

Minutes
HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
Monday, February 27th, 2017
4:00 P.M.

Members Present: Chris Banner, Betty Mattingly-Ebert; Craig Hager; Eileen Meyer, Vice Chair; and Kevin West.

Members Absent: Cameron Tross and Suzanne Orr, Chair.

Others Present: Patrick Schaub and Logan Steiner, BBN (Applicants); Jason Stock, Timber and Stone Architects (Applicant); Donna Schenck-Hamlin; Linda Glasgow; Linda Morse; and Mel Borst.

Staff Present: Ben Chmiel, Planner; John Adam, Senior Planner; and Wyatt Thompson, Senior Park Planner.

1. Consider the minutes from January 23, 2017 meeting.

West moved to approve the minutes as written. Hager seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Major Review Applications.

Chmiel described the proposal for subdividing the retail space at 316 & 318 Poyntz Avenue, the Woolworths and Higinbotham Buildings (both contributing buildings), to create two separate retail/office spaces. He explained the history of both buildings which were once separated but were combined into one large interior space after a remodel dating back to the 1930s. The demising wall would be constructed to divide the space roughly in half from north to south, following the original wall base and structural columns. There were no historic finishes on the interior to be disturbed, save for a historic tin-pressed ceiling that covered the majority of the ceiling, underneath the non-historic drop ceiling. The tin-press appeared to be in good condition. To leave this feature undisturbed, the proposed demising wall was designed to be built up to and rest on the tin-press ceiling without penetrating it. Fire-rated mineral wool would be placed between the ceiling and the wall to meet fire and code requirements. The addition of an accessible bathroom was also proposed in the rear of the store.

Hager asked if the tin-press were original to the building before its remodel in the thirties since it exists on both sides of the space. Chmiel explained that it was probably installed as a part of the remodel in the thirties since it is uniform throughout, but it would still be considered a contributing feature. Banner noted there were two different styles of tin-press throughout. Stock noted that the two styles are different in the front of the store compared to the back. Mattingly-Ebert asked if there were any changes to the storefront awnings. Stock said that wasn't part of

the application, but would happen later. Mattingly-Ebert asked if HVAC would be installed as a part of the project, noting that several ducts throughout the space are mounted on tin-press ceiling. Stock said the HVAC wouldn't change as a part of the project.

West moved that the proposal met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as reviewed in accordance with K.S.A. 75-2724 and will not damage, destroy, or diminish any historically significant property or historic character-defining features. Banner seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Chmiel briefly described the history and the proposal for altering the west façade of 205 South 4th Street, the Sears Building (a non-contributing building). The west façade, originally a contiguous storefront window all along 4th Street, was removed and filled in with a smooth-face limestone façade and tinted slit windows in the late 1980s when Sears moved into the mall. This alteration effected the integrity of the building, giving it its non-contributing status. The proposal was to create two new storefronts between the two existing recessed entrances on the west façade by removing the smooth-face limestone and slit windows in that part of the façade. The large, flat metal canopy along 4th Street wrapped with canvas would be removed, and new metal "floating" shed-style awnings would be installed over the new storefronts and existing recessed entrances. The building brick would also be tuck-pointed where needed. Generally, the building would be returning to a more outward-facing orientation as opposed to inward.

Schaub added that the space was very unlikely to return to one unified building in the future, given the market for such spaces in a downtown. Banner asked if there was any interior work proposed. Schaub said eventually there would be interior work corresponding with the exterior changes, creating more individual retail spaces for tenants.

West moved that the proposal met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as reviewed in accordance with K.S.A. 75-2724 and will not damage, destroy, or diminish any historically significant property or historic character-defining features. Mattingly-Ebert seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Sunset Area Survey HPF Grant Update.

Chmiel explained that city administration submitted a preliminary HPF grant application to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), proposing a project to survey and list five individual structures in and around the Sunset Cemetery on the State and National Register of Historic Places. The State reviewed the application and recommended that the project be broadened and altered to a general historic resources survey of all city-owned property in the area, including the cemetery, zoo, and surrounding parks with the goal of establishing a district encompassing the original structures as well as others in the cemetery, zoo, and parks. SHPO noted this would be a much more competitive grant proposal and would still result in all the preservation and funding benefits for the original five structures if a district were established. Chmiel further explained that since the project would be considerably different from the original project, they would be needing City Commission approval before continuing and wanted to forward a recommendation from the HRB to the City Commission, communicating their approval of the change in project scope.

West suggested that even if a district didn't result from the project, one could still pursue listing of the individual structures with the research already conducted. Chmiel explained that it was possible, but because the area survey is more general, there may not be enough information to fully support a State or National nomination and additional research and documentation would likely have to be carried out. Banner asked about the timeline and cost of the project. Chmiel explained that the change to the project would go before the City Commission at their next meeting and the final grant application would be submitted by March 18th. Adam added that the budget for the project would not change at this point. West asked if the Landmark Water Tower could be included in a survey. Chmiel explained that the area to be surveyed was very general at this point, but it could be included in a future district if a historic link could be found. Borst noted there were many WPA projects and other features throughout the area creating a historic link. Chmiel concurred. Thompson stated that there would be little interest from the zoo for being a part of a historic district as it could inhibit their operation. Chmiel explained that the city being the property owner has ultimate power in deciding if they want to establish or be a part of a district. Meyer asked who would conduct the research. Chmiel said the City would hire a consultant to do the work using funds from the grant. West asked if the Board should recommend not surveying the zoo since they wouldn't want to be part of a district. Chmiel explained that including the zoo in the survey would likely help the odds of the grant proposal, but the application would clearly state that a district may not result from the project for historical or political reasons. Adam reemphasized that the zoo wouldn't have to be part of a district and that even so, individual listings could be possible in the future. However, the grant application would be much weaker by not including the zoo in the research scope at this time. Morse asked if the cemetery gates could be more easily repaired if it were listed. Chmiel said it would be eligible for tax credits or a grant if it were listed or a contributing structure in a district. Morse inquired about the progress of the Landmark Water Tower nomination. Chmiel said it was being processed, but possibly be part of a future district if a historic link were found. West asked if Denison Circle could be included. Chmiel explained that 51% of property owners have to agree to a district, but it's unsure if that is measured by property area or number of property owners.

Mattingly-Ebert moved that the Historic Resources Board recommended to the City Commission the proposal to survey the city-owned property in the Sunset area, possibly resulting in a historic district instead of the proposal to list individual city-owned structures on the State and National Register of Historic Places. Hager seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

4. 2018-2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Requests.

Chmiel explained that the Board needed to approve the final draft of their CIP requests for next year. As per Tross's request at the last meeting, Chmiel informed the Board that the Bluemont Youth Cabin was not in need of any repairs as this time and didn't need any supporting funds through an HRB CIP request. West moved to approve the requests as written. Meyer seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Updates and Announcements.

Chmiel explained that the Landmark Water Tower Nomination was forwarded to the SHPO and should be on the agenda for the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review meeting in August 2017. It will likely be eligible for the State and National register.

Chmiel explained that the Floral Hall Nomination was forwarded to the SHPO and should be on the agenda for the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review meeting in May 2017. It will likely be eligible for the State, but unlikely the National due to integrity issues. Chmiel explained that if it were ever fully restored it could be eligible for the National Register. Thompson explained that it will likely continue to be used for storage, but uses change all the time.

6. Upcoming Meetings.

Monday, March 27th, 2017.

Monday, April 24th, 2017.

7. Adjourn.