

CITY OF CARMEL
CARMEL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 8, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
ENGINEERING CONFERENCE ROOM, CARMEL CITY HALL

In attendance:

Members: Nick Davis; Curtis Butcher; Bill Sanders; Ron Carter

Advisor:

HPC Administrator: Mark Dollase; Sam Burgess

Guests: Emily Ehrgott

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:12 P.M. by Nick Davis.

2. Roll Call

Nick D., Curtis B., Bill S., Ron C.

3. Approval of Minutes (12-14-2017; 1-16-2018)

Minutes for 12-14-2017: Bill S. motioned to approve the minutes and Curtis B. seconded. Motion passed 4-0. 1-16-2018 Minutes: Bill S. motioned to approve; Curtis B. seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

4. Hearing of Visitors

5. Certificate of Appropriateness

No discussion

6. Financial Report

Staff recapped finances for 2017 and provided an updated amount of funds available from the 2018 budget. Staff also noted that some of the unclaimed grant funds from the 2016 façade grant program are set to expire. Bill S. asked if there was a mechanism for an extension to claim façade grants. Mark D. noted that the Commission could vote to offer an extension. Nick D. stated that 18 months would seem reasonable. Ron C. recommended encouraging those who have not yet claimed their 2017 grants to take advantage of the 2018 spring-summer construction season. Staff will send reminders.

7. Old Business

a. Potential Local Historic Districts

i. Thornhurst meeting in January

Staff held a second informational session for prospect of local historic or conservation district designation on January 30, 2018. Seven residents attended. Four signatures were gathered for a preliminary application for a historic district. Ron C. asked if there were potential leaders among residents for the district designation process. Commission discussed seeking owners of the Brengle House. Nick D. expressed doubt that there was sufficient critical mass to support a preliminary application. Bill S. noted that neighbors had organized their own meeting. Ron C. asked what the

Commission as a group wanted to do. Nick D. stated that the Commission as a group seemed to want to see a historic district designation for the neighborhood. Mark D. stated that the next meeting should be held when there are more signatures in support of a designation. Ron C. noted that someone on the Commission should be selected as a committee co-chair for the effort to designate Thornhurst. Commission discussed that Becky Feigh would be a good candidate. Next step is for staff to talk to more property owners to get their support and signatures in favor of a district designation. Mark D. stated that it would be ideal to have signatures from at least ten households in Thornhurst before submitting a preliminary application to the Commission. Ron C. proposed setting a target date to gather signatures. Curtis B. suggested that it would be beneficial to have homeowners advertise a meeting so there is more initiative from within the neighborhood to designate. Mark D. agreed that there could be benefits to this, but wanted to make sure that the Commission would not lose control of the process of designation. Mark D. also relayed that one of the attendees of the information session would have been more comfortable designating Thornhurst if Johnson Addition were also designated as a district. Ron C. opined that a new application for a Johnson Addition district designation would not likely make it through City Council. Curtis B. asked if some properties on Main St. should be exempted from a Thornhurst designation. Mark D. stated that he did not support that approach, as the exemption of individual properties counteracts the benefits of a historic or conservation district.

ii. Wilkinson-Hull House update

Mark D. noted that after Commission's action at Jan. 16 special meeting, both he (Mark D.) and Ron C. had phone conversations with owner Mark Brennan. Mark D. expressed that he and Mark B. both seemed to have ended the conversation with an accurate understanding of each other's positions. Mr. Brennan seemed to understand that the existing proposed district boundaries could be changed. Mr. Brennan also expressed that the property had personal meaning to his family. Ron C. had two conversations with Mark Brennan. Brennan indicated that he and his fellow property-owners had been willing to accept a lower price from the property from Beazer Homes in order to see the house preserved. Ron C. sent two detailed memos to City Council concerning the property. Curtis B. mentioned that if a road to the house were taken into the development from the Smokey Row subdivision, the sale of the house on a separate site would constitute a capital gain. To offset the capital gain, some of the proceeds could be donated to a 501 c 3 non-profit. Ron C. asked if a Commission member or staff should communicate with the Brennans about donating the property to offset the capital gains tax. Mark D. noted that it would not be appropriate for an employee of Indiana Landmarks to address the subject, so as to avoid conflicts of interest. Ron C. volunteered to suggest the idea to Mark Brennan. Curtis B. volunteered to provide any support needed.

Ron C. and Curtis B. both volunteered to serve on an Ad Hoc Committee. Sam B. will arrange a meeting with Curtis B. and Ron C. to develop design guidelines. Committee should work with Brennans to determine how much land the district boundaries should encompass. Discussions with Brennans will determine the ultimate shape and size of the district. Staff will visit property to assess how much and which land should be preserved around the house. Mark D. suggested keeping Cool Creek adjacent to the property.

iii. 3740 W. 106th St. (Larson-Dunwoody House)

A draft of a preservation plan with design guidelines is nearly complete. Ad Hoc Committee will plan to have guidelines in place in time for the first public hearing in the designation process during the March meeting.

b. Commissioner appointments for 2018

Rosemary Dunkle has been appointed to the Commission and plans to attend the March meeting. No information about Ms. Dunkle's background or credentials were available.

8. New Business

a. 2018 Officer Election

After some discussion among Commissioners, Bill S. made a motion to reelect the current slate of officers (Nick D., President; Becky F., Vice President; Curtis B., Treasurer). Ron C. seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

b. 2018 Façade Grant Program

Staff introduced plans to send letters to eligible grant applicants the week of Feb. 12 and to offer two information sessions about the grant program, one on March 8 and one on another date in late February or early March. Mark D. also introduced the concept of raising the maximum grant amount available for owners of properties locally designated in historic or conservation districts. Nick D. expressed that he thought that raising the grant amount for designated districts could be beneficial, but wanted to know how much funding the Commission should allocate for the 2018 façade grant program. Nick D. liked the idea of capping the maximum annual giveaway at \$50,000. Mark D. noted that there are currently no districts in place. Ron C. asked if guidelines should be revised to include a time incentive such that recipients get more grant money for completing projects earlier. Bill S. suggested that the difference in grant amount depending on completion date might not be enough to incentivize property owners to complete their projects faster. Mark D. proposed possibly adjusting the max. grant amount for designated properties to \$10,000.

Ron C. said it was possible to pursue the establishment of a non-reverting capital fund for the CHPC. Mark D. noted his recollection that at the City Council's Oct. 2016 budget meeting, a non-reverting fund seemed to have been established. Ron C. said he would investigate whether a non-reverting fund had already been established. Ron C. also said that now is the time to start working with DOCS on the CHPC's 2019 budget. The process would begin with a conversation with Mike H. at DOCS. Budget should be completed in late May or early June. Emily E. reminded commission that a new section would soon be annexed and many more houses on the survey could become eligible for façade grants. Requests for budget increases might be advisable to account for this.

Ron C. made a motion to amend the cap on the façade grant program for properties locally designated in historic or conservation districts from \$5,000 at a 50% match to \$10,000 at a 50% match. Bill S. seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

9. Other Business

Ron C. asked if there were upcoming conferences to attend. Staff noted that the Commission Assistance and Mentorship Program (CAMP) will be offered at statewide Preserving Historic Places Conference in Columbus. The conference is Apr. 17-Apr. 20 and CAMP is on Apr. 17. Nick D. encouraged commissioners to attend (Nick and Ron attended in 2017). There will also be a luncheon for local elected officials with a lecture by Donovan Rypkema.

Ron C. also asked if the Commission wanted to pursue Lynnwood Farms as a historic district. He expressed that there might be pressure to get rid of the barn on the golf course in order to take advantage of development potential. Ron C. also expressed concern that the Plum Creek Corn Crib might be at risk of demolition by its owners (the Plum Creek HOA). HOA is concerned about the cost of upkeep. Commission and staff discussed possibility of encouraging the HOA to pursue a local designation for the crib in to become eligible for one of the new \$10,000 façade grants.


10. Announcements

11. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by Nick Davis at 7:52 PM.



Nick Davis, Carmel Historic Preservation
Commission Chairperson



Recording Secretary Sam Burgess