

**MINUTES
CITY OF AMES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Date: December 12, 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: 7:40PM	Jesse David Chariton	2023
	Rosemary Dale	2025

[*Absent]

CALL TO ORDER: Mary Jo Winder, Vice-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Dale /Chariton) to approve the agenda for the meeting of December 12, 2022.

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 14, 2022:

MOTION: (Oakley/Hunter) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of November 14, 2022, with revisions.

Ms. Winder said the paragraph about National Register submission on page four (4) should say, "integrity criteria are stricter." The third to last paragraph, when Marion Thompson spoke, she referred to the Chautauqua Park district.

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

CHAPTER 31 UPDATE DISCUSSION

Ms. Winder, Vice-Chairperson, asked if anyone has something they wanted to discuss to start.

Mr. Oakley, Commission Member, asked if Ms. Kolz has recommendations and questions from the previous meeting. Ms. Kolz replied that she has comments on the sections of Chapter 31 on the agenda this evening.

Ms. Winder asked if everyone reviewed the questions that Ms. Kolz mentioned last time. Ms. Winder began the review with Section 31.10(1), (2), and (3). Ms. Kolz said clarification in the Code on minor additions on an owner's lot are not covered under Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Chariton, Commission Member, asked if this applied only for the Old Town District, or if it would apply to a new historic district. Ms. Kolz commented that the first sentence makes it appear that anything on an owner's property or yard could potentially require a Certificate of Appropriateness. She said clarifying what does and does not need require a Certificate of Appropriateness would be beneficial to residents as they decide if they want to move into the neighborhood. Mr. Chariton suggested they further describe below that paragraph what the requirements are.

Ms. Kolz said she was unsure why accessory buildings that are 120 square feet or larger are required to get a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ray Anderson, Planner for the City of Ames, said the 120 square foot requirement is in the Design Guidelines, and anything under 120 sq. feet would not need a Certificate of Appropriateness. A building permit is required for accessory structures that are 120 square feet or larger. No building permit is required if the accessory structure is smaller than 120 square feet. Ms. Kolz thought making that clarification would help whoever is reading the Chapter to understand it.

Ms. Winder questioned if window replacement requires a building permit. She thought the requirements for that should be clarified in Chapter 31.

Ms. Winder commented if the Commission is educating people, they should educate on the Code since that is the law. Ms. Winder said it is important to clarify what requires a building permit and what does not, as well as what requires a Certificate of Appropriateness. She asked Mr. Anderson if the Commission could have the Building Official attend a future meeting so the Commission could ask questions. Mr. Anderson said he would check with the Building Official.

Ms. Kolz asked Ms. Winder if she was wanting to add a permit requirement for siding and windows. Ms. Winder replied she was not since those are in the Building Code. Ms. Winder said she wants improved clarification on what is required from property owners.

Mr. Chariton asked if this issue was addressed in Section 31.10(2) regarding Alteration of an exterior part of a building or structure. He believes that would include window and siding requirements. Anything not triggered by the building permit process should have another trigger that it needs a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Kolz said that anything listed in the Design Guidelines requires a Certificate of Appropriateness. Windows do have Design Guidelines. A statement could be included at the start of Chapter 31, "Anything that has Design Guidelines needs a Certificate of Appropriateness." It could get tricky with an update to a visual aid to go with the Design Guidelines regarding what is required and what would be recommended. Ms. Winder said they could distinguish between those two things in the visual aid.

Mr. Oakley said he thought Section 31.10(4) addresses this as well. As one reads the entire section top to bottom, it makes sense, but changing the order of it may help with clarification. He

suggested an order for listing the Design Guidelines. It is important to know the boundaries and how it applies to the rules.

Ms. Kolz asked if that could be achieved by references or moving the section up. Mr. Oakley thought either option would work.

Ms. Winder asked if there were general design guidelines or if they were all included with the district and Landmarks. Mr. Anderson said the design guidelines apply to structures within a historic district and landmarks and are broken down further for Design Guidelines for Alterations and New Construction. There are design criteria based on the architectural styles identified in the Old Town District. Ms. Winder said she wondered if there would be conflict between the Design Guidelines and the Design Criteria.

Eloise Sahlstrom, Planner for the City of Ames, said there has not been conflict between the Design Criteria and the Design Guidelines. Mr. Anderson agreed since the Design Criteria are based on architectural style. Ms. Winder asked if the Design Guidelines are more general and the Design Criteria and more specific. Mr. Anderson replied that was correct.

Mr. Chariton said he thought Section 31.10(4) would make sense if it were placed under Section 31.10(1).

Ms. Winder asked if rearranging paragraphs is going to be okay with the Legal Department. Mr. Anderson replied that the Legal Department might have their own interpretation of how it should be organized or flow.

Mr. Oakley said so far, they are not suggesting changing the meaning but the flow of the chapter.

Ms. Kolz said having an itemized list at the beginning of Section 31.10 describing what needs a Certificate of Appropriateness might be helpful. Once the Commission has prepared a list of all suggested changes, the Planning staff could take the proposed changes to the Legal Department for review.

Mr. Anderson said the recommended changes would go to the Planning staff to prepare a report for the City Council. The Legal Department would be involved with writing the ordinance for City Council to adopt any changes to the regulations.

Ms. Winder asked if everyone was comfortable with what they had discussed so far.

Ms. Winder commented that under Section 31.10(2)(a) a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be permitted if an architectural feature has deteriorated to the point that it must be replaced. She asked if a property owner wanted to remove a deteriorated porch, would it be required to be replaced?

Mr. Anderson said replacement of the porch would not be required. However, steps would be necessary to address any safety standards in the Building Code. The steps, or a new porch, would require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission.

Mr. Oakley believes the text states that a Certificate of Appropriateness would be granted for demolishing an Architectural feature and that if it were going to be replaced, it would need to go to the Commission for approval.

Ms. Sahlstrom said it does not say an owner can demolish a porch and not replace it.

Ms. Dale said the word "must" makes the difference in the text.

Ms. Winder said the Commission should look at it further since it is not clear.

Mr. Chariton believes that reading Section 31.10(2)(a), (b), and (c) together clarifies it.

Ms. Winder said under Section 31.10(3), regarding a new principal structure, she objects that a new principal structure must represent one of the styles. The Secretary of Interior Standards do not advocate for that. They say that new construction should be compatible but does not have to mimic a style. She said she just wanted to call attention to it, but the Commission does not have to discuss it tonight.

Mr. Chariton asked what the reason behind the Secretary of Interior Standard is. Ms. Winder said they do not want to give a false sense of history and it encourages modern architecture. Mr. Oakley asked what the definition is of compatible and what are the guidelines for those.

Ms. Kolz commented that there might be a push for a granny cottage to help people age in place so this could become more relevant.

Ms. Winder read aloud what Section 31.10(5) said regarding "Demolition." Deterioration is not a reason given for demolition of existing structures. She thought it would be prohibited unless the deterioration has reached a level that would be economically unfeasible to repair. She does not see anything that covers it.

Ms. Kolz said Section 31.10(5)(b) includes "Determination of Economic Hardship." Ms. Winder said that does address it, but it does not state it outright.

Mr. Oakley said it comes down to whether the cost is too much to be economically feasible for the owner.

Mr. Oakley asked for an explanation of the requirement that approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness is effective for one year from the date of approval by the Commission, or by the Department of Planning and Housing in the case of administrative approvals, as stated in Section 31.11(5).

Mr. Anderson said the Commission can grant extensions. If it is something the Commission approved, it must come back to the Commission for approval again. The Planning Director can only extend things that were originally approved by the Planning Director. Mr. Anderson gave examples of what the Planning Director could approve. A one-year extension may be granted upon finding that the pertinent codes have not changed since the original approval.

Ms. Kolz said in the Certificate of Appropriateness application it says one thing required is a site plan and that requires a survey. She asked where that requirement came from.

Mr. Anderson said the survey does not have to be done by a licensed professional. It is important to know where existing and proposed structures/additions are located on the property as part of the review of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Winder said she is not clear on what items go directly to Planning staff and what goes to the Commission.

Mr. Anderson said the administrative approvals process is described in Section 31.11(1). City staff have the authority to approve alterations to existing structures and the new construction of fences and retaining walls. All new construction must go to the Commission for approval. Further discussion ensued on various kinds of projects that would qualify for staff approval verses Commission approval.

Ms. Winder asked what the procedure is when someone brings in an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Is there a time limit when it would go to the Commission. Mr. Anderson said the application must be received a minimum of two weeks before the next Commission meeting to have enough time to process it. There are times when the application may be needed three weeks prior to the Commission meeting for projects that are more complex.

Mr. Oakley asked if they had a 30-day approval period. Mr. Anderson responded that applications which have not received final administrative approval within thirty days from the date of acceptance of the application due to any unresolved dispute as to the administrative interpretation of the regulations shall be submitted to the Commission for consideration.

Ms. Kolz said the process for the timeline is on the website. Section 31.12 is the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Those are the Federal Guidelines.

Ms. Kolz said she missed applicability of a Certificate of Appropriateness. She says it talks about things for a contributing structure or lot with a contributing structure. She asked how noncontributing structures are dealt with in Chapter 31.

Mr. Anderson responded that a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for noncontributing structures.

Ms. Dale asked about the three properties in Chautauqua Park that could be nominated for the National Register. Ms. Sahlstrom said there is a map that shows contributing, noncontributing and new structures as well as garages.

Ms. Dale asked whether it is typical of someone buying a house in the historic district that they would ask the City if the house were a Contributing Structure.

Ms. Kolz responded that it is not common that someone would know to ask that question.

Ms. Sahlstrom responded that is why we encourage people to check with City staff prior to deciding to purchase a house in the local historic district.

FINALIZE WORK PLAN FOR 2023

Ms. Winder said Staff sent a draft of the proposed 2023 Plan. She asked if anyone had any comments.

Ms. Dale asked who did the draft. Ms. Sahlstrom said Susan Minks, Chairperson for the Commission, sent in notes, and she combined them with notes from Planning staff. Ms. Sahlstrom said she then drafted the report based on those notes. She said the intent tonight is to clarify what the work plan is. She suggested they start the review at the beginning of the plan.

Ms. Dale commented under bullet one it says collaborate with the Ames History Museum and Collaborate with Iowa State is struck out. She asked if that was too specific and if they should replace it with Downtown Ames instead. Ms. Hunter suggested they leave the text as it is. Ms. Winder said under bullet two, the Commission discussed holding meeting(s) to pursue National Register or Local Landmark District Overlay Designation and to present the options to the neighborhood. She said the Commission needs to present both options and she would like that to be added to the 2023 Work Plan.

Ms. Sahlstrom said it was discussed at the neighborhood meeting what the differences were between a National Register nomination and a Local district, and they did a poll on what residents thought of a National Register nomination. She does not think the neighborhood understands what their role would be because the Commission has not told them. She said the Planning staff and Commission can pursue a National Register nomination.

Ms. Winder said for the neighborhood to get a consensus of what they want they need an opportunity to attend an information session. Mr. Oakley asked Ms. Winder if what she was suggesting was

Ms. Winder said under bullet three the wording should say provide information on tax credits rather than reach out to owners in the Old Town District. Mr. Chariton said he thought this was about Chapter 31. Ms. Kolz said she thought it was even more general and was about just giving out information on what the neighborhood is. Mr. Oakley commented that Ms. Sahlstrom had said to be general to give room for something specific in the future. The Commission decided to not change the wording.

Ms. Winder said Ms. Kolz discussed going through neighborhood association to inform owners about Historic Preservation information. Ms. Kolz said she was losing track of what the suggestion was. Ms. Winder clarified she was referring to giving each homeowner in Old Town specific information on their property. Ms. Kolz said an article was submitted for the most recent Homeowners Association Newsletter and it focuses on tax credits. She thought the Commission could have something in each publication of the newsletter that addressed different information useful to owners. Ms. Winder asked if they wanted to list that as something specific in the Work Plan. Ms. Kolz said she did not think that was necessary.

Ms. Kolz said she thought the whole plan looks good. Mr. Oakley agreed.

Ms. Dale asked if the Commission usually adjusts the work plan halfway through the year. Ms. Sahlstrom said they do not.

MOTION: (Chariton /Oakley) to approve the 2023 Work Plan

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

COMMUNITY EDUCATION TOPICS

Ms. Dale said Ms. Hunter made all the progress this month. Ms. Hunter said tomorrow she and Ms. Dale are meeting with the Ames Chamber of Commerce and the Ames History Museum to discuss what they are envisioning for the Downtown History Walk.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

There were no by Commission members.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Anderson discussed items that will be on the agenda for the next Commission meeting on January 9, 2023. The 2022 CLG Annual Report will be on the agenda for review by the Commission. He also noted the Commission will be deciding whether to have a Historic Preservation Awards Program this spring. A National Register nomination for the Cranford Apartment Building, at 103 Stanton Avenue, has been received. The Commission will review the nomination at the meeting in January.


Ms. Sahlstrom described the process for the Historic Preservation Awards.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Chariton/Oakley) to adjourn the meeting at 7:40PM.

MOTION PASSED: (6-0)

The Meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.



Mary Jo Winder, Vice
Chairperson
Historic Preservation Commission



Laura Colebrooke, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing