

Historic Preservation Commission

City of Superior

Monday, June 21, 2021 5:30 p.m.

The HPC meeting for the city of Superior was called to order by Jeff Skrenes at 5:34 p.m. The meeting was held at City Hall in room 217.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Tim Meyer, Tom Wondolkowski, Matt Osterlund, Kathleen Laakso

Member Absent: Brian Finstad

Staff Present: Jeff Skrenes

Others Present: Bobbi Morningstar, Keith Hoffman sp?

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Tom Wondolkowski, seconded by Tim Meyer, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2020 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Application for designation of a historic property at 1011 Weeks Avenue

Housing Coordinator/Planner Jeff Skrenes introduced the application. He explained two procedural items. First that the City had disposed of many of its original records such as building permits and ownership or assessment history prior to 1980 as it had moved offices. These records were not digitized prior to being disposed of, and are no longer available through traditional city resources and research methods. Staff will work with applicants to determine what other reasonable research and documentation methods are available, and that applicants made a good faith effort to provide items that the application form requests as well as other pertinent historical data. Skrenes also asked members of the committee to share their own recommendations for where such data may be found.

Second, staff is recommending approval based on the significance of the architecture and character of the property, but does not know enough about local history to recommend for or against designation in that category.

The owners of the property were asked to speak and commented in more detail on the home's history as the first graduating class of St. Mary's School of Nursing. Committee members agreed that carried local significance as a historic resource, and that the current photos alone could merit approval based on architectural significance. Staff pointed out that the early photos of the property, compared with the photos from the 1983 City intensive survey, show a potentially historic property in decline. And the current photos show that the owners have been repairing and restoring the property in ways that maintain and bring back its architectural significance.

MOTION to approve the application for historic designation of 1011 Weeks Avenue based on both criteria, made by Tom Wondolkowski, seconded by Kathleen Laakso, carried unanimously.

Scheduling of regular meetings of the HPC

The committee must conduct regularly-scheduled meetings. City code requires that owners of a historic property submit exterior plans to building inspections, who notifies the HPC. The HPC must then consider that item at their next regularly scheduled meeting. The HPC has previously been meeting on an as-needed basis. Meetings can be cancelled if there is no business to discuss, but must have a scheduled meeting established to be in line with city code and to be fair to owners of historic properties. The group decided to set that meeting on the second Wednesday of each month, at city hall.

OTHER BUSINESS

Staff gave updates on other properties in application processes. We are in discussion with one private property owner and the Superior Public Museums about designation. The FDL tribe is also in discussion with the St. Francis church and cemetery about ownership or at least formalized recognition of their right to access and maintain as needed a burial site that is on St. Francis Cemetery land. The site straddles two parcels owned by St. Francis as well as a vacated, unused City right-of-way. The area could be eligible for designation as a historic site, if desired. Staff will be working with parties to at least nominate and recognize a sign and burial marker as historic objects.

The committee discussed Certified Local Government status, which is designated by the state of Wisconsin. CLG status allows two important items for the sake of historic preservation. One is access to funding to help maintain and restore historic properties, and the other is the ability to revert to previous building codes when restoring historic properties. In the latter case, a historic property that is damaged may not be able to be rebuilt or restored in ways that follow existing code and retain the historic characteristics. CLG status grants more leeway for that to happen. The committee and staff discussed changes to City of Superior municipal code that would be required for CLG eligibility, and expressed a desire to move those forward for consideration when appropriate.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jeff Skrenes