

**MINUTES OF THE HOBART HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MARCH 19, 2019**

THE MEETING OF THE HOBART HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:32PM.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: TOM EHRHARDT, GEORGE RAINEY, TIFFANY TOLBERT, RITA McBRIDE, THEODORE ECKELS

STAFF: SERGIO MENDOZA (CITY PLANNER), ROSS PIETRZAK (ZONING ADMINISTRATOR), BRAD MILLER (IL)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL – WARNER BAXTER, ABSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 15, 2019

MR. EHRHARDT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR JANUARY 15, 2019; Ms. McBRIDE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

ACCEPTANCE, ADDITIONS, OR AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

MS. TOLBERT ASKED STAFF IF THERE WERE ANY AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA. MR. MENDOZA REQUESTED ONE ADDITION, HHPC 18-10, REGARDING 414 MAIN STREET AND A REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF TREE TYPE AT THE STAFF LEVEL. MS. TOLBERT SAID THAT WOULD BE ADDED AFTER NEW BUSINESS. MS. TOLBERT ASKED FOR A MOTION TO AMEND. MR. EHRHARDT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE; MR. RAINEY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

**HHPC 19-04 PETITIONER: RICH PLUTA
REQUEST: CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
PURPOSE: DEMOLITION
LOCATION: 534-538 E. 3RD STREET**

MR. PLUTA PRESENTED HIS REQUEST FOR DEMOLITION OF THE BUILDING AT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY. MS. TOLBERT CLARIFIED FOR THE COMMISSION AND THE PETITIONER THAT THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION IS ONLY ABOUT THE DEMOLITION OF THE REMAINING STRUCTURE (GUYER BUILDING) DAMAGED BY FIRE ON THE PROPERTY.

MR. MILLER PRESENTED HIS STAFF REPORT. THE PROPERTY, 534-538 E. 3RD STREET, KNOWN HISTORICALLY AS THE GUYER BLOCK, IS A NOTABLE COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE WITHIN THE LAKE GEORGE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT.

ON JANUARY 15, THE GUYER BLOCK SUSTAINED SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE DUE TO A STRUCTURAL FIRE THAT ORIGINATED ON THE FIRST FLOOR AND SPREAD THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE SECOND FLOOR. IN CONSIDERATION OF THE STRUCTURAL DAMAGE AND AN IMPENDING WINTER WEATHER EVENT, THE CITY OF HOBART ORDERED THE PROPERTY OWNER TO SECURE THE REMNANTS OF THE SECOND STORY THROUGH AN IMMEDIATE, PARTIAL DEMOLITION. PARTIAL DEMOLITION COMMENCED ON JANUARY 19, WHICH SAW THE ENTIRETY OF THE SECOND FLOOR PUSHED INWARDS INTO THE BUILDING SHELL TO PREVENT ITS OUTWARD COLLAPSE ON TO THE SIDEWALK AND STREET.

THE REMAINING STRUCTURE – AFTER FIRE DAMAGE AND PARTIAL DEMOLITION – NO LONGER RETAINS ITS INTEGRITY AND IS STRUCTURALLY UNSOUND. THIS IS UNFORTUNATE GIVEN THE GUYER BLOCK'S NOTABLE RATING WITHIN THE

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HISTORIC DISTRICT AS A STANDOUT COMMERCIAL BUILDING AT A PROMINENT CORNER INTERSECTION. THE COMPLETE DEMOLITION OF THE BUILDING WILL CONSTITUTE A DRAMATIC ALTERATION TO ADJACENT BUILDINGS AND THE OVERALL ENVIRONMENT OF THE DISTRICT.

STAFF RECOMMENDS APPROVAL FOR DEMOLITION OF THE GUYER BLOCK BECAUSE THE FIRE AND EMERGENCY PARTIAL DEMOLITION LEFT THE BUILDING STRUCTURALLY COMPROMISED, STRIPPED OF ITS ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY, AND A THREAT TO THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF THE PUBLIC. THE BUILDING'S LOSS, HOWEVER, WILL HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE DISTRICT'S STREETScape.

MR. MILLER EXPLAINED THE PHOTOGRAPHS INCLUDED IN HIS REPORT THAT SHOW THE FIRE DAMAGE.

MS. TOLBERT ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION ON WHAT WOULD BE DEMOLISHED. MR. MILLER EXPLAINED THE ENTIRETY OF THE GUYER BUILDING WOULD BE DEMOLISHED, BUT THE BUILDING WITH THE MANSARD ROOF WOULD REMAIN. MR. RAINEY REPEATED THE QUESTION. MR. MILLER ASKED THE PETITIONER IF HE WAS EXPLAINING THE PROPOSAL ACCURATELY.

DAVID McEACHERN, THE PETITIONER'S ARCHITECT, EXPLAINED THE PROPOSAL. MR. McEACHERN SAID THE REAR WALL OF THE GUYER BUILDING IS SHARED WITH THE BUILDING PROPOSED TO REMAIN, SO THAT SHARED WALL WOULD REMAIN. THE EXISTING FOUNDATION OF THE GUYER BUILDING WOULD ALSO REMAIN BECAUSE THE TWO FOOT FOUNDATION WOULD HELP HOLD THE SIDEWALKS IN PLACE DURING THE DEMOLITION. SOME OF THE SHARED WALL WILL HAVE TO BE REBUILT, INCLUDING DESIGN OF THE STRUCTURE TO REMAIN SO IT CAN BE A STAND-ALONE DESIGN.

MS. TOLBERT ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE LOT WHERE THE GUYER BUILDING WAS DURING AND AFTER DEMOLITION. MR. PLUTA SAID THE BASEMENT WOULD BE BACKFILLED. MS. TOLBERT ASKED WHEN THE DEMOLITION WOULD START. MR. PLUTA ANSWERED THAT HE IS CURRENTLY SEEKING BIDS FOR THE PROJECT. HE EXPLAINED IT HAS BEEN DELAYED DUE TO PERSONAL HEALTH ISSUES.

MS. TOLBERT ASKED FOR ANY MORE QUESTIONS. MR. MILLER ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION FOR WHAT WALL IS SHARED WITH THE TWO BUILDINGS. MR. McEACHERN USED THE IMAGES ON THE COMMISSION'S SCREEN TO EXPLAIN THE WALL AND ACCESS CORRIDOR. MR. MILLER ASKED IF THE DEMOLITION WOULD IMPACT THIS WALL. MR. McEACHERN SAID THERE ARE FLOORS THAT TIE IN THE WALL TO THE BUILDING THAT WILL REMAIN.

MS. DAWN HOSTETLER, ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE CITY OF HOBART, ASKED THE PETITIONER IF ANY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS WOULD BE SALVAGED. MR. MILLER SAID THAT SOME ELEMENTS WERE SALVAGED DURING THE DEMOLITION, MOST OF WHICH WAS PRESSED TIN. MS. TOLBERT ASKED IF THE GUYER NAME WAS SAVED. MR. MENDOZA SAID IT WAS IN HIS GARAGE. MR. McEACHERN SAID ANY DETAILS LEFT ON THE BACK WALL WOULD BE RETAINED. SEVERAL COMMISSION MEMBERS DISCUSSED THE HISTORY OF BRICKS IN THE CITY.

MS. TOLBERT REPEATED THE PETITIONER'S REQUEST AND THAT THE STAFF REPORT RECOMMENDED APPROVAL FOR DEMOLITION. MS. TOLBERT CALLED FOR A MOTION. MR. RAINEY ASKED HOW LONG THE DEMOLITION WOULD TAKE. MR. PLUTA SAID HE DID NOT KNOW BUT HE DOES NOT WANT TO WASTE ANY MORE TIME. MR. EHRHARDT MADE A MOTION AS STATED BY MS. TOLBERT; SECONDED BY MR. RAINEY. MOTION CARRIED.

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HHPC 18-10 AMENDED TO AGENDA

MR. MENDOZA EXPLAINED THE PREVIOUS APPROVAL FOR TREE PLANTING IN FRONT OF CITY HALL THAT CONTAINED A CERTAIN TYPE OF SWEET GUM TREE. MR. MENDOZA SAID THE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION HAD TO SWITCH THE SPECIFIC TYPE OF SWEET GUM TREE BECAUSE ONE IS MORE RESISTANT TO COLD WEATHER. THE TWO TYPES OF SWEET GUMS VARY SLIGHTLY IN THE LEAF EDGE. MR. MENDOZA ASKED THAT THE COMMISSION ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHANGE. MS. TOLBERT ASKED IF THAT COULD BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGE. MR. MENDOZA REQUESTED A MOTION. MS. TOLBERT ASKED FOR A MOTION. MR. RAINEY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE; SECONDED BY MR. ECKELS. MOTION APPROVED.

MR. EHRHARDT MADE A COMMENT ABOUT THE RECENT CHANGES TO THE FRONT OF CITY HALL AND EXPRESSED HIS DELIGHT IN THE IMPROVEMENTS.

HHPC 18-09 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – HISTORIC PRESERVATION CHAPTER

MR. MILLER HAD NO UPDATES ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE DISCOVERED MORE PAPERWORK FROM PREVIOUS EFFORTS AT A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN THAT INFORMS HIS WORK.

MR. MILLER MADE A NOTE THAT MAY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH AND THE COMMISSION MAY WANT TO CONSIDER HAVING A SECOND ROUND OF A DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR OR A TOUR IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY. MR. MILLER SAID IF THE COMMISSION DID THE DOWNTOWN AGAIN, THEN THEY WOULD JUST NEED TO ADVERTISE THE EVENT.

MS. TOLBERT SAID SHE WOULD THE COMMISSION TO DO SOMETHING FOR PRESERVATION MONTH. MS. TOLBERT EXPRESSED INTEREST IN A DOWNTOWN TOUR FOR MAY, POSSIBLY INTEGRATING THE SUMMER MARKET ON THE LAKE.

MR. MILLER SHARED THAT HE RECENTLY ATTENDED A MEETING OF OTHER COMMISSIONS IN NORTHERN INDIANA TO DISCUSS THE NEED FOR A STANDARD SET OF DESIGN GUIDELINES. HE SAID THERE WAS NOT MUCH NEED IN HOBART GIVEN THAT THIS COMMISSION RECENTLY UPDATED THE DOWNTOWN GUIDELINES. MR. MILLER CONTINUED TO EXPLAIN HOW THE TEMPLATE COULD BETTER ADAPT TO BUILDINGS WITH VARIOUS SIGNIFICANCE RATINGS SO THAT PROPERTY OWNERS HAVE MORE FLEXIBILITY. MR. MILLER SAID IT MAY BE HELPFUL IF THE COMMISSION WANTS TO CONSIDER RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATION IN HOBART.

MR. MILLER ALSO REMINDED THE COMMISSION THE STATE PRESERVATION CONFERENCE IS NEXT MONTH IN EVANSVILLE. HE ALSO HINTED THAT THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE HOSTED IN SOUTH BEND NEXT YEAR SO IT WOULD BE CLOSER FOR THE COMMISSION MEMBERS.

MS. TOLBERT ASKED IF MR. MILLER WOULD CONSIDER PURSUIT OF CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT STATUS FOR HOBART GIVEN ALL OF THE BENEFITS OF SUCH A DESIGNATION. MR. MILLER AGREED THAT IT WOULD A GREAT IDEA, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THAT GRANT FUNDS SET ASIDE FOR CLGs WERE NOT ALL SPENT IN THE 2018 CYCLE. MS. TOLBERT ASKED IF STEVE KENNEDY AT DHPA COULD PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION ON THE PROCESS. MR. MILLER SAID HE WOULD PURSUE THE REQUEST OF THE COMMISSION.

PUBLIC COMMENT

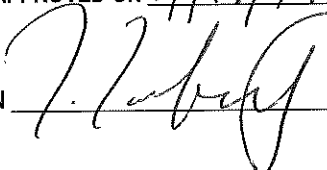
MS. MCBRIDE SAID THE HOBART HISTORICAL SOCIETY ACQUIRED A NEW OBJECT IN THEIR COLLECTION; A WOODEN BOARD FROM AN OLD TREE IN THE CITY.

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MR. EHRHARDT MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.
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NEXT MEETING: APRIL 16, 2019

MINUTES APPROVED ON 4/16/19

CHAIRMAN 

ATTEST 