

**HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AND SITES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 21, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Courtyard Conference Room**

COMMISSIONERS:

Ward Warren (Chair)
Dan McBerty (Vice Chair) - Late
Virginia Ford
Shirley Holzinger
Arden McConnell
Rob Pell

City/Staff/Council Liaisons:

City Councilor Barry Eames
Taylor Graybehl – Planner
Lora Glover – PCD Director

Guests:

Michael Holzinger

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Items from Public:** (opportunities for citizens to share information with the Committee regarding items that are not on the agenda)
 - a. None
3. **Consent Agenda:**
 - a. Minutes: January 17, 2019
 - b. Chair Warren stated on the goal list on page 2, number 1, actual wording should be “Add capacity in the Historic District”. On number 3, the goal should read “Comprehensive clean-up program for the Historic District including alley’s trash, graffiti, sidewalks, leaves and trees, etc.”.
 - c. On page 4, number 6 should be “Taylor” instead of Tyler.

There was no Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda

4. **Action Items (Recommendations / Decisions):**
 - a. None
5. **Work Session Items:**
 - a. **Discussion and prioritization of 2019 HBSC Goals** - Taylor provided the goals in the packet. Goals are 1-7. There was discussion about how they faired in the City Council’s Strategic Planning session.
 - b. **Historic Plaque Update** – Chair Warren updated Councilor Eames about the plaques on the buildings downtown. Eleven buildings have been selected to have plaques added.
 - o Councilor Eames asked how the buildings are selected. The City hired a consultant to do an inventory many years ago but was updated in the past few years. Buildings are listed as “significant” in terms of date and order of importance in terms of development of the downtown and the city. Examples given were the Grants Pass Pharmacy building and the US Bank building. Most on the list currently are those built in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Taylor added there are about 39 sites, possibly including the new ones. Chair Warren went on to explain that many of the addresses are in the Downtown core and in the National Historic District which is only G and H streets until its expansion about 3 years ago. One of the benefits for building owners that wanted to stay in the Historic District and not opt out was we would promote the Historic District and work toward providing building identification plaques.

- Councilor Eames asked why anyone would want to opt out? Chair Warren explained they had about an 85% opt in rate but that those that opted out didn't want any more bureaucracy and he explained the process and the public forums that went on at the time.
- Member Ford asked if there were any Mid-Century Modern in that group? Chair Warren answered no, because they (Towne Center Plaza) opted out. The law office, the old Evergreen Bank building) by the railroad tracks also opted out.
- Chair Warren mentioned that Taylor had the update of the plaques. Page 9-10 has the bids Taylor has obtained.
- Lora mentioned the cell tower mitigation and the paying for the plaques. They also did an update to a building, so they did an inventory.
- Chair Warren continued with the bid list. He noted that Lowes came in the lowest. Taylor noted that the Lowes signs shapes wouldn't match what we currently have. He has been in contact with Recognition Specialties (Nice Badge) and provide him with a quote.
- Member Holzinger noted they used to handle plaques through their studio. She can check on if that would still be possible and let the committee know.
- Member McConnell recommended to be sure to get bronze plaques instead of other materials. She asked if the City maintain control of that plaque or is that given to the building. Chair Warren said the City would install them. They shouldn't be removed. It would become a fixture of the building.
- Michael Holzinger mentioned the silver plaques on G Street on two buildings. One had plastic over it. He will email Chair Warren the addresses/pictures. He will copy Lora Glover on it. Chair Warren suggest checking to see if they have the authority on the National Historic registered plaques.
- Member Pell asked Taylor if there are any plaques on the list that are the correct shape? Taylor said other ones are custom and the right shape. They are 14x11 or the oval at 14x14. They meet the color requirements. They are slightly set back with the background of the sign having a leather finish. The letters themselves are brought out. The text is also similar.
- They talked about Nice Badge being local and the warranties on the products.

c. Case Studies: Online presence for the Historic District –

- Taylor talked about the Experience Grants Pass website managed by Jon Bowen plus the Jacksonville and Medford websites. This is for increasing presence for the Historic District to help promote awareness and bring more people into the downtown. Taylor went through the sections of the website including the map and the walking tour. He mentioned this is also related to the façade improvement program.
- Chair Warren asked if someone from our IT department or a web developer could come to a meeting as a guest? He knows a few web developers and will forward their contact information to Lora Glover. They will add this to the next agenda.

d. Case Studies: Identify and Promote Historic Resources.

- Taylor talked about the criteria that should be identified. Chair Warren said there are owners of very old buildings that aren't interested in renovating and some are getting really run down. We could make a list of those buildings then contact them to see if they would like renovations.
- Chair Warren talked about the layers siding that have been done over the years to numerous buildings. He feels that if we get the buildings downtown

that have siding renovated, it would look really nice. It won't be cheap, but it enhances the value of the building and he's not suggesting the City pay for it. Changes can be made without spending a fortune and it could look a lot better. He suggested members note buildings that might be good candidates. He hopes we will have the CLG (certified Local Government) status which will open some state grant money.

- They talked about grants and some tax incentives. The State Historic Preservation Office has a property tax break/freeze for 10-years. Now it is just a percentage (10 or 20%).
- Councilor Eames mentioned that the plaza downtown has been sold to Dutch Bros. He wondered if this committee wants input of they do to that property? They discussed wanting to help them with the resources they have to offer. Councilor Eames would like to see it blend in. He feels they also need a parking structure downtown. We don't have enough parking for people.
- Chair Warren noted it was their number one goal last year and this year. It is still on the list.
- Member Pell added that it used to be just mid-day when the parking would be maxed out. They talked about how much it has changed and the shopping patterns along with it.
- Councilor Eames asked about the multi-level buildings and if the other levels are being used? Chair Warren indicated that some of them are. Some are unimproved. They aren't utilized in the same fashion such as Ashland. There are fire code issues with living quarters upstairs. Redwood Towers is experiencing that issue.
- Member Holzinger said it would be nice if there was an incentive to draw them in. Chair Warren mentioned lack of interest. If there isn't interest than why waste the time. Member Holzinger said people don't want to spend their own dollars. They would like to have help. They talked about doing research on some of the resources. Lora Glover mentioned the Urban Renewal Agency developing its funding then there will be more flexibility.
- Chair Warren asked Council Eames if he feels the downtown is a top priority? He indicated he does. He mentioned when the shopping center was developed east of town, the downtown died. We've all seen it come back over the years and he would like to see it continue to grow.
- Chair Warren asked Lora when the parking study would arrive? She indicated they are wrapping up their recommendation part of it. She talked about some frustrations with getting them to just letting them know about what they feel is the problem, so they can move forward. She believes they will recommend the parking structure but location matters. There are a lot of unknowns.

d. Update Local Landmark List –

- Chair Warren asked if anyone ever found the list? Those that have it will email it to the others on the commission, to Councilor Eames, Lora and Taylor. They will add this to the next agenda.
- Member McConnell asked if it costs money to apply to be a landmark? Lora said yes there is a fee as with all hearing processes. They discussed possibilities.
- Certified Local Government (CLG). In order to have a seventh member as required by the State. There was discussion about a member asking to see the applications. This hadn't been requested before so there was discussion of it at the City Council meeting. They had also been requested from the

UAPC. The UAPC would like to do interviews of applicants and then make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council would also do interviews and make the choice. The City Council will have the discussion at a future workshop. There are qualifications that applicants must have. Councilor Eames said he would rather have a recommendation from the committees since he doesn't know what the needs are. He wanted to know what the criteria for selecting someone is? Chair Warren said experience, knowledge, and are those things needed. They would be stakeholders (5 of 7 members) in terms of being a property or business owner in the historic district or they have some special experience and knowledge and skills. Taylor noted that part of the CLG application process required us to update this body to meet their standards. Lora mentioned visiting the states preservation site for background on SHPO. Discussion continued regarding qualifications and can contribute.

- Chair Warren talked about the change in time for this commission. Currently this commission meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month. They wait two to three weeks until there is another Council meeting. If we make a motion, it doesn't get presented to the Council for three weeks later and is no longer timely. They would like to move the meetings to the second Thursday of the month 5:30 we could get out a bit sooner. They did a show of hands for a vote. All agreed to start this in March. This will also be good if they do interviews they can forward that to the Council who would have a workshop the following Monday and a regular evening meeting that Wednesday. Karen would have to time the closing date for applications, so it falls right before a meeting.
- Chair Warren let Council Eames know the boundary for the Historic District. From E to J streets, 4th to 7th. Taylor brought up a map to show further detail. Exceptions would be any building that opted out like the Caveman Plaza.
- Chair Warren mentioned the Comprehensive Cleanup Program noting he was disappointed that it didn't make it into the goal list. Lora noted that with more than 10 committees, and some items were worded similarly, but it did make it, but it was worded differently. There will be funding to help do more cleanings, more trashcans, etc. but it is a good starting point. They will continue to work with this with the merchants. They talked about the downtown and the cars traveling down 6th Street. Five months out of the year is a draw for the river/jet boats. The downtown is all year. It needs to be clean, safe and vital. Graffiti is an issue and needs to be dealt with quickly. There needs to be a notification process and a program developed for property owners. Alley's, sidewalks and streets all need to be clean. Commissioners will brainstorm ideas. Chair Warren mentioned Pat Sheets was the director of the Towne Center Association years ago and did a great deal to keep on top of the downtown and with the merchants. The downtown cleanup will be added to the next agenda.

6. Information Sharing:

a. Items from Staff – None

b. Items from Commissioners –

- Chair Warren talked about the Caveman Bridge/Redwood Empire Sign Celebration. He mentioned the Courier front page story from a few weeks ago. Ward has been working with Josie Molloy (Chamber of Commerce Director) and Gary Leaming (ODOT). Celebration will be on Friday, May 3, 2019 at 10:30. It will tie in with First Friday for May and with the kickoff for

Amazing May. He is working on lining up some classic cars from the 30s and 40s. He has talked with the state historian that will come down and make a presentation. The Chamber Ambassadors will be there for the ribbon cutting in the Taprock parking lot. There will be a live 5-piece brass quintet dressed in period clothing. There will be media releases for the news outlets. The Historical Society has been contacted and hopefully will be there in period costume as well. Replication of the old photo of the mother and daughter was an idea. This will be a great promotional event for the community.

- Commissioner McConnell asked if there will be signs from the state around our sign before the bridge. Lora said there will be a plaque. Chair Warren said he saw one and it wasn't anything special. It would be good to have some history on the plaque. It would be fun to have something about the Redwood Empire.
- Commissioner McConnell also talked about "nominate a historical marker". People can nominate a building as historical. Lora suggested an email go out to this commission about this topic.
- Member Ford passed out a list of restaurants for everyone. She also gave Chair Warren an article from Mid Century Modern for what to do if you run out of paint. She also gave him a logo that says, "It's the Climate, It's the River, It's the People". She handed out a brochure with the news of the month. They are handed out at the Chamber of Commerce.

c. Items from City Council Liaison

- None

7. Future Agenda Building for Next Meeting

- Landmark List
- Website Development
- Downtown Cleanup

8. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting: March 14, 2019

Minutes prepared by Donna Anderson, City of Grants Pass Administration.