



**Landmarks Commission
Minutes
September 9, 2024**

Members Present: Raivo Balciunas, Jenny Ebert, Robert Gough, Aaron Brewster, Rick Schemm

Members Absent: Greg Kocken, Dave Barnes

Staff Present: Peter Baumgartner, Ned Noel

The following items were on the agenda:

- 1. Call to order**
Chair Ebert called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.
- 2. Roll call**
Roll was taken and a quorum was present.
- 3. Approval of 3/4/24 Minutes**
Member Schemm moved to approve, and Member Gough seconded. Motion passed with Brewster abstaining as he was not part of landmarks at the time of the last meeting.
- 4. Local Landmarking of Forest Hill Cemetery Discussion**
Mr. Baumgartner gave an overview of past discussion, went over the nomination form and asked for direction.

Brewster asked if you could mark graves of residents who had their houses landmarked. Member Gough said no, it would potentially damage the historic integrity of the site. He instead suggested that a brochure could potentially be made to highlight the people who are buried there that also had landmarked houses.

Member Brewster made a motion to proceed with the nomination to locally landmark Forest Hill Cemetery, seconded by Member Schemm.

During the discussion, Baumgartner brought up several items that need to be hashed out yet, such as the boundary of the landmarked area and the delineation of which activities would and would not need to go before Landmarks. When discussing the boundary potentially excluding Plank Hill, Member Gough stated that the hill is essential to the cemetery and if it isn't included it may not get nationally landmarked.

After the Commission directed staff to return with a more refined boundary map and the policy on what they would and would not review, Members Brewster and Schemm withdrew their motion.

- 5. CLG Grant Letter of Intent**
Mr. Baumgartner introduced the topic of the CLG Grant, noting that the letter of intent to apply is due on the 13th and that it currently lays out seeking a grant for a

consultant to aid in nationally landmarking Forest Hill Cemetery. Baumgartner then asked if there were any other potential items that they might want to seek a grant for, and none were suggested.

With no further suggestions, the Landmarks Commission directed staff to submit the letter in a motion made by Member Balciunas, seconded by Member Schemm, and approved unanimously.

6. Historic Preservation Foundation Q&A on the Proposed Zoning Code

Mr. Noel gave an overview of the ordinance overhaul. He then went over the existing landmarks district plans and regulations before covering various aspects of the proposed ordinance. During the discussion, the following things were discussed and answered:

- Will the existing historic district plans be brought into the code? They will be referenced becoming zoning overlays.
- Will the setbacks stay the same? They are proposed to be reduced to allow for more flexibility and reinvestment into older structures.
- How many infill lots are available within Eau Claire? Estimated that no more than 100 within city limits and maybe four in the Third Ward.
- If an art deco structure with a flat roof burned down within the Third Ward, could it be rebuilt? Under the current ordinance it could be rebuilt as is if the permit is pulled within one year.
- There were questions on how adapting to modern materials and solar could be done on landmarked properties. The property owner/contractor would need to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA).
- Could the property owner change the internal use of the structure. They can as long as it doesn't impact the exterior of the structure.
- There was some concern on homeowners being able to modify the interior of a landmarked structure without any review method by landmarks.
- Schemm noted that people he knows are concerned about the gentle density. Ned explained the testing and sensitivity for infill projects and how they could be more compatible.
- A representative of Third Ward Neighborhood stated there was questions about how many unrelated people could live in a structure. Staff responded that it is a discussion to be had, also that it is it works a bit differently when it is in a multi-family building using bedrooms.
- Is there any consideration in the plans for short-term rentals? It is a legal question that staff are currently in the process of addressing.
- A representative of Third Ward Neighborhood expressed their thoughts on how the properties within the Third Ward are legacy properties for the entire city. They also expressed a desire to have more enforcement.
- A representative of Third Ward Neighborhood noted that the more people living in a house will cause more wear and tear on it. They also expressed a desire to have the City carefully consider dwelling conversions in older neighborhoods as they can spread. They concluded by stating that historic neighborhoods are good business for cities.

- A representative of Third Ward Neighborhood stated that the proposed ordinance is different as various items that go before neighborhood associations and Plan Commission would not be required to in the future. Staff responded that the new objective standards should allay many of these concerns of subjective input.
- A representative of the Third Ward Neighborhood asked if they would be noticed of changes of use? As it is proposed now they would only be notified if there was a requested change in zoning. One representative stated that they wanted it codified to notify them of any proposed change in use.

It was ultimately decided to table the item to bring it back for further discussion at the next meeting.

7. Future agenda items and announcements

- None.

8. Adjournment

Chair Ebert called for adjournment of the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raivo Balciunas", written over a horizontal line.

Raivo Balciunas
Secretary