

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF SUPERIOR

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 10, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

The HPC meeting for the city of Superior was called to order by Tim Meyer at 5:31 p.m. The meeting was held at City Hall in room 270 and by web and phone conference.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Kathleen Laakso, Tim Meyer, Tom Wondolkowski, Matt Osterlund, Brian Finstad
Finstad was able to attend briefly by phone, but the call was dropped prior to voting on issues and he was not able to reconnect.

Staff Present: Jeff Skrenes

Others Present: Garner Moffat, Shelley Nelson

There being a quorum present, the meeting was in order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Board Member Laakso, seconded by Osterlund, to approve the June 8, 2022 minutes, carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Nomination of City museum sites for historic designation on local register

Jeff Skrenes explained a time frame; that the HPC and other members of the public wanted to get the three museum sites designated in 2022. SLFRF and other personnel issues have delayed that, but as we near the end of the year we should try and move these along. The Executive Director of the museums is out on maternity leave, and waiting until she returns would make it difficult to complete this goal in time. Skrenes advised that usually the HPC recommends properties for designation and requests a public hearing to happen as quickly as statute allows. The public hearing has generally happened at the same Common Council meeting where the vote takes place, but that is not a requirement. If the HPC were to recommend designation and ask that the public hearing happen no earlier than mid-September, that would give Planning staff a chance to meet with the museums board prior to a public hearing and final vote.

The most significant difference in terms of the operation of these sites, is that the Certificate of Appropriateness process would apply to exterior work that resulted in material changes to the properties. But he has already been in contact with Linda Cadotte about how each department can work through that process together. And even with some extra work, the preservation of historic details at these sites will be a positive development.

Skrenes also explained that Planning staff had struggled with how to condense the vast amounts of historical data on each site into a singular narrative. Then realized that much of this information had already been compiled by people with significant expertise in historic designation, as the properties are on state and national registers. Therefore, the

application and confirmation narratives from those sites are used for the municipal designation applications as well. Skrenes recommended that the HPC consider each site individually.

- A. MOTION to place the Fairlawn/Pattison House on the Municipal Register of Historic Places, and request a public hearing to take place no earlier than September 13, 2022, made by Board Member Wondolkowski and seconded by Laakso, carried unanimously.
- B. MOTION to place the Meteor on the Municipal Register of Historic Places and request a public hearing to take place no earlier than September 13, 2022, made by Board Member Osterlund and seconded by Wondolkowski, carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Updates on SLFRF

- a. Carnegie Library – the City now owns the site. SLFRF funds were used to acquire the property at \$175,000 and another \$325,000 was allocated for repairs and maintenance. The condition is that within 18 months of closing, the City shall have the site listed for sale and development. The City has put out an RFP for design work on the roof. The previous owner did have extensive design work plans, but those were for a different style roof than what this budget can afford. And architects and other contractors likely will not want to assume liability for using parts of design work that they themselves have not originated. The City has limits on how much money can be contracted without an RFP, and it is quite possible that new or updated design work could exceed that amount. While we all know the roof needs to be on this as soon as possible, the prudent course is to do the design work RFP and then the roof RFP. The hope is that a new membrane can be up before winter. Tom W. asked if this was too fast of a time frame to be considered realistic. Tim M. responded that with a high-profile job like this, that increased the odds that a qualified bidder would be willing to take the job and at least complete the membrane portion this year.

Tim recommended that staff look into internal heat options to help with preserving the site. Garner offered to begin work on an application for the National Register of Historic Places.

- b. Princess Theater – The site is cleaned out. Debris and papers and other belongings have been removed. The cost of removing those items was roughly \$6,800 and will come out of SLFRF funds. With those items removed, the good news is that the mold smell and compounding effects have been greatly reduced. At this time, further mold remediation efforts do not seem necessary. The next step is asbestos testing, and the rear roof has standing water, which may be as simple as a clogged drainage system.

In a message to staff, Finstad had recommended that HPC members tour the interior in order to assess if anything historic remains. Even the dimensions of certain spaces or an overall layout or design might be historically important to preserve in future plans. Skrenes advised that the Committee could tour with staff and that to comply with open meetings laws there should be no more than two members present at any time. Skrenes also shared that interior photos of the Princess could be very helpful in determining specific restoration plans. Likewise, finding out the name(s) of original

architects and builders could help staff and committee members to research if “twins” of the Princess had been built nearby.

- c. Other sites – The committee asked if there was an update on the Ringsreds and the warehouse remains at 1515 1st. The site has not been lost to tax forfeiture. The Ringsreds believe they have a strong case against the neighbor, in terms of financial compensation. But the site may not survive on its own until then. Staff agreed to reach out and inquire about how things are progressing and how or if the Ringsreds are monitoring the site for potential changes in stability.
2. Updates on Certified Local Government status – Skrenes reminded the committee that getting CLG status at least discussed at a Common Council meeting was a goal for 2022. The committee discussed clarifying who could nominate a property for local designation under the code changes required for eligibility. Namely, could anyone nominate any property, or would the nomination have to come from the HPC or City staff? It would also help to report how many times this process has been used in Wisconsin, if that data is available. And specific funding options for tax credits and other grants/loans would help demonstrate benefits. The committee stated a goal of presenting the topic for discussion at an October Common Council meeting, and deciding before then what part of the meeting would be best used (i.e. items from public vs. items from department directors or mayor/council members).
3. Updates on Historic Preservation City website – Skrenes reminded the committee that this was a topic at the July meeting that was then cancelled. He asked if the committee had any recommendations on information to be included on the city website for this part of the Planning Department page. Certificate of Appropriateness documents would be added soon. Committee members said that a quick link to HPC meeting minutes could be helpful, as well as updates on SLFRF usage.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jeff Skrenes