

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF PELLA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
APRIL 17, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Kermode called the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to order in the Public Safety Complex at 5:04 p.m. Members present were: Don André, Bruce Boertje, Lorinda Bradley, Rhonda Kermode, and Lila Turnbull; absent: none. Staff present: Zoning Analyst Jared Parker, Local Programming Coordinator Monte Goodyk, and the Deputy City Clerk. Twenty-six members of the public attended the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF TENTATIVE AGENDA**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion** by André, second by Boertje to approve the minutes from the March 13, 2023 meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Consider a Demolition Permit Application for 906 Independence St., Located Within the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District (Tabled at the March 13, 2023 Meeting)**

Central College submitted an application to demolish the building at 906 Independence St. due to extensive damage, which is located within the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District. The building would be considered a contributing structure and, as such, the building needs to be reviewed under the standards required by code. The application was tabled by the Commission at its March 13, 2023 meeting. Kermode and André met on March 14, 2023, to tour the building so that André and Kermode could see the extent of the damage firsthand and help determine whether approving the demolition permit would be appropriate or whether the structure could reasonably be salvaged.

*As The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* do not have any guidance on demolishing a structure that has received significant interior damage, it does not provide a clear path for what would be acceptable or unacceptable. Therefore, staff had no recommendation.

Central College Director of Facilities Maintenance Craig Roose was present to speak in favor of the demolition permit and to answer questions from the Commission.

Kermode and André reported touring the home with Roose and noted that the damage is to the addition and that the original part of the structure is in good shape and appears to be structurally sound. They said their preference is for preservation and not demolition. Kermode mentioned that City of Pella Mayor Don DeWaard offered to reach out to Central College administration on behalf of the Commission to facilitate dialogue regarding preservation.

**Motion** by Boertje, second by André to table the demolition permit for 906 Independence St. until after the Central College Board of Trustees has met and there has been dialogue between Central College and the Commission. Motion carried 5-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Consider a Motion Supporting the Potential Preservation Project Between Central College and the Pella Preservation Trust for the House at 906 Independence St.**

Boertje asked the HPC to consider a motion supporting the potential preservation project between Central College and the Pella Preservation Trust for the house at 906 Independence St.

**Motion** by Boertje, second by André to support a potential preservation project between Central College and the Pella Preservation Trust to preserve the house at 906 Independence St. Motion carried 5-0.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Consider an Application to Form the Scholte Garden Historic District**

HPC members directed the Planning and Zoning Department to file an application to form a historic district. The name of the proposed district is the Scholte Garden Historic District, which generally includes properties along Main Street and Broadway Street as the east/west border and properties between Lincoln Street and the alley immediately north of Washington Street as the north/south border.

Chapter 165.13.5 of the Pella City Code specifies the requirements to form a historic district. In order for the City to consider an application for a historic district, the application must contain the following:

1. Signatures of the owners of at least 50% of the total number of parcels of real estate within the proposed district, excluding parcels owned by government bodies.
2. Signatures of the owners of at least 50% of the total public street frontage area within the proposed district, excluding public street frontage abutting government property.
3. Supporting documentation so that the Commission can evaluate whether the application to form a historic district meets the ordinance criteria.

As currently submitted, the application includes the support of 30 of 47 (63.8%) property owners included in the proposed district, which consists of 1,546.5 feet of the 2,690.1 feet (57.5%) of the street frontage in the proposed district.

If the Scholte Garden Historic District is approved and formally established, the following activities would be subject to design review standards:

1. New construction of single or two-family homes or new accessory buildings for any single family or two-family homes in the historic districts.
2. Additions to existing structures in the historic districts which require a building permit.
3. Alterations to existing structures in the historic districts which require a building permit or demolition permit.
4. Alterations to existing structures in the historic districts which do not require a building permit or demolition permit but are visible from a public street or front of the structure do not require historic review; however, voluntary historic review is encouraged for such alterations. These types of alterations are also exempt from the certificate of appropriateness requirements. Other alterations not visible from the public street or front of the structure, and which do not otherwise need a building permit, shall be exempt from historic review.

For properties with base zoning which permits multi-family, commercial, or other non-residential uses, design review would then be conducted by the Community Development Committee first and then these same properties would also be subject to design review under the proposed historic district overlay zone.

If approved, City Code requires the HPC to use the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" for structures within the historic district overlay zone. This differs from the standards in the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District where non-contributing structures are reviewed using the "Dutch Residential Design Review District Guidelines". The reason for this change is to conform with Certified Local Government program requirements.

It is important to point out the City Code provides a process for appeal. Any person aggrieved by any decision of the HPC regarding an application for historic review in a historic district may appeal the action to the City Council.

If approved, City Code requires public hearings and review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. This process follows the same requirements as all zoning amendments. The proposed historic district is tentatively scheduled for public hearings and consideration at the May 27, 2023 Planning and Zoning meeting and the June 19, 2023 City Council meeting.

In summary, the City has received an application to form the Scholte Garden Historic District. The application meets the minimum application requirements for consideration and has been approved by the appropriate parties at the State of Iowa.

Convened **Public Hearing** on the local historic district application. No written comments were received. Wayne Stienstra, the owner of two properties in the proposed district, spoke in favor of the application and the protections that this district would provide. Scott De Penning questioned the requirement to use the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings." Boertje explained that the two apartment complexes in the proposed district are considered non-contributing structures.

Jade Dix said two home remodel projects, at 515 Broadway St. and 307 Main St. did not require building permits, so would not have been subject to HPC review. However, he is concerned that if the homes had been new builds, they may not have been approved by the Commission. He questioned whether the standards for homes in local historic districts will be too high. He said the owners have received many compliments on the two homes he mentioned. He asked whether there is a way to remove one's property from a historical district once it is included in one. He also asked whether there are any local contractors in Pella, aside from Stienstra, who specialize in historic preservation and could perform the necessary work on properties located within a historic district.

Kermode said if the homes at 515 Broadway St. and 307 Main St. burned down, they would likely get approval from the HPC to be rebuilt as they look today. However, she said retaining the original siding on those homes would save money and save waste from going to the landfill.

André said homeowners can learn how to perform some of the work on the historic homes themselves, such as restoring old windows. He said there are contractors in town who can perform this work. Boertje said the intent of the local historic district is to preserve the character of the neighborhood and is not meant to be an onerous process. Tax credits are also available to homeowners. Kermode said that the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa can help homeowners if they have questions about the tax credit process. André noted that the Commission has considered two building permits for the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District and both were approved by the Commission.

In response to a question, Zoning Analyst Jared Parker said staff would consult the City Attorney on the process to remove a local historic district overlay zone. Parker also explained that the Dutch Residential Design Guidelines apply to residential properties and anything else would follow the City's Architectural Design Guidelines

Bill White, a property owner, asked about a hypothetical situation where he suffers a loss on his property and an insurance adjuster may disagree with the Commission on how to remedy it. Kermode said she would need to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa. However, if a home burns down and needs to be replaced, the homeowner would not be required to rebuild the exact same product with historic materials; it would just need to fit in with the character of the neighborhood and be architecturally appropriate.

Dix asked how they prevent demolition by neglect of the homeowner. Parker said enforcement is primarily handled by City staff.

Rachel Tiskevics asked whether homes in the local historic district would be provided with plaques that indicate the local historic district status. Boertje informed her that street signs will be placed on the corners of the district to identify it has the Scholte Garden Historic District, but plaques for individual homes will not be provided. However, a homeowner is welcome to affix a plaque to their home if they so choose.

**Motion** by André, second by Bradley to close the **Public Hearing** as no further comments were received. Motion carried 5-0.

**Motion** by André, second by Boertje to approve the application for the Scholte Garden Historic District. Motion carried 5-0.

Parker explained that property owners will receive additional notification once public hearings are scheduled for the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council meetings.

## **OTHER BUSINESS/WORK SESSION**

### **Work Session to Discuss the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office's 2023 Preserve Iowa Summit**

Kermode reported that the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office's 2023 Preserve Iowa Summit is scheduled for June 1 through June 3, 2023 in Sioux City, Iowa. She said she plans to attend. She said the City agreed to pay the registration fee for a couple of Commissioners to attend in 2022. Staff will check with Planning and Zoning Director Gerald Buydos to confirm what funds are available.

### **Work Session to Discuss the Certified Local Government Program**

Kermode said she spoke with City Administrator Mike Nardini regarding removal of the Dutch Design Guidelines from the historic overlay zone ordinance so that the City could be eligible to join the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. She also spoke with Mayor DeWaard about it and it will hopefully be scheduled for discussion on a City Council agenda in the near future.

### **Work Session to Discuss the Historic Fire Station Hose Tower**

André wanted to have further discussion on the historic fire station hose tower. As background, staff received the following information from Kim Mulch, the architect hired to evaluate the costs of renovating the hose tower. This would include the following activities:

1. Siding and sheathing demolition and haul-off

2. Sheathing, weatherproof building wrap, siding, and trim installation
3. Painting & caulking

For the activities above, in the opinion of the architect, it would cost approximately \$30,000; however, with bonding, insurance, and bidding costs, as well as other required costs due to regulatory requirements, the cost would likely be approximately \$75,000. It is worth noting that this does not include any structural work that should become apparent once the cladding is removed. It is also important to note that if this were to be combined with other work on site, this portion would probably be reduced.

Kermode reported she received a proposal from Jennifer Price regarding the cost to place the historic fire station on the National Register of Historic Places. She will forward the proposal to staff. André said Local Programming Coordinator Monte Goodyk was able to take photos of the hose tower which show increased deterioration.

### **Work Session to Discuss the Proposed McClatchey Mill Historic District**

Boertje wanted to have further discussion on the formation of a future potential historic overlay zone called the McClatchey Mill Historic District. This proposed district is located between Lincoln Street and Columbus Street and East First Street and East Second Street and would include 39 properties. Boertje asked whether the Commission thought additional properties should be added to this district, as the informational flyers he created have not yet been mailed to homeowners. The Commission discussed possibly walking through the district either in pairs or by themselves to view homes in the proposed district. The Commission decided to have staff wait on mailing the flyers until the Commission has made a decision on whether to add additional properties to the proposed district.

Duane Rempe was present and suggested the Commission consider adding a historic district on Washington Street.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The next HPC meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2023.

Adjourned at 6:59 p.m.