MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, January 17, 2019, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Melissa Dirr Gengler, Jim Hewitt, Jim Johnson, Greg McCown, Jim McKee and Gregory Newport; Liz Bavitz absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer, Stacey Hageman, Amy Huffman and Chelsey Pounds of the Planning Department; Craig Gies, B & C Construction; the media and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Chair Greg McCown called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

McCown requested a motion approving the minutes for the meeting of December 20, 2018. Motion for approval made by Johnson, seconded by Hewitt and carried 6-0: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, McKee, Newport and McCown voting ‘yes’; Bavitz absent.

The opportunity was given for persons with limited time or with an item not appearing on the agenda to address the Commission.

Craig Gies came forward to update HPC about work at 801 O Street, the Raymond Bros. building. Construction and restoration have gone well. It was discovered that the cornice at the top of the building has more wear and tear than was expected. It is a very large piece, at 75 inches tall, and since much of the original structure is rusted out, it will not hold up with less intensive, cosmetic improvements. The new idea is to use a fiberglass reinforced polymer (FRP) reproduction of the original ornamentation by sending pieces of the original to be molded to create an exact, but lasting replica. The galvanized grey color will be integrated into the material and will require little to no maintenance. The pieces will be approximately 8.5 feet long and will include the endcaps. They had hoped for a simpler fix, but due to the weight and the extent of deterioration, this is the best, most durable option.

Newport asked how far down the cornice will be replaced. Gies said they will replace all the way down to the brick.

McCown wondered what will happen with the original pieces; he wonders if there are buyers who would be interested in it. Gies said they do not intend to simply throw it away even though it is not in great shape. The midsection is particularly interesting. All of it will need to be cleaned up.
Newport asked if the new pieces will extend over the top. Gies said the roof cap will be removed so they will. The brick at the top is not bad, but this building deserves to have the cornice back.

Hewitt asked how the company reproducing the cornice was found. Gies said they looked online and asked architects. The selected company specializes in custom casting and works mostly on projects up and down the east coast. The cornice will be removed to get the structure sound while waiting for the new pieces to arrive.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Gies for the update.

**RECOMMENDATION ON DESIGNATION OF THE FORMER BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH, 2015 S. 16TH STREET, AS A LANDMARK, AND RECOMMENDATION ON SPECIAL PERMIT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION FOR THE SAME.**

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

January 17, 2019

Members present: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, McCown, McKee and Newport; Bavitz absent.

Zimmer suggested that the regular adopted schedule be followed so this item will have hearing this month for comment, and then come back next month for action. This is a modest building sitting amongst residential buildings. It has been known as the House of Hope or the Hope Chapel, affiliated with the alcohol rehab program, but it was built as Blessed Sacrament Church and was one of the first Catholic parishes beyond St. Mary’s, located to serve the growing population in the south part of town. The bishop acted over the opposition of St. Mary’s parishioners who did not want to lose families from their own congregation. Bishop O’Reilly commissioned a little-known local architect named Frederick Yockel, who was a house-builder and architect. Within a couple of decades, they build a much bigger church and school a few blocks south at Lake Street. To have this as the comparison to the sequence is a unique opportunity that we have with few other sets of buildings in town.

The purpose of this application for Landmark would be to make them eligible for a Special Permit. It is back to church use again for a small congregation known as No Greater Love Fellowship Church and they would like to have some education rooms. An architect at Clark Enersen is working with the congregation to figure out a way to get the addition made. Liz Bavitz has stepped forward to sponsor this, as Commissioners can do. This is a fairly straightforward way to get to their purpose with an interesting story about the growth of the community and the growth of religious buildings to serve the community over time. That is the basis for the Landmark. They have 4-5 parking stalls in back that will be lost.

McKee asked what accommodation will be made for parking. Zimmer said he believes they quietly park in the CVS parking lot on Sunday mornings. If they are serving their whole need with only five stalls now, it should not be a large issue.
McKee asked if there is anything of interest on the interior. Zimmer said it was used by the church as a gymnasium after the church use. He has not been inside yet. McKee commented that they added a window above the door; there may be a balcony. Zimmer said it has that feel. Chelsea has reached out to the church to see if there are any early views of the building as a church or gymnasium use, but we have not heard back yet.

McCown asked if the building has a basement. Zimmer said he thinks there is one; he will find out. Some of the foundation blocks have been replaced during repairs over the years. McKee said it looks like there must have been a furnace. Zimmer agreed that the chimney suggests that. McCown wondered if there is a basement, if it is a workable space. That would imply they anticipate growth. Zimmer said they feel they have a need for separate classroom space today. The church is led by Reverend Miles, whose name he has heard in the community. Though it is not recommended as a landmark based on its architecture, the building has a story to tell.

Newport asked if this is a common use of the process. Zimmer said one of the few incentives we have is that Landmarks can ask for a Special Permit which is one of the most flexible permits. Traditionally, it just altered allowed uses, but later it was expanded to vary parking, signs, yards, and height. The applicant has to make their case and are then subject to public review. They must stick to what they show in the plan that was approved. It is good process to include the neighborhood. Newport asked if this has had the neighborhood review. Zimmer said no, that is one reason he would rather delay action.

McKee asked if there is an adjacent house that was reviewed by HPC. Zimmer said the Dial house is one door down.

McCown asked if this building has had other uses besides church and social groups. He believes it still hosts AA meetings. Hewitt suggested the building may have been used by the owners as a photography studio for a short time. Zimmer said they are the same people that operated Houses of Hope, so that would be interesting to confirm. McCown commented this is a nondescript little building, but it has had so many relevant uses.

Newport ask if this action will offer any special protection for the building. Zimmer said that by Landmarking it, future changes have to come through this body. If the building is ever demolished, the special permit goes away since it is tied to the building. It has been a good tool for things that are hard to manage under the traditional zoning, which would say that this is either a house or it should be removed. It provides a different option.

DISCUSS AND ADVISE:

2018 Annual Report

Zimmer said these required annual reports contain pictures and stories of work that was accomplished the previous year, to be provided to the City Council and posted online. Most of
the reviews of HPC were in the Haymarket. Even the sign reviews have a lot of impact on how the area looks and feels, overall. There were two landmark applications including the Scottish Rite Temple and the 1600 O Street project which is proceeding along. This body will see it again as part of the redevelopment review. Both were built in 1917 and show a broad contrast in the property types, but both are significant buildings and provide good use to the community.

**ACTION:**

Johnson moved approval of the 2018 Annual Report, seconded by Gengler and carried, 6-0: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, McKee, Newport and McCown voting ‘yes’; Bavitz absent.

Zimmer mentioned that along with Blessed Sacrament, he is expecting next month to have a review of 815 O Street, the Pepperberg Building. The ax throwing business at that location placed a roll-up door in their storefront. They did this work on the building without building permits. A few of these have been seen and approved before, but nonetheless, the review is still required.

Hewitt asked if they intend to be able to drive up. Zimmer said he is not sure why the open air is necessary at this location for this use. It may end up looking alright, but that should be the call of HPC. They have provided photos from the inside view. It is all glass in a metal frame with some horizontal features.

Gengler asked what the recourse would be if this alteration were found to be inappropriate, since the old storefront and historic material were already removed. Zimmer they could be ordered to be put back what was removed, or they can be fined $100 per day until it is corrected. That has not been used, but it is allowed per the ordinance. It was not historical material that they took out, but it was a conventional storefront. The platform that is their sidewalk café is public property. They do not want to use that, so the City Attorney has informed them they need to remove it unless they want to use it. To do that, they have to utilize the full kitchen so they now offer a menu. There is another ax throwing business operating on N Street near Antelope Valley Parkway.

Gengler asked if the applicants will be requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for work that has already been done. Zimmer said yes. The building is owned by an experienced developer, and the work was done by a reputable contracting company without a permit, which is surprising.

McKee asked what happened with the up lighting project that was heard a couple of months ago. Zimmer said nothing more has been heard on that. Also on next month’s agenda will be an item from Jim Arter to replace the windows at Lincoln Station.

Newport asked for more information about the expansion of HPC to review County projects. Zimmer said he does not think there will be many items. This body will be used as the reviewing body, similar to Planning Commission hearing both City and County items. It is possible that a representative for that jurisdiction could be appointed to HPC when a vacancy comes open. It
does not make sense to go to a 9-person body.

McCown asked if there are any educational opportunities coming up. Zimmer said there is a conference in Omaha and they will distribute information about soon. Gengler mentioned that there will be a special workshop on Guastavino tile at the State Capitol in April. The capitol building contains the largest use of the tile in the world and people come from all over to study it. There will be various talks and tours, including above the dome.

Zimmer briefly discussed his latest entries on the Placemakers of Nebraska website, including Harold Van Buren Magonigle and his design of First Plymouth Church.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.