

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF PELLA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 20, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Kermode called the Historic Preservation Commission to order in the Public Safety Complex at 6:00 p.m. Members present were: Don André, Bruce Boertje, Rhonda Kermode, and Lila Turnbull. Staff present: Finance Director and Assistant City Administrator Corey Goodenow, Building Official Jerry Byers, and the Deputy City Clerk. Due to heightened public health risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, accommodations were made to broadcast this meeting via conference call. Ten members of the public joined the conference call.

APPROVAL OF TENTATIVE AGENDA

Motion by André, second by Boertje to approve the tentative agenda. Motion carried 4-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Boertje, second by André to approve the minutes from the October 12, 2020 meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

Consideration of an Application to Form the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District

Don André, 601 W. 1st Street, with the support of Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) members, has submitted an application to form a historic district. The name of the proposed district is the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District, which generally includes properties between Main Street and W. Second Street as the east/west border and properties between Liberty Street and Independence Street as the north/south border.

As background, historic district overlay zones are geographically cohesive areas with significant concentrations of buildings and other resources that possess a high degree of historical integrity and convey a distinct sense of time and place and that have been designated as a historic district by the City Council pursuant to this ordinance. To qualify for designation as a historic district, the subject area must contain abutting pieces of property under diverse ownership that meet the following approval criteria:

1. Are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture; and

2. Possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and
3. Are associated with events that have been a significant contribution to the patterns of our history; or
4. Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
5. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
6. Have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Chapter 165.13.5 of the Pella City Code specifies the requirements to form a historic district. In order for the City to consider an application for a historic district, the application must contain the following;

1. Signatures of the owners of at least 50% of the total number of parcels of real estate within the proposed district, excluding parcels owned by government bodies.
2. Signatures of the owners of at least 50% of the total public street frontage area within the proposed district, excluding public street frontage abutting government property.
3. Supporting documentation so that the Commission can evaluate whether the application to form a historic district meets the ordinance criteria.

As currently submitted, the application includes the support of 20 of 34 (59%) property owners included in the proposed district, which consists of 2,664 feet of the 4,079 feet (61%) of the street frontage in the proposed district. In addition to meeting the owner signature requirement, the application included a comprehensive study of the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District completed by Will Page, which was nominated by the State Historical Society of Iowa to the National Register of Historic Places on June 9, 2017, and subsequently approved by the National Park Service.

If the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District is approved and formally established, the following activities would be subject to design review standards:

1. New construction of single or two-family homes or new accessory buildings for any single family or two-family homes in the historic districts.
2. Additions to existing structures in the historic districts which require a building permit.
3. Alterations to existing structures in the historic districts which require a building permit or demolition permit.
4. Alterations to existing structures in the historic districts which do not require a building permit or demolition permit but are visible from a public street or front of the structure do not require historic review; however, voluntary historic review is encouraged for such alterations. These types of alterations are also exempt from the certificate of appropriateness requirements. Other alterations not visible from the public street or front of the structure, and which do not otherwise need a building permit, shall be exempt from historic review.

For properties with base zoning which permits multi-family, commercial, or other non-residential uses, design review would then be conducted by the Community Development Committee first and then these same properties would also be subject to design review under the proposed historic district overlay zone.

If approved, City Code requires the HPC to use the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" for contributing structures within the historic district overlay zone. For non-contributing structures, the HPC would utilize the "Dutch Residential Design Review District Guidelines". These guidelines are currently used for new single and two-family homes constructed within the City's commercial corridors. Furthermore, these guidelines place a heavy emphasis on requiring the new structure to "fit in with the existing neighborhood." Also, they provide flexibility for developers constructing new homes.

It is important to point out the City Code provides a process for appeal. Any person aggrieved by any decision of the HPC regarding an application for historic review in a historic district may appeal the action to the City Council.

If approved, City Code requires public hearings and review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. This process follows the same requirements as all zoning amendments. The proposed historic district is currently scheduled for public hearings and consideration at the January 25, 2021 Planning and Zoning Meeting and the February 2, 2021 City Council meeting.

In summary, the City has received an application to form the Collegiate Neighborhood Historic District. The application meets the minimum application requirements for consideration and has been approved by the appropriate parties at the State of Iowa.

Convened **Public Hearing** on the proposed historic district overlay zone. No written comments were received.

Motion by Boertje, second by André to close the public hearing as no further comments were received. Motion carried 4-0.

Motion by André, second by Turnbull to approve the historic district overlay zone application as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

OTHER BUSINESS/WORK SESSION

Annual Elections for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

Kermode was elected Chairperson and André was elected Vice-Chairperson for 2021.

Other

Kermode read aloud a proposed resolution from the Commission in support of the efforts of the Friends of the Pella Community Center in preserving Pella's Community Center building. The Commission will place the proposed resolution on the agenda for formal consideration at their next meeting, which is scheduled for February 8, 2021.

Kermode reported that she heard back from the State Historical Society of Iowa about performing a field services visit on the Pella Fire Station Hose Tower. This visit will be an opportunity to discover whether the building would qualify to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places and could facilitate the connection with a skilled tradesman to perform the necessary repairs on the building.

Adjourned at 6:19 p.m.