

MINUTES OF THE LANDMARKS BOARD

DATE: May 9, 2018

TIME: 5:30pm

The regular meeting and public hearing of the Landmarks Board was held on the above date and time in City Council Chambers, third floor of Historic City Hall with the following members and City of Springfield staff in attendance: Gary Bishop (Chair), Nancy Crandall (Vice-Chair), Paden Chambers, Paul Lewis, Kaitlyn McConnell, Kent Brown, Wallis Nattinger and Justin Stanek. Absent: None. Staff members: Michael Sparlin, Senior Planner and Duke McDonald, Assistant City Attorney.

ROLL CALL:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of March 14, 2018 were approved as amended.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Certificate of Appropriateness: None

Certified Local Government Review: None

Pre-Application Review: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Certificate of Appropriateness: None

Certified Local Government Review: None

Pre-Application Review: None

Communications: Michael Sparlin noted that new member Matthew Cadle has resigned due to moving out of state and proposed a text amendment to change the Architect Representative's qualifications and use the Park's National Service qualification for their Architect Representative that requires a two (2) year professional architectural degree or state license.

The Landmark's Board to give their recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a text amendment.

Nancy Crandall commented that this is an excellent idea.

REPORTS:

Report on Committees: None

Application: None

Demolition: Sent out today for April demolition permits.

Paden Chambers asked for the timeline, i.e., is it a 30-day timeline for review?

Michael Sparlin stated that there is not really a timeline and asked if the Board wants to give direction on sending out the reports.

Gary Bishop noted that the properties were not within the Historic Districts, but are recognized in the community and that the Board recognizes them as architecturally or historically significant. He also states

that there needs to be increased notification and if they can be sent out a couple of weeks in advance and asked what the timeline process from application to the permitting.

Mr. Sparlin stated that he would get back with Board on the timeline, however this list that was sent out did not include any historic structures, stating when someone gets a demolition permit, they are reviewed to see if they are on the Springfield Historic Register. If they are, there will be a denial on the permit until communication with the applicant notifying them that they must go before the Board or what other process needs to be done.

Mr. Chambers gave an example of the YWCA building downtown noting that it was demolished and members of the public that were upset and wondered why the Landmarks Board did not do something. He however understands that the YWCA was not on the Historic Register, but it would be nice that have a discussion on why it was being torn down.

Mr. Bishop noted that there are many occasions where a structure is historically significant and is going to be demolished, the Board can still photograph and do some documentation of that building and wants to look at the gap in between the time of the application/demolition and the time they can do so. He asked if he should entertain a motion to make that a policy consideration.

Duke McDonald stated that if the Board wants to review something that is not on the Historic Register we can have an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Bishop stated that an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance is not what they are looking for. The Board does not want to add another step that needs to be completed before demolition, what the Board is asking for is time to review the property and determine if the Board needs to document it further, photograph it before it is demolished, stating that we do not want to lose access to the structure before demolition.

Mr. McDonald stated that there can be discussion with Harlan Hill, Director of Building Development Services and see what the gap is and then make a possible resolution that stating the Board would like the properties to reviewed by the Landmarks Board before demolition.

Mr. Sparlin stated that he can talk with Harlan Hill and Mr. Bishop concurred.

Historic Sites and Districts:

Jefferson Avenue Footbridge – Michael Sparlin went over the previous setup from Councilman Ollis and stated that his substitute bill was withdrawn and that City Council approved authorization for the City Manager to seeks bids on the recommended rehabilitation including options for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and approving the proposed funding approach and you can direct me to provide a resolution or an oral report.

Paden Chambers asked for clarification on the Council meeting. He understood that the bill was moved forward with funding pending and the Landmarks Board would have a discussion on this matter tonight.

Mr. Sparlin noted that it was his understanding also that the Landmarks Board would have a discussion on this.

Gary Bishop stated a few introductory comments, noting two big issues that are being presented by this project. He does not believe that there is any dispute that the community knows that the bridge is an iconic structure and is certain that everyone would like to see it restored/preserved with the least amount of funds used. The other issue is governance and how best to govern the community, noting that City Council many years ago passed an ordinance empowering the Landmarks Board to serve a certain role, to oversee the actual restoration, maintenance, and preservation of historic landmarks. Mr. Bishop's stated that he is extremely disappointed in how this process has worked for the bridge and what is the most disheartening is that the very municipality that requested all the members of this board to serve in a volunteer basis and take up personal time that Public Works did not care what the Board had thought and believes that Public Works really did not want to hear from Board members. The Board has taken an oath to preserve the City's historic property and has an obligation. The ordinance states, "to make recommendations to the Council concerning grants from the Federal and State agencies, private groups and individuals in the utilization of budget appropriations to promote the preservation of historic and architectural resources." This is a governance issue and it is a wonder that the Board has a problem with the public in presenting applications to work on historic properties when the City (Public Works) goes around the Board. There are ways that the project can be done which are not being explored, more in keeping with what the community wants and more financially responsible and none of those alternatives are being discussed.

Justin Stanek stated that he agrees with Gary Bishop and the Board 100% and feels that it was a decision by the City to encourage and create this Board and that the obligations are to represent an interest in what the people of the City expect.

Paden Chambers also noted that he agrees 100%, however most irritated with the letter that was sent 14/15 months ago stating their support of this project and offering resources, recommendations, and expertise and had people come before this Board that have done napkin sketches, have done sketches on paper and said that they want to work on this project but I don't know what I am doing, I need your recommendations and help. In the 14 months there has been no one to come before this Board to ask for recommendations to make this project smoother.

Mr. Bishop also stated his impression of this project is that the approach taken so far is that it is a cookie cutter and that is exactly the opposite of what is needed. We need a custom project and need to look at it from a holistic point of view. Some of these structures being proposed, and realizes that there are ADA requirements, but believe there should be opportunities to be explored (explored months ago) and how to approach this that was not done. I am talking about governance and it couldn't be more disheartening when the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

The City of Springfield Public Works (Andrew Flippin) presented a slide-show of possible renovations to the bridge and asked for Board recommendations. What was shown last March is what is the public perception and we took those comments to City Council to procure approval to reconstruct the bridge. There is not a set of plans that are final, none of this is final, everything being presented is still not final, the only difference is that we now have guidance on how to move forward either to tear the structure down or rebuild.

Mr. Flippin went back through the same presentation from March 2018 and brought everyone up to date.

Mr. Flippin stated that City Council gave guidance to start the design and try to find a funding plan in January 2018. City Council approved for rehabilitation on the structure on May 8, 2018. Now we know that we are rehabilitating the structure and going through the SHPO process and will do what is necessary to get the Landmarks approval to move forward. Prior to May 8, 2018 we were not sure if City Council was supportive of rehabilitating the bridge in the 14-month process.

Mr. Bishop asked if Public Works is legally certain that the ADA features must be incorporated into the bridge structure itself or can they be separated in part (areas adjacent to the bridge, but not directly attached to it) of the same project.

Mr. Flippin stated that there must be an accessible path and that the path must tie to the truss structure where you walk across the track. The City has looked at other structures and other cities that had to have ADA accessibility and this is considered a transportation structure and if federal government funds are to be used, it will be required.

Mr. Bishop asked Duke McDonald, Assistant Attorney if a legal question has been asked to render an opinion on the previous question.

Mr. McDonald stated that they have not rendered an opinion, but wanted to know if this is an engineering or legal question for people with disabilities that are going to access the bridge.

Mr. Bishop said that it has been suggested, and has not checked the law, that it is conceivable that the ADA requirements could be completely separated from the bridge structure. For example, you could improve the underpasses (roadway) and make that the compliant ADA part of this project. Asked if that possibility was ever explored and whether it continues to be the possibility on how this project might be accomplished?

Mr. Flippin noted that it has been explored and one of the rules of ADA is that you must make it accessible to all users and have been in communication with the Access Board through the United States Government.

Mr. McDonald stated that the regulations require you can use the word renovation, rehabilitation, remodeling, whatever word used and start to begin on your historical structure, you must make it ADA compliant and accessible. He also noted that the Board has discussed the clear visual distinction between the old and the new.

Mr. Chambers stated that this is a rehabilitation and the Secretary of Interior Standards will be utilized in the guiding principles of this project. He quoted two briefs, number 14 and number 32 and those are very clear on delineations between old and new and stated these are the guiding principles that will be expected during state review.

Mr. Bishop also stated that it is important to add that it is the governance issue, this Board should have been comfortable with Public Works presentation to City Council first and that did not happen.

Mr. Flippin stated that there has never been an intention to avoid the Landmarks Board during this process and went through the approval process and continued his presentation.

Ms. Nancy Crandall asked a question about the vertical clearance of the bridge is 22 feet and the current design standards for Burlington Northern bridges requires new overhead bridges to be designed to a vertical clearance of 23.5 feet.

Mr. Flippin stated that if a new structure was built, then it would have to meet the 23.5 feet, but as it is an existing structure, Burlington Northern would have to speak on their behalf of the height requirements.

Kaitlyn McConnell believes that nothing was done maliciously, but seems that we have set the community up for disappointment and feels that since you have an estimate from what the public preference was and, so when it comes back to the Board and if they suggest changes to preserve the historical integrity, and it dramatically changes the budget, does that change anything for City Council or it is going to happen regardless of the cost.

Mr. Flippin stated that Public Works is going through City Council to get approval for the funding, but we are requesting 2.5M and we have been given estimates of 2.3M.

Mr. Bishop stated that his concern is that the City will spend a lot of money on the bridge, but will end up “gold-bricking” the heck out of it with the required ADA infrastructural changes that must be made. He is wondering what happens when the lifts cease to function, does that mean the pedestrian bridge closes because it is no longer accessible.

Mr. Flippin stated that the City must commit to maintain those structures and there are options available and to rebuild this structure it must be ADA compliant, either the ramps that are more expensive or the lifts that requires maintenance.

Mr. Kent Brown asked about the record on maintenance for the lifts.

Mr. Flippin stated that he is not an expert on lifts, however the City does have lifts in the parking garages and have issues with vandalism.

Mr. Stanek asked if the same standards would apply to the possible lifts maintenance.

Mr. Flippin stated they would have to maintain the same standards.

Mr. Brown asked if the bridge is currently in danger of falling over or is it stable and if the bridge belongs to the City of Springfield.

Mr. Flippin is not currently endangered of falling, but doesn't know what limits it would be to fail and it does belong to the City.

Ms. McConnell asked about the City's maintenance with the lifts, and its commitment to maintain the bridge in the future, i.e., 20, 75 years in the future and what is the plan.

Mr. Flippin stated that there is no way for Public Works to set aside the funds for 75 years in the future. When the bridge was presented to the public on the ideas of demolition or rehabbing we went over the possible maintenance cost that it would take. The City would have an extensive rehab on the bridge approximately every 24 years and keep yearly maintenance.

Mr. Paden make comments regarding on-going maintenance after the bridge has been rehabbed and if there has been an over-coat test on the bridge as part of the report and noting that over-coat systems sometimes are utilized to encapsulate lead base paint.

Mr. Flippin noted that with the existing rehabilitation plan shows stripping three layers of paint to the bare metal and still working on the paint system.

Mr. Kirk Juranas, Assistant Director of Public Works, my understanding of the paint system that is on the bridge has failed, it has a large amount of rust between the members. Great River Engineering recommends that remove the three layers of paint due to the water getting into the crevices.

Mr. Paul Lewis notes the discussion in two major areas of concern. The first is ADA compliance and the second is the historical integrity. The historical bridge pictures of the past show the landing on Commercial Street has always been a key component. The reason for my concern, is during the public presentation, a lot of them did not show the landing as a key component and believes it may set up a vote that is not historically accurate. Having the historical piece shows a key component of the Commercial Street history and where I believe the historical integrity is a concern and should be tied together.

Ms. Crandall asked who made the designs of the rendering and who would make the final design.

Mr. Flippin stated that the designs are drawings and renderings and mainly a discussion piece. There are no final designs and they will be worked out with the help of the Landmarks Board and the consultant is Great River Engineering.

Mr. Bishop asked if anyone has any input about the rehabilitation, this is the actual bridge structure, not the additional add-on (elevators/lifts or ramps).

Mr. Chambers asked about the materials being used.

Mr. Flippin stated that it is just a talking point and ideas the Board might be interested in and would like to discuss the materials.

Mr. Chambers stated that the bridge needs to be preserved using existing material as recommended in the Standards and obligated to use in these projects and talked about the possible origin for the materials/steel.

Mr. Flippin noted that the City is aware of more than one source of steel on the bridge, but not sure where they came from.

Mr. Brown asked if the bridge has always been the same color.

Mr. Flippin noted that various public accounts show the bridge may have been orange, but not sure.

Mr. Bishop stated that the Board is about maintaining the integrity of the bridge and all the component parts that can be preserved should be. The bridge structure itself, not the add-ons (elevators/lifts or ramps), to be made from materials very similar.

Mr. Chambers sees the rehabilitation of the bridge as two separate projects, the main span as a maintenance project and the ADA add-on as a new structure.

Ms. Mary Collette, President of Commercial Club, believes that some guidance from an expert in historic bridge restoration, however doesn't feel that Great River Engineering have the expertise in historic bridge restoration. Commercial Club hired VS Engineering to get a second opinion at the cost of \$10,000 and some recommendations that included testing the steel and believes that City staff could use some training if they are going to serve the Landmarks Board. She stated that Great River Engineering is doing an excellent job on the structural design, but the City has not hired a designer/consultant that can propose ideas. The concept of what the Landmarks Board is to provide conversation for project design and assistance before they hire a designer/consultant and reiterated the City needs to hire a firm with historical bridge design/restoration. She stated that she believes that the lighting component will bring the bridge into the next century and give another reason to celebrate.

Mr. Flippin reaffirmed that this is a discussion session and to hear feedback from the Landmarks Board as the historical experts to help the City go through this process.

Ms. Crandall asked for confirmation that City staff has permission to rebuild/rehabilitate the structure.

Mr. Flippin stated that City staff has received confirmation from City Council to go forward and the next step is to meet with other boards and go through the SHPO process.

Mr. Chambers asked about historic bridge design consulting, and if this is about an architect or an architectural historian (specialist in this type of structure) that can advise and give recommendations.

Ms. Collette stated that they contacted VS Engineering because they were recommended to Commercial Club due to their expertise in historic bridge rehabilitation.

Mr. Sparlin commented to the Board that he will schedule regular meetings regarding the footbridge for the future.

Communications: None

Awards and Recognition: None

Design Guidelines: Still waiting.

Administrative Approval of C of A's: None

ANY OTHER MATTERS THAT FALL UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE BOARD

None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30pm.



Michael Sparlin

for Executive Secretary