

**8/1/11 - Monday, August 1, 2011**

**EAU CLAIRE  
LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**Meeting of August 1, 2011**

Members Present: Jenny Ebert, Katrinka Bourne, Patrick Kurtenbach, Carrie Ronnander, Karen Nusbaum, Kathy Mitchell

Members Absent: Barbara Lozar

Minutes. The minutes of the July 11, 2011 meeting were approved as written.

The meeting was chaired by Jenny Ebert.

1. Appointment of Interim Vice-chairperson.

The Commission discussed appointing an interim vice-chairperson until Barbara Lozar returns to the Commission.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Kathy Mitchell moved to appoint Katrinka Bourne as the interim vice-chairperson until Barbara Lozar returns to the Commission. Pat Kurtenbach seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

2. Recommendation on Proposed Baseball Hall of Fame/Office Building South of the Carson Park Baseball Stadium.

Pat Ivory provided an overview of a request from the Eau Claire Express Baseball team to construct a building to the south of the Carson Park Baseball Stadium. The building would be utilized for a Baseball Hall of Fame, baseball museum, restrooms, ticket sales, and offices for the Eau Claire Express.

The Eau Claire Express made an initial presentation to the City Council in June regarding the project. The City Council referred the request to the Landmarks Commission, Waterways and Parks Commission, and Plan Commission for input on the project.

The baseball stadium is a designated local landmark building; however, the land to the south of the stadium is not part of the landmark designation. Therefore, the Commission is not required to review and take action on a Certificate of Appropriateness for the building; rather provide input in the form of a recommendation to the City Council who will make the final decision as to whether to approve the project.

Pat also informed the Commission that the baseball stadium is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the listing includes the area to the south of the stadium where the proposed building is to be located. Since this property is owned by the City, State law requires that the City make a finding as to whether the proposed building would preserve the historic character of the property.

Plans for the project were reviewed by the Commission, including site plans, and building elevations. The building would be one-story in height and have a pre-cast concrete wall panel exterior. Its dimensions are approximately 126 feet in length and 30 feet in width, with a plaza constructed between the stadium and building. It would be constructed approximately 40 to 45 feet south of the stadium. There are a number of trees in this area, eleven of which would have to be removed for the project. Thirteen replacement trees would be added to address the loss of the trees. Parking configurations to the south and southeast of the stadium would also change.

Mr. Bill Anderson, the architect for the project, spoke in support. Mr. Anderson discussed the design of the building noting that the building is designed to present a low, horizontal wall appearance from the south that would be approximately 18' higher than the fences along the south side of the bleachers, or approximately 12' in height. Its design does not attempt to replicate the design of the stadium, but rather be complimentary to the stadium and be understated relative to the stadium design. The exterior walls will be smooth pre-cast concrete with recessed horizontal articulation to emphasize the low and linear appearance. The color will match the lightest shades of the stadium's stonework.

Mr. Bill Rowlett, owner of the Eau Claire Express, spoke in support. Mr. Rowlett indicated that the building would serve multiple purposes, including: restrooms, ticket sales, the Baseball Hall of Fame, and offices for the Express. He added that restrooms in the stadium cannot be used in the early spring until the water is turned on; whereas, water would be available in this building year-round. Ticket sales would be shifted to this building instead of at the stadium, which would improve pedestrian circulation and security issues.

The Commission asked whether other site locations had been considered and whether the baseball museum portion of the building would be better located near the Chippewa Valley Museum. Mr. Rowlett stated that they had looked at multiple alternative locations, including incorporating the building as part of the replacement of the bleachers. However, none of these options accommodated all of their needs or placed the building too far away from the stadium and the circulation of stadium users. He also added that they preferred to have the baseball museum close to the stadium, rather than somewhat far removed near the Chippewa Valley Museum.

The Commission discussed the proposed building. Jenny Ebert noted her concerns about the location of the proposed building in front of the stadium. Several Commission members agreed, indicating the construction of the building at this location would have a negative effect on the historic character of the stadium, noting that the area surrounding the stadium to the south and west contribute to the historic importance of the stadium. Jenny Ebert discussed the importance of maintaining those views of the stadium, particularly from Carson Park Drive.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Katrinka Bourne moved that the Commission not support the proposal as submitted, noting that the building would negatively affect the historic character of the baseball stadium and that the applicant should explore alternative locations of the

building to the east, west, or northwest that would not block or obscure views of the stadium. Pat Kurtenbach seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

### 3. Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness to Replace Steps and Add Hand Rails at 606 Fourth Avenue.

Pat Ivory provided an overview of an application for Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Foote, at 606 Fourth Avenue, to undertake repairs to their porch floor and porch stairways for their house located at 606 Fourth Avenue. The property is a pivotal property within the Randall Park Historic Landmark District. The work would include replacement of the stairway on the west side of the house, replacement of the stairway on the east side of the house to the south (left), and repairs to the stairway on the east side of the house to the north (right).

As required by code, hand railings will have to be installed on the stairways that are being completely replaced (stairway facing the west side of the house and the stairway on the east side of the house facing Fourth Avenue; to the left as someone is looking at the house from the street).

Pat reviewed the information submitted for the project, including photographs of the stairways, and a sketch of the proposed railings. The existing railing on the porch is approximately 2<sup>TM</sup> in height, and this railing will not be changed. The hand railings for the stairways will be greater than 2<sup>TM</sup> feet in height both due to code requirements and ability to use the railings. Therefore, the stairway railing will attach to the porch post approximately 8 above the porch railing.

Mr. and Mrs. Foote would prefer to not install the hand railings for the one stairway facing east that is to the right as someone is looking at the house from the street. This stairway will only be repaired rather than completely replaced. Therefore, the building code does not require installation of a hand railing.

Mr. Jon Sandvig, the contractor for the project, discussed the repair and replacement of the stairs. Mr. Sandvig indicated that the new handrails would replicate the design of the porch railing, except that the height would be between 30 to 38 and that the spacing of the spindles would be closer to comply with the building code.

Mr. and Mrs. Foote were present at the meeting and spoke in support.

Katrinka Bourne discussed the design of the hand rails and questioned whether a simpler design that did not replicate the existing porch railings might be preferable since the height would differ. Mrs. Foote indicated that their neighbors at the southwest corner of Broadway and Fourth Avenue had a similar issue with their stairway railing and chose to construct the hand railing to replicate the porch railing, and the design worked well.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Kathy Mitchell moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted. Karen Nusbaum seconded the motion. The motion carried with Katrinka Bourne voting no.

### 4. Update on Landmark Activities and Properties.

A. Update on 310 Lake Street. It was noted that the roof trusses had been installed at 310 Lake Street. Commission members indicated that the work appeared to be progressing quite well. The Commission noted that they would like to tour the inside of the building when the framing is completed.

B. Commission Title Change Status. The Commission continued their discussion regarding whether they should change the title of the Commission as recommended in the City<sup>TM</sup>'s Comprehensive Plan. It was noted that at the March 14th meeting, the Commission had initiated the process of changing the Commission<sup>TM</sup>'s title to the Eau Claire Heritage Commission, but moved to reconsider this at their June meeting. Commission members reviewed titles of other Commissions that they had found from their research since the previous meeting. Commission members concluded that the title of the Commission as the œLandmarks Commission was still appropriate and should not be changed.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Kathy Mitchell moved that the Commission not consider a change in the title of the Commission. Pat Kurtenbach seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

C. Historic Preservation Presentation. Pat Ivory updated the Commission regarding the September 27th presentation of Frank Butterfield from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The presentation will focus on the economic benefits of historic preservation and be held at the Chippewa Valley Museum.

D. Update from the Eau Claire Historic Preservation Foundation. Pat Kurtenbach provided an update of Foundation activities.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Patrick Kurtenbach, Secretary