

**Historic Preservation Commission**  
**City of Charleston**  
City Council Chambers  
520 Jackson Avenue  
Charleston, Illinois  
May 20, 2016, 8:00 a.m.  
**MEETING MINUTES**

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Bob Bertrand at 8:06am
2. Members present: Bob Bertrand, Erin Blitz, Gary Henigman, Merry Lichtenberger, Blair Lord, Kit Morice, Elisa Roberts, Matt Madigan and Nora Pat Small
3. Guests present: Dan Corrie, City Clerk Deborah Muller, City Planner Steve Pamperin, and Code Official Alex Winkler
4. Erin made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2016 meeting; Kit seconded, approved by acclamation.
5. 1109 6th Street – Consideration of COA Requirements  
Dan Corrie had questions about COAs and repair/rehabilitation requirements for rental properties within the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Streets Historic District with specific interest in 1109 6<sup>th</sup> Street, which is likely to go to foreclosure soon. A lengthy discussion ensued about how investors in this and other properties in the area could do necessary repairs in an economically feasible manner. Corrie said the rental market has been adversely affected by the drop in enrollment at EIU. Nora Pat noted that the HPC's role is not to be concerned what repair costs will be but what are the options to save the resource? The HPC is charged with following the Standards for Rehabilitation when reviewing COAs. Erin suggested costly repairs should be a negotiating point for the sale price. Steve said 1109 6<sup>th</sup> Street is currently uninhabitable, and Alex noted there are many issues with this house including the foundation. Nora Pat mentioned a "Demo by Neglect" clause that is included in some HP ordinances. Steve would like to know more about this. The City is guided by a property maintenance code that outlines a process for inspections and fines issued to violators are imposed by the court system. Gary expressed that in the current market investors are concerned with property maintenance expenses but the HD designation should not be a burden and

realtors should not view that as a deterrent for purchasing and rehabilitating these properties. A brief discussion about incentives took place, including the property tax freeze for non-commercial properties and low interest loans. There is a need to educate realtors and potential investors in these properties; Gary will look into a realtor's workshop. Elisa expressed that it may be the time for reinvestment in these properties, preferably by families, bringing them back to their historic and intended use.

6. CASA House Walk

CASA is organizing another house tour for December 4<sup>th</sup>; do we want to co-sponsor and act as docents again? Elisa made the motion that we do and Merry seconded; the motion was approved unanimously.

### **Old Business**

1. City Planner/Inspector Report

Eight TIF projects were approved for funding for 2016.

Steve also reported that a sale is pending for 513 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

2. HPC Booth at Exchange Club Bicycle Race – Morning of May 21

The banner is done. Race starts at 8:00am with second and third starts at 10-minute intervals. There will be about 70 cyclists. No vendors this year, but maybe next year. "MuseFest" may also be on the same weekend as bike race next year (May 20). The HPC then discussed how these events increase tourism and commerce. The HPC table will be up at 7:00am and members decided on the shifts for the morning.

3. Grant Projects Update

Nothing to report in the absence of state funding.

4. Will Rogers Theatre Update

Next hearing is June 7. The group is working on a business plan and securing their 501 C-3 status.

5. Other

6. Bike Trail: Gary submitted the letter on behalf of the HPC and attend and spoke at the hearing.

## **New Business**

Website: Erin has made updates to the HPC's website, including the new officers for the year.

## **Meeting Adjournment**

Bob made a motion to adjourn by acclamation.