

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF PELLA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
JANUARY 13, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Kermode called the Historic Preservation Commission to order in the City Hall Conference Room at 5:30 p.m. Members present were: Don André, Bruce Boertje, Rhonda Kermode, Chris Meyers, and Lila Turnbull. Staff present: Finance Director Corey Goodenow and Zoning Administrator Bryce Johnson. One member of the public was present.

**Annual Chair/Vice-Chair Elections**

Kermode was elected Chairperson and Turnbull was elected Vice-Chair for 2020.

**APPROVAL OF TENTATIVE AGENDA**

**Motion** by Boertje, second by D. André to approve the tentative agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion** by Boertje, second by D. André to approve the minutes from the November 11, 2019 meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Update on the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District Overlay Zone Application**

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has reviewed the historic district application submitted by the City in December 2019. SHPO has since provided a response. It is important to note that, in their response, SHPO is requesting a reason for why the proposed boundaries of the local Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District do not align with those of the neighborhood's National Historic District. Therefore, the purpose of this agenda item is to discuss the reason for the boundary change so SHPO can complete its final review of this application. Once this information has been provided to staff from the Commission, a letter outlining the reasoning for such will be sent to SHPO for their final review.

The Commission discussed 906 Independence Street, which belongs to Central College, and 503 Main Street, 704 and 706 Independence Street. These properties were included in the National Historic District but was not included within the local Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District overlay zone application. Kermode suggested that the Commission reach out to owners of these four properties about inclusion within the local historic district overlay zone and report back at the Commission's next meeting.

Kermode reported she confirmed with SHPO that, if the City becomes a Certified Local Government (CLG), language referencing the *Dutch Residential Design Manual* in Ordinance 927 of the City's code will need to be removed as it will not comply with national standards.

## **OTHER BUSINESS/WORK SESSION**

### **Other**

Kermode reported that Paula Mohr and Sara André with SHPO plan to do a presentation on the CLG program for the City Council on February 4, 2020. Finance Director Corey Goodenow stated he would confirm that the meeting will have the presentation on the agenda.

Kermode also reported that, after becoming a CLG, the City would be eligible to apply for certain grants that could potentially provide funds for projects, such as the Pella Community Center.

### **Discuss Opportunities to Preserve the Historic Character of the Central Business District**

Kermode said there have been some recent changes to buildings in the Central Business District (CBD) that are concerning in regards to the preservation of their historic integrity. The Main Street Iowa program, administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority, is an option for downtown business owners seeking grants to fund work on their buildings. Goodenow shared with the Commission his experience with the Main Street Iowa program in another community.

D. André stressed that approval for these programs must be given prior to beginning work. He gave an example of a local business owner downtown who removed plaster from walls before reaching out to the State for grant money and was told that they were not eligible since work had already begun.

Turnbull said there may be some challenges in preserving the historic integrity of buildings that had Dutch fronts added to them that were not part of the original structure. Boertje suggested providing information to the business owners letting them know of funding opportunities available to them through the State.

### **Update from Bruce Boertje on the Compilation of an Inventory of Pella's Historic Homes**

Boertje reported that he has compiled an inventory of the buildings in Pella built prior to 1960, which total around 1,250. The pre-1900 buildings total around 150. Zoning Administrator Bryce Johnson will work on mapping these properties and color-coding them by decade.

### **Other**

D. André mentioned he has been in contact with State Historical Society of Iowa Board of Trustees member Lori Witt, who will be providing him with more information on grants that

are available for landmark designation plaques and signage for historic districts through the Iowa Historic Resource Development Program.

Adjourned at 6:21 p.m.