

**EAU CLAIRE
LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

Meeting of January 5, 2015

Members Present: Katrinka Bourne, Ken Ziehr, Carrie Ronnander, Dave Strobel, Brady Foust, John Mann

Members Absent: Jane Seymour Kunick

Minutes: The minutes of the December 8, 2014, meeting were approved as written.

The meeting was chaired by Katrinka Bourne and called to order at 4:30 p.m.

Election of Officers. The following officers were appointed by the Commission:

- A. Chairperson.** John Mann moved to nominate Katrinka Bourne as Chairperson. Brady Foust seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.
- B. Vice-Chairperson.** John Mann moved to nominate Carrie Ronnander as Vice-Chairperson. Brady Foust seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.
- C. Secretary.** John Mann moved to nominate Jane Seymour Kunick as Secretary. Brady Foust seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

- 1. Consideration of Request to Demolish 1004 Menomonie Street – the Kaiser Lumber Company Office.** The Commission continued their discussion from the December meeting to consider a request submitted by James Rolbiecki (DMB Distinguished Multiply Buildings, LLC) to demolish the property located at 1004 Menomonie Street, having the historic name of the Kaiser Lumber Company Office. The building was designated as a local landmark property in 1999 for its historic association with the City's lumber industry, specifically the Kaiser Lumber Company. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

Pat Ivory provided an overview of the request and the provisions in Chapter 2.65 that pertained to such requests. He noted that information requested by the Commission at the December meeting was included in their agenda packets. This included a copy of the City Council resolution and agreement pertaining to the sale of parcels to the Rolbiecki's in 1999 with the contingency that 1004 Menomonie Street be designated as a local landmark property, Leader-Telegram articles pertaining to sale and designation, and a copy of the City assessment record for the property. Pat added that there did not appear to be any contingencies placed in the City's agreement with the Rolbiecki's that precluded them from, at some time in the future, requesting to have the building demolished. This was based on discussions with the City Attorney and reviewing the video tape of the 1999 City Council meeting when the agreement was approved.

The building was constructed in 1905 and was used as an office for the Kaiser Lumber Company until 1939. It is one of the only remaining buildings from the lumber era in the city. After 1939 the building was utilized for various uses, including the Eau Claire Drum and Bugle Corps and a retail store. The building was later remodeled as a dwelling, but is currently vacant.

Mr. James Rolbiecki and Mr. Patrick Rolbiecki, the applicants, were present at the meeting. They informed the Commission that they were proposing to demolish the building so that they could construct a new building on the site. This would include retail on the first floor and apartments on the second floor. A concept plan for the new building was included with the information submitted by the Rolbiecki's. It was noted that the property would have to be rezoned by the City for this development to proceed.

At the December meeting, the Rolbiecki's indicated that they would be willing to donate the building to be moved to another location, but would not be involved in any funding relating to the relocation of the building. When asked if they would be willing to sell the property, they indicated that they would be open to such a proposal.

Sharon Hildebrand, 426 Summit Avenue, spoke in opposition to demolishing the building. Ms. Hildebrand stated that the building is an important building to preserve based on its association with the lumbering industry. In addition, she noted that it is important to keep the building at its present location rather than considering moving it to other location.

Jenny Ebert, 1321 Pershing Street, spoke in opposition to demolishing the building. Ms. Ebert also noted that the building was an important building to preserve and it should be kept at its present and original site. She noted that the building could still be an asset to the area with a number of different uses.

Several Commission members discussed the historic importance of the building, noting it was one of the last buildings left in Eau Claire relating to the lumbering era. As noted at the December meeting, the Commission noted that their preference would be to attempt to preserve the building on-site, rather than moving the building.

Pat noted that he had received a call regarding the rezoning of the property in 2001 and whether any conditions were placed on the rezoning. Pat indicated that no conditions were noted.

ACTION TAKEN: John Mann moved to deny the request to demolish 1004 Menomonie Street based on the provisions of Chapter 2.65.040C of the City Code and specifically criteria 2A noting that the building is of such historic significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City, and that the Commission work with the applicant to find a method to save the property. Carrie Ronnander seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

The Commission then discussed the formation of a subcommittee to work with the applicant and report back to the Commission.

ACTION TAKEN: Brady Foust moved to create a subcommittee to work with the applicant to find a method to save the property. The subcommittee would consist of Katrinka Bourne, Dave Strobel, and Brady Foust. Ken Ziehr seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

2. **Discussion of 2014 and 2015 Commission Work Programs.** The Commission reviewed the 2014 Commission work program noting projects that were completed, those that were on-going or in progress, and those that were not completed. Pat Ivory noted that several of the projects that were completed in 2014 were not on the original work program for the year. As part of this discussion, the Commission also discussed the draft 2015 work program. The Commission noted several projects that should be considered a fairly high priority, including: consideration of the local landmark designation of one or more National Register properties, updating the contractor listing, updating the landmarks tour booklet, and continuing to look at the issue of the opted-out properties.

Pat noted that he would draft the 2015 work program based on the Commission's discussion and present it to the Commission for discussion at the February meeting.

3. **Update on Landmark Activities and Properties, including:**

- A. **Report from Historic Preservation Foundation.** None.

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

Submitted by,

Jane Seymour Kunick