

**Minutes**  
**HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD**  
**City Commission Room, City Hall**  
**1101 Poyntz Avenue**  
**Monday, July 22, 2013**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**Members Present:** Patrick Schaub, Chair; Dixie West, Vice-Chair; Betty Mattingly; Angie Danner; Dea Brokesh; Michael Krysko (arrived after item #3); Michael Mecseri (arrived after item #4).

**Members Absent:** None.

**Others Present:** Linda Glasgow; Ila Morrill; Grey Penfield; Jennifer Bryan; Robin Edmunds; Joe Edmunds; Jim Sharp; Sharlin Sargent; Randi Dale; Kathy Dzewaltowski; Michael Dudek; Bruce McMillan; Cameron Tross.

**Staff Present:** Lance Evans, Senior Planner; Kevin Credit, Planner I; Jason Hilgers, Assistant City Manager; Edward Eastes, Acting Director of Parks and Recreation.

1. Consider the minutes for the June 24, 2013 Historic Resources Board meeting.

Schaub recognized former Board member Michael Dudek and thanked him for his time on the Board. Schaub also introduced new appointee Betty Mattingly.

Brokesh noted two corrections to the minutes. West moved that the Board approve the minutes as amended. Brokesh seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 5-0.

2. Major Review – 310 Poyntz Avenue (Shaw-Little Building)

**Applicant:** Salvation Army

**Representative:** Patrick Schaub, Bowman Bowman Novick

Building Permit. *Within the Downtown Manhattan Historic District.*

Schaub noted that he was the representative for the applicant on the project and recused himself from voting on the item. Credit presented the staff report for 308-310 Poyntz Avenue, with a recommendation of approval. West asked about the location of the fiber cement siding. Schaub explained that it would be located on the rear façade, with the existing stone remaining.

Schaub opened the item to public comment. Dale said that she thought it was a wonderful idea, and that she supports it. Danner moved that the Board finds that the proposal meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Brokesh seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0, with one abstention (Schaub).

### 3. Administrative Review Summary:

- 721 Pierre Street: Building Permit. *Within the Houston-Pierre Streets Residential Historic District.*
- 318 Poyntz Avenue: Sign Permit. *Within the Downtown Manhattan Historic District.*

Credit presented the administrative review summary for the month of July. West asked if staff could provide pictures with the administrative review summary in the future so that the Board could better understand the projects. Credit said they would.

### 4. Announcements and Updates.

- Community House charrette status update.
- Local Environs law options.
- Heritage Trust Fund Grant workshop report.

Schaub explained that the local AIA-sponsored Community House charrette had yet to be planned; the summer season had been busy for architects and designers, and they needed to nail something definite down.

Evans said that staff has developed a memorandum and letter of support signed by Schaub requesting that the City Commission consider amending the City's preservation ordinance to include some kind of environs provision. Evans said that they were now waiting to be placed on a City Commission agenda to discuss the item.

Credit informed the Board that he and Evans had attended a Heritage Trust Fund Grant workshop in Topeka offered by SHPO the previous week, and they had learned a lot of useful information about how the grants should be presented and what criteria were considered.

### 5. City Auditorium Discussion

- Linda Glasgow presentation.
- Jason Hilgers comments.

Glasgow distributed several copies of articles and a report pertinent to the history of the City Auditorium construction project and said that there was a lot of material at the Riley County Historical Museum about the history of the project. Glasgow then gave a presentation on the history of the City Auditorium. Sharp asked if the names of the 101 soldiers from Riley County who died in World War II were ever embedded in stone in the building. Glasgow said that she did not know.

Brokesh asked about the original capacity of the auditorium. Glasgow said that the original intention was to be able to seat 3,500 - 4,000 people. She explained that the project was constantly evolving, and that one of the reasons that it wasn't built until 1955 was due to the fact that construction costs had been inflated from the war. She added that it was a gigantic enterprise, and many different opinions were expressed throughout the process. Hilgers said that currently the auditorium was Building Code compliant to seat around 500 people. Dale discussed the historic number of chairs originally intended for the auditorium. Brokesh asked what would be needed to increase the occupancy of the auditorium – would more exits allow for more

people. Hilgers said that the issue with the Code was a minimum square footage calculation – in order to increase the occupancy, the building would have to be physically expanded.

Hilgers then presented on the need for the City Auditorium renovation, and the process that staff had used to determine the need for additional Parks & Recreation facilities. Hilgers said that staff had looked at both the Community House and the City Auditorium in order to determine how to best use these public buildings, which both get used frequently. He said that they had talked to the City Commission previously about the City's programming needs and potentially shifting recreation space from the Auditorium to the Community House, but they had decided the best option was to concentrate additional recreation space in City Hall.

West asked why expansion of the existing Parks and Recreation offices in City Park wasn't chosen. Hilgers said that the ability to have a one-stop-shop experience at City Hall was a driving factor; they would be able to do multiple transactions at one location, which would offer a financial benefit, as well as a benefit to operations efficiency. He said that Parks and Recreation interacts with the Human Resources department often, due to the nearly 700 seasonal applicants that Parks and Recreation gets annually, and housing the department in City Hall would create a much more operationally-friendly environment than the current setup. Efficient money-handling was also a consideration. West asked about proposed changes to the exterior of the auditorium. Hilgers said that an existing exit off of the stage will be enclosed.

McMillan presented the basics of the proposed design, explaining that a single-floor stairway on the west will be extended to the second story, and that the new Parks and Recreation offices will be located on both the first and second stories of the northern end of the existing gym space. Tross described the various planned configurations of the basketball, volleyball, and badminton courts available in the gym area with the proposed renovations. He said that three sets of collapsible bleachers, able to fold flat against the wall, would be located on the southern end of the gym, where the stage is currently located. Portable bleachers could also be brought in for larger events. West asked how many people would have seating in the new configuration versus the current layout. Hilgers replied that a similar number of seats would be available.

Brokesh asked about the mechanical cooling tower to the south of the gym, and whether they had looked at adding a stage in that area. Hilgers said that it would be an expensive alternative, so they had not studied it in detail, in an effort to be as economical as possible. Mattingly asked if they had considered the option of bringing in a portable stage for events that required it. McMillan said that portable stages had been discussed, but nothing concrete had been determined yet. Hilgers said that he thought the City had portable stages already in their inventory that could be used for specific events. Mattingly asked whether the lighting with a portable stage would be sufficient so that people can use the stage as they use it now theatrically. McMillan said that they could put the portable stage in the space where the current stage sits, with the bleachers proposed for that area collapsed. Hilgers said that if they began to propose additional costs, such as additions to the building to accommodate the stage, the City Commission would likely ask staff to find cost-saving alternatives – which, as he presented earlier, they had found in various places around the community.

Brokesh asked if the design group had looked at putting the Parks and Recreation offices on the west side of the building and keeping the courts and stage as they currently are. Hilgers said that they had not studied that specifically, but they did look at expanding the entire structure, and that moving an exterior wall something like twenty feet resulted in an increased cost of about \$1,000,000. He added that staff had been sensitive to expanding the footprint of the building and being sensitive to the neighbors and zoning requirements, as well as historic concerns over changing the exterior appearance of the building. Brokesh noted that the 1955 report had mentioned a possible west expansion, and asked if an option like that had been considered. Schaub said that during a previous renovation he had researched the original documents that show a one-story addition to the west, but that it wasn't considered at that time due to cost.

West said that it would be nice for the Board to be involved in the discussion concerning historic properties owned by the City. Danner asked if the City Commission was notified at the first meeting concerning the need for a Parks and Recreation facility expansion of the historic nature of the auditorium. Hilgers said no, staff and the City Commission were not aware of the history at that time; after reading Avery's 1955 report, it is clear that the auditorium needs to be reinvested in, and that the City Commission is currently on board with this concept, which serves to reinvest in the space. Schaub then opened the item to public comment.

Dale said that she had some questions and would also like to make a presentation. She asked if the City had already started design work before coming to the Board tonight. Hilgers said yes, the City Commission has authorized the money to do design work, so they had started the process already. Dale indicated that she felt that the City should have waited to start design work on the project. She then discussed the original number of seats intended for the space and that she disagreed with the Building Code occupancy requirements for the building.

Sharp asked for a comparison between the number of employees and their space needs in the current Parks and Recreation offices versus what was planned in the City Hall renovation. Hilgers said that there are 14 employees now, and 15 are designed for in the proposed City Hall plan. Currently, existing space in City Park provides for 14 to 18 employees, but the office space is woefully inadequate. Sharp and Hilgers then discussed the cost of renovations to the auditorium that would retain the stage and the analysis of the facility's current usage. Hilgers reiterated the analysis from his presentation that approximately 15,000 people use the space for recreational activities, and only 200 for the stage. Sharp asked if a better managed and maintained auditorium would entail more use of the stage. Hilgers said that in his personal opinion, no, due to the supply and demand of stage space – more people are demanding a limited amount of gym space, often due to restriction from school principals, compared to a smaller demand for a larger number of available stages in the community.

Dzewaltowski asked that if school gyms were often unavailable for recreation, how it would be possible that the stages would be available in those same locations. Hilgers said that he was under the impression that school principals were concerned about damage caused by recreational activities, but that he hasn't talked to them about their opinions on stage space. Mattingly asked if Hilgers had checked on the rates and availability of the list of stages shown in the presentation. Hilgers said that he had not. Glasgow said that it seemed to her that many churches have quality gym space that is currently being underutilized, and that any list of stages should be vetted by

someone with theatrical expertise in order to determine whether they are truly suitable for a theatrical performance in terms of acoustics and stage size.

Dale passed out several photographs and said that she had been involved with renting the stage since the 1970s and that she has noticed the lack of maintenance on the stage. She discussed the generous proportions of the stage and wing areas, and said that the auditorium had the potential to be used as a venue for live musical acts for college students who did not want to drink alcohol. Dale discussed the lack of handicapped accessibility in the facility, as well as the lack of signs identifying areas for handicapped accessibility. She said that the platform near the stage was a good place for someone in a wheelchair to watch a basketball game or a performance, but how to get to the platform is not clearly marked. She said that there was a handicapped-accessible lift in the facility, but that when she had needed to use it, the tires were flat and no one knew how to pump them up.

Dale said that people would rent the stage if they knew it was available. She then discussed the lights in the auditorium, and said that despite the fact that the contract she had signed with the City specified “stage lights,” they did not work properly. She said that other stages around town were not designed for theatrical work – they did not have a curtain. She said that this stage is a wonderful space because it has a lot of room, and she discussed the beneficial acoustic qualities of the auditorium. She then explained that she is so passionate about this issue because she was a child model for war bonds, and that it is hard to think that they could have a remodel without a vote of the general public. Dale then passed out a photocopy of a City Commission memorandum, and said that there was a conflict of interest with Bruce McMillan being chosen as the architect for the project since in the memo it states that he was consulted before the beginning of the project. Schaub said that the work McMillan did was preliminary analysis and this kind of preliminary consultation is common practice.

Hilgers explained that the City has a process that is followed when selecting consultants. He then asked who in the room knew of the history of the Peace Memorial Auditorium when the item was first discussed over a year ago at the City Commission. Two people raised their hands. He said that many people did not know of the history – we should have been aware of the history, but we were not. Dale then asked about the parking analysis conducted for the project, and she, Hilgers, and McMillan discussed the available parking for the facility in light of the recent reconfiguration of the City Traffic Shop.

Penfield introduced himself as a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and said that when he came into the building, he looked at the memorial plaque and was disappointed that the only thing on it that is a reminder of the past is a list of politicians and nothing about the struggles of the City’s original settlers and its military veterans. He said that many people in the room had not experienced live combat. He said that the building needs to be redone, and then said that he would like each and everyone to ask themselves what the right thing to do would be. He said that he would like the auditorium to be rededicated to the veterans with a big ceremony, and that it was an important memorial for those who have served in the military.

Bryan said that she was a lifetime performer of the violin and that the arts are very important to humanity. She said that a big stage with a curtain is a nice thing to have, and while she thinks sports are significant, the arts are also important.

Sharp said that he was a World War II veteran and that he fought in several battles in Europe. He described the purpose of the auditorium and said that we need to save this Memorial Auditorium for the people who didn't come home. He said that we need to step back and study the situation – a whole group of organizations put the auditorium here, and maybe the same groups could study this issue again. He said that his recommendation would be to have the Mayor name a committee of about 7 to 10 people, similar to the original committee that determined the aspects of the auditorium's construction, with members of some of the same organizations that would make recommendations about this project and where Parks and Recreation offices could be accommodated.

Sargent said that there is a war memorial in Manhattan – this auditorium is it. She said that money should be put towards an auditorium memorial.

Schaub asked for comments from the Board. West said that she was humbled by the things that she heard tonight. She said that there were oversights but that she doesn't think anyone meant to do anything wrong intentionally. Because of these oversights, we find ourselves in this large emotional mess – I hope that when the City moves forward, when there are projects on City-owned structures over 50 years old, the City engages the Board at an earlier point. She added that although it may cost more money to save the stage or make changes to the project, we may need to pull in the public to help raise funds to make improvements. She also said, I think we're all guilty because we did not know.

Brokesh moved that the Historic Resources Board recommend to the City Commission to direct the architect of the Parks and Recreation expansion project to study alternatives, including renovating the Peace Memorial stage and auditorium, as well as adding on to City Hall with Parks and Recreation offices. Danner asked if the motion should include a recommendation to stop all current work on the project until the alternatives are evaluated. Krysko said that even if the Board said "stop", it would still just be a recommendation. West said that it would still make the Board's voices heard. West seconded the motion on the table. She then added that the powers that be can make their decision, but we can have on the record that we have made the recommendation to stop design until alternatives are evaluated.

Krysko then proposed a friendly amendment to the motion, to add "in a way that takes into account the historic elements of the facility" to the end of the motion on the table. Brokesh and West agreed. The Board discussed possible issues with recommending the City Commission to stop work on a contract that had already been authorized – would it be possible to ask the architect to stop? Schaub then proposed a second friendly amendment to the motion on the table, to include "before the completion of the design phase of the project" to the end of the last sentence. Brokesh and West consented. Schaub said that it is interesting that the meaning of the living memorial is that the structure is intended to be used, and that there are good arguments on both sides for what the highest and best use of the auditorium would be. He added that the worst possible outcome would be for the space to be unused.

Credit then restated the motion, that the Historic Resources Board recommend to the City Commission to direct the architect of the Parks and Recreation expansion project to study alternatives, including renovating the Peace Memorial stage and auditorium, as well as adding on to City Hall with Parks and Recreation offices in a way that takes into account the historic elements of the facility before the completion of the design phase of the project. The motion passed on a vote of 7-0.

6. Upcoming Meetings:

- Monday, August 26, 2013.
- Monday, September 23, 2013.

Evans said that SHPO had proposed having a tax credit workshop in Manhattan, tentatively scheduled for August 6<sup>th</sup> at 5:30, and asked if the Board would be interested. The Board agreed. Schaub said to make a note on the next agenda that the meeting would run from 4:00 to 5:30.

7. Adjourn.