

**MINUTES
CITY OF AMES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Date: November 14th, 2022	Edith Hunter	2023
	Susan Minks	2024
Call to Order: 6:00PM	Angie Kolz	2024
Place: Council Chambers	Mary Jo Winder	2024
	Matt Oakley	2023
Adjournment: 7:27PM	Jesse David Chariton	2023
	Rosemary Dale	2025

[*Absent]

CALL TO ORDER: Susan Minks, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Winder/Kolz) to approve the agenda for the meeting of November 14, 2022.

MOTION PASSED: (7-0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 10, 2022:

MOTION: (Oakley/Hunter) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of October 10, 2022.

MOTION PASSED: (7-0)

PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

CHAPTER 31 UPDATE DISCUSSION

Susan Minks commented that a schedule was presented at the last meeting and sections 10-12 of Chapter 31 regarding the Certificate of Appropriateness were scheduled for discussion this evening. She turned the discussion over to Ms. Kolz.

Angie Kolz, Commission Member, stated the Certificate of Appropriateness is what residents in the Old Town District use to apply to make changes to their property, and is a requirement for those living in that neighborhood. The Commission is reviewing the Certificate of Appropriateness to see what changes may need to be made. There needs to be a balance between usability and livability. Ms. Kolz felt the Commission should consider a couple of questions when reviewing the Certificate of Appropriateness. Those questions are:

1. What are the historic elements that are the core elements worth protecting?
2. Are all character defining features worth protecting, such as siding and roofing?
3. What does not need to be covered, or is there a certain subset that doesn't need to be covered such as decks?
4. What are the key historic elements that need to be covered?

Is the ordinance clear on what is and is not covered and what would require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Kolz said she believes the process needs to be as straightforward as possible for future applicants. When a project for her own property went to the Commission, there were expensive requirements to do so. She said if other property owners in Old Town want to redo their own porches, do they all need to take the same expensive steps.

Mr. Oakley asked if Ms. Kolz was suggesting the Commission discuss those questions next month and she said that was correct. He also asked what a homeowner would do if they did not understand Chapter 31, they don't have clarity on classifications, and they need to go through the Certificate of Appropriateness process.

Mr. Anderson said he recommends residents in Old Town call the Planning Department so staff can discuss with them what would or would not be allowed before work would begin and money is spent. The earlier a resident can speak with staff the more beneficial it would be.

Ms. Winder asked if residents in the Old Town district know to call the Planning Department, or if the Inspections Department alerts Planning staff once a resident in Old Town applies for a building permit. She asked if a resident in Old Town goes to the Inspection Department and wants to add a room to their house if staff does a preliminary review.

Mr. Anderson said both scenarios happen, and they encourage residents to consult with the Inspections Department as well before starting a project.

Ms. Winder said she was trying to discern the number of residents who believe they are prepared for the Certificate of Appropriateness review but get surprised by what the requirements are. She said the Commission wants to avoid someone spending a lot of money then not meeting the requirements to move forward with their project.

Mr. Chariton asked what would happen if someone completed a project without a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Anderson said the person would potentially have to remove the work they had done.

Ms. Dale asked Mr. Anderson how much local realtors know about the Certificate of Appropriateness and if they provide information to homeowners. Mr. Anderson said occasionally someone will come in and say their realtor didn't tell them they had to get a Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Dale asked if there would be a way to reach out to realtors.

Ms. Winder replied that the Commission may need to focus more on public education. She said she wants the code to be easy to administer and easy to understand for residents.

Mr. Anderson said the other residents in the district are helpful as well and they will mention it when someone is purchasing a home in the area.

Ms. Minks asked the Commission to look at the sections with fresh eyes as though they were going to be doing a project themselves and had to use the Chapter 31 guidelines and make suggestions accordingly.

CLG GRANT UPDATE

Ms. Sahlstrom introduced Marian Thompson, who is the principal investigator on the grant. The draft of the grant was submitted to the State and will be posted on the website for public viewing. She said there were 150 properties in the survey. At the time of the grant application, it was anticipated that no more than 107 properties would be inventoried, so it was expanded beyond what had originally been proposed. The site inventory forms include 950 pages, so it is a large document.

The Commission thanked Marian for putting in such hard work and excellent photography.

Ms. Sahlstrom said the State will provide comments back for review within 30 days. Staff will then send in a final draft to the State. Ms. Sahlstrom hoped they could wrap it up yet this calendar year. She said it was the conclusion of the study that these properties would be appropriate for a National Register nomination. Sixty percent of people that attended the neighborhood meetings supported the National Register nomination. She discussed the process for the district to be nominated for the National Register.

Ms. Minks asked if it would be possible to apply for the National Register as well as the local one at the same time.

Mr. Anderson said most communities do a national register nomination then a local one. He said he had not heard of doing both at once.

Ms. Dale asked who would lead the nomination. Ms. Minks said they would discuss as part of the work plan for 2023. Ms. Sahlstrom explained that an informal poll at the Neighborhood Meeting indicated strong support in a National Register nomination. Interest in a local district was not tallied.

Ms. Sahlstrom cautioned to keep the budget in mind. She said the budget was submitted last week even though it doesn't start until July 1st, but it goes through the Council process starting in January.

WORK PLAN FOR 2023

Ms. Minks said within the last few years the State started requiring a Work Plan from the Commission. The Commission must think six months ahead to plan accordingly.

Ms. Minks asked what the Commission would need to do to make a submission to the National Register. Ms. Sahlstrom said there is a grant they could apply for, and they could hire a consultant through the grant. The grant program is called the HRDP Grant that requires a 50/50

match and applications are due in May 2023. HRDP Grants may include a higher dollar amount than a CLG grant.

Ms. Winder said for a National Register submission, the Commission would want to hire someone to do the whole project that is an experienced professional. The integrity criteria are stricter than those for an Intensive Level Survey. For a local district, the residents would make the nomination because they would need a majority agreement since it would have to go in the Zoning code. She described the differences in the processes for National verses local register.

Mr. Oakley asked about the polling at the public meeting. At what point does the neighborhood get to make the decision on what they want to do? Ms. Sahlstrom thought Council would want the neighborhood to make that choice. Ms. Minks thought the submission of the survey and making the history known made it more palpable to residents.

Ms. Minks said educating people on historic resources is important. She asked the Planning staff how soon the Commission needed to finalize the 2023 Work Plan. Following up on the intensive survey might be a good item to have on the work plan. Ms. Winder agreed and said she thought they needed to have another public meeting now that the work is completed. She thought doing that, then doing a designation the following year would be a good idea.

Ms. Sahlstrom asked if she was suggesting the Commission meet with neighborhood in 2023 and do a nomination in 2024. Ms. Winder said that was correct. She said it also depended on what else was on the plan for the year.

Ms. Minks asked if there were requirements for local districts to have annual meetings so residents would know they have an association. Mr. Anderson said he was not aware of any requirements of that nature.

Ms. Dale asked if Ms. Sahlstrom could post the next steps and contact information when she posts the intensive survey report on the website. Ms. Sahlstrom said she could do that.

Mr. Oakley asked if the report could go on the City Facebook page as well to reach more people. Ms. Sahlstrom said they can do that.

Marian Thompson commented that there may be a point where the Commission would want to reach out to individual homeowners in the Chautauqua Park district, because there were a few homes discovered in the intensive survey that may be eligible for an individual nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Minks thanked Ms. Thompson for the information.

Ms. Minks commented that part of the Commission's budget covers fees for its members to attend workshops. Ms. Minks said she would like to look at Ames hosting a workshop with the National Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions. Ms. Winder suggested pursuing hosting a CAMP type event that would get the community involved. Ms. Minks said her idea was that Ames would host the event, and the NAPC would provide the speakers etc. She said they need to check if there is a cost associated with that.

Ms. Minks, she thought there would be things that would carry over into the 2023 Work Plan from the previous year. Ms. Hunter suggested that they could have a history walk next year too. Ms. Minks said that could be something they add.

Ms. Minks also commented on the topic of Economic development. She noted the Commission has done past events and maybe it is time to do one in 2023 regarding available Tax Credits.

Ms. Dale commented on the Sustainability plan and something Ms. Kolz had said about it. Ms. Minks said that would be a good point to have that continue into next year as well.

Ms. Winder said she worries the Climate Action Plan is overlooking the value of historic buildings in favor of new, more efficient ones that would result in structures being demolished. She thought they could educate on things that could be done to make a historic building energy efficient.

Ms. Minks asked Mr. Oakley about the education contact he had mentioned previously. She said if the Commission thinks of anything else to add to let her know.

Ms. Winder said to ensure they have a quorum she suggested if a commission member misses a certain number of meetings in a row, there would be a ramification. Ms. Minks said they also talked about changing rules on how often someone could serve a term on the Commission.

Ms. Minks said final recommendations for the work plan need to be done by the next meeting to make the budget deadline. At the next Commission meeting in December, members should come with bullet points on what they feel should be included in the plan.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION TOPICS

Ms. Minks asked Ms. Hunter and Ms. Dale for an update on their proposed ideas. Ms. Hunter said they hashed out some factors and are looking at who would be involved in a Downtown history walk. She discussed different ideas to make the event engaging. Ms. Dale said she thought it would be important to have collaborative partners, so it doesn't appear they are taking over someone else's project. She suggested they link the topic of architecture to the Architecture Department at Iowa State University. Ms. Hunter said she went to a presentation at the library on the architecture of Main Street, and she would contact Iowa State to inquire about collaborating.

Mr. Chariton said he loved the idea of live actors at certain stations for the event.

Mr. Oakley said the library had a themed book night recently that included attendees dressing up. Ms. Minks said she wondered if there are events already in the works that they can partner with. Ms. Minks asked Ms. Hunter and Ms. Dale to further investigate their event idea and they can discuss it further at the next meeting.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

No comments currently.

STAFF COMMENTS

No comments from staff.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Winder/Chariton) to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 PM.

MOTION PASSED: (7-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.



Susan Minks, Chairperson
Historic Preservation Commission



Laura Colebrooke, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing