

The City of Auburn
Historic Resources Review Board
c/o Office of Planning and Economic Development
Memorial City Hall - 24 South Street
Auburn, New York 13021
(315) 255-4115 Fax 253-0282

Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2015 7:00pm

Present: Michael Deming, Ed Onori, Linda Frank, Paul McDonald, Jim Hutchinson, Richard Stankus

Staff Present: Christina Selvek

Meeting opened by Chair Michael Deming.

Motion to approve meeting minutes of July 14, 2015 made by Paul McDonald, seconded by Ed Onori. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chair opens Public to be Heard for National Registrar Nomination 149 North Street. Public to be Heard will remain open for the remainder of the meeting.

Certificates of Appropriateness

Christina Selvek introduces the Certificate of Appropriateness (C of A) application.

77 South Street- Mr. William Berry Jr.

The applicant proposes to conduct minor repairs to the three porches (front, and rear facades), repairs to the porch railing, corner of front facade soffit/ eaves and roof repairs due to ice damage. The proposed repairs will be completed with in-kind wood and roofing materials.

Christina Selvek: States applicant has a work commitment and is unable to attend.

Jim Hutchinson: Everything is in-kind?

Christina Selvek: Yes. The scallops are an important architectural feature that is important to have matched and repaired in-kind. Also would like to make sure that the roof material, architectural shingles, is within the certificate.

Paul McDonald: With the amount of damage seen here (pictures in packets), more damage may be discovered. If more damage appears the applicant needs to get approval from the Board.

Christina Selvek: I can note in the certificate that if there is additional damage to come back before the Board. If he is doing in-kind repairs, I can do a staff issued Certificate.

Jim Hutchinson: He can call me and I can stop over to look at the damage.

Richard Stankus: The base on the floor of the porch is very wide.

Jim Hutchinson and Paul McDonald mention that materials can be found at Builders Choice, Skaneateles or Liverpool Lumber.

Motion to accept the proposal with the following amendments: Listing of roofing material on Certificate of Appropriateness, and that any additional work needs staff approval is made by Jim Hutchinson, seconded by Richard Stankus. All members in favor. Motion carried.

17 Elizabeth Street- Mr. Bruce Natale

The applicant proposes to make general exterior renovations to the front facade (south facing) porch. The project will entail the removal of the existing precast concrete stairway and replacing the stoop with a blue stone modular stair kit. The existing railing will be reused for the new stairs.

Christina Selvek introduces the application. The applicant is looking to make adjustments to his front porch stoop that is noticeable from the right of way. He wished to replace the stoop with a prefab unit with stone veneer on the sides. The materials are in more keeping with the property than the concrete steps that are there now. He is asking for permission to widen the stairs from the existing width to the 60 inch tread and reuse the railing that is there.

Jim Hutchinson asks if the applicant has any idea of what was originally there.

Bruce Natale is not familiar with what was originally there but suggests that it was probably wood. These steps were old when the house was bought 23 years ago.

Jim Hutchinson asks if the iron rail will be kept.

Bruce Natale: Yes. I may need to trim about a half inch off of one leg or the other.

Jim Hutchinson suggests using with a wood rail since the iron rail is not original to the house.

Bruce Natale: If I need to replace the railing, if it is too rusted, I will look at other options. When I bought the house the railing was an abstract wrought iron rail that must have been made in the 20's or 30's.

Richard Stankus asks the reason why prefabricated stairs were chosen.

Bruce Natale: They were readily available. The Mason that will be placing them is Tom Elbridge, who has done other work on the house.

Linda Frank asks if applicant would consider using wood for the stairs.

Bruce Natale: I really do want the stone since I replaced all of the walks with blue slate and blue stone.

Motion to accept the proposal as presented made by Richard Stankus, seconded by Linda Frank. No additions or corrections. All members in favor. Motion carried.

Christina Selvek suggests having the mason check the mortar mix -soft mortar- before the repointing work is started.

Chair closes the Public to be Heard section of the meeting.

Other Matters:

National Registrar Nomination for Charles C. Dwight House

Christina Selvek introduces the National Registrar Nomination for Charles C. Dwight House.

The City HRRB has been notified by the State Board for Historic Preservation that the property located at 149 North Street, known as the Charles C. Dwight House, is being considered for nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places at the September 17, 2015 meeting.

As a CLG, the City of Auburn Historic Resources Review Board has the opportunity, based upon public comment, to prepare a report that provides an opinion on whether the property meets the criteria for listing on the State and National Registers.

Richard Stankus reviewed the application and criteria and agrees that it meets local criteria but not State or National criteria. According to the application the applicant is looking for local recognition.

Christina Selvek: The State and National Registrar is also the keeper of the local designations.

Michael Deming: I would think this would meet a lot of the criteria for the National Registrar. This house is one of the most intact houses from 1871. Architecturally this house is more historically significant than most of the houses in the Historic District on South Street. Is it the intent of the applicant to move this on to the National Registrar as well?

Christina Selvek: The only thing that is pointed out is local. This property is a local landmark in our ordinance.

Richard Stankus- It would have been nice if the applicant was here tonight to state their intent. How are we going to respond because the letter states State and National Registrar but the box is checked for local.

Michael Deming: Right now it is not clear what they are asking for since it states two different things.

Linda Frank explains that to get a property on the National Registrar you have to go through the State and what this application is saying by that local designation is that he is not claiming that this has national significance but it is going to be on the national registrar. 95 % of properties are local but they are on the National Registrar. They are not saying that is significant beyond its historic contribution locally.

Motion to state that we agree with the criteria that has been selected in the application and support it's of the Charles C. Dwight House located at 149 South Street made by Jim Hutchinson, seconded by Richard Stankus. All members in favor. Motion carried.

Christina Selvek: The letter will be sent by the mayor.

Update on Properties in Historic District

Christina Selvek mentions two property owners on Elizabeth Street, a car garage and a carriage barn at 7 Elizabeth Street are seeking demolition approvals. I am hoping that they are documenting the buildings with pictures and dimensions before demolition.

Michael Deming: I would like to make a recommendation that someone buys or make some type of appeal to sell the building or do something with it before it is demolished. Demolition by neglect is illegal. In the 1980's the State Preservation Department said we have the largest selection in the Historic District of carriage buildings in New York State at that point, but since then many have been demolished or fallen down. We need some type of criteria/ process in place.

Christina Selvek: There are fewer and fewer of these carriage barns and these are part of Auburn's history. Does anyone have experience with dismantling?

Ed Onori will look into companies that dismantle historic buildings.

Linda Frank mentioned that there are people who look for salvaged flooring

Richard Stankus: A Carriage House has as much significance as a house in the Historic District

Historic District Anniversary

Christina Selvek: The Historic District was formed in April of 1991 and next spring marks the District's 25th Anniversary. Maybe we could celebrate in a special way.

Linda Frank: It would be nice to mark each property in the City with dates like Homer does. It may be a nice way to celebrate by starting it in the district. We have the resources.

Christina Selvek: Hopefully we have an announcement from the National Park Service on the Harriet Tubman House or dollar bill.

Richard Stankus: Was it at the property owner's discretion to place the Historic Markers on South Street?

Christina Selvek: Yes, those were placed at the property owners discretion. They are on a swivel system so if the property owners wish to change the direction the sign faces, it can easily be done.

Jim Hutchinson: Can we request to change the sign direction at the Dulles house with a letter?

Richard Stankus: I can discuss it with the homeowner this week

Christina: I do have a Preserve America sign that was awarded to the City by Michele Obama's Preserve America program about two years ago. We can use this as part of the Anniversary Celebration.

Motion to adjourn made by Paul McDonald, seconded by Linda Frank. Meeting adjourned.

Recorded by Renee Jensen