

MINUTES
City of Monona
Landmarks Commission
Wednesday November 13, 2019

Chair Kuhr called the meeting of the Monona Landmarks Commission to order at 4:30 PM.

Present: Chair Jennifer Kuhr, Mr. Rick Bernstein, Ms. Anne Wellman, Mr. Erik Lincoln, Ms. Mary Murrell and Ms. Branda Weix

Absent: Ms. Rebecca Holmquist

Also Present: Douglas Plowman, City Planner

Approval of Minutes

A motion by Mr. Bernstein, seconded by Ms. Weix, for the approval of the minutes of October 9, 2019 carried with two corrections.

Appearances

There were no appearances.

New Business

A. Discussion of Springhaven Pagoda and Stone Bridge Park improvements

Planner Plowman provided an overview of the July 2019 draft plans for the Stone Bridge Park, and referenced the concept plan included in the meeting packet. This had been discussed at the October Landmarks Commission meeting and more information was requested by Commission members. These plans are still conceptual, and the intention was for the Commission to discuss the proposed improvements, specifically how they interact and impact the Springhaven Pagoda.

Ms. Wellman shared information about water drainage issues currently present on site. There are topographic challenges that mean both stormwater and freshwater backwash into the pagoda. There were concerns that these elevation changes haven't been addressed by the proposed plans.

Chair Kuhr shared that she would like to see the inclusion of a stepping stone path or to extend the concrete path from the current design to the pagoda. Ms. Weix asked if the space around the pagoda could be cleared, with the possibility of adding a curved bench to separate it from the park and possibly alleviate some of the issues with the hillside. The pagoda foundations were also discussed, as these were shown to be in good condition during the 2016 assessment. Ms. Weix suggested locating a sign/boulder closer to the pagoda as it is a Monona landmark. The Commission requested more information from the City files and asked Planner Plowman to look into this before the December meeting.

Chair Kuhr added that it is important for the Landmarks Commission to get a seat at the table for these discussions. Final engineering plans are expected in 2020, with work scheduled to start in 2021. The pagoda work can be separate or concurrent with that taking part in the greater park. There was discussion that the work can help to address City stormwater outfalls, and that the redesign includes significant components to help with this. Chair Kuhr has spoken to Alder Wood and the current plan is for a joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Board in January. It was also requested that if possible the engineer from Ayres be present at the meeting to answer Commission questions.

B. Discussion of 4659 Tonyawatha Trail – Monona Landmark Property

An initial background to the discussion was provided by Planner Plowman. This informational discussion is intended to develop defining characteristics of currently landmarked properties. The Commission will use the current Landmark Designation forms and use these criteria and guidelines to develop documentation for these properties. The process is a response to Commission member discussion when reviewing landmark properties for potential certificates of appropriateness.

The Commission discussed the unique features of the subject property, what would be eligible to be documented, and what would be outside of the Commission's purview. The Commission can designate exterior features of the property, but those internal to the building are ineligible. There was discussion of how local designation does and could differ from National and State Register listings. Ms. Wellman raised that this property was one of the first from Monona to be used year-round, rather than as a vacation property. Ms. Weix added it would make sense to document history of the property and reference the architectural features. Planner Plowman shared the text associated with the property on the State Historical Society website for additional context. Mr. Lincoln asked how this, or other designation helps with property value and future sales. Mr. Bernstein responded that National Register designation provides the greatest level of detail to the applicant. Ms. Wellman shared that the Monona criteria need to focus on the architectural features, not just the history, and why it is significant to the community.

Ms. Weix suggested that she would like to see a similar size and style be maintained for the property. It is a great example of the Dutch Colonial style in Monona. There was general uncertainty about the property's original color, and as such that will not be included. The exterior French doors and general massing of the property were both other defining architectural characteristics that were highlighted. Ms. Murrell referenced the suggested lake survey to capture architectural characteristics that front the lake, and not just the street. There may be the opportunity to document these with photographs and add them to the property file. Additionally, it was requested that Planner Plowman look into the property files at the State Historical Society and see what photographs or additional documentation is available there. The Commission discussed replacement materials for projects such as the siding. The consensus was for similar materials to be selected. A landmark nomination document will be drafted by Planner Plowman for review and discussion at the next Landmarks meeting.

The Commission agreed that it would like to review both the Springhaven Pagoda and the Monona Landmark Property at 4123 Monona Drive at the December meeting.

C. Staff Updates

i. Reindahl Mound Marker donation to Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society

Planner Plowman updated the Commission that the marker will be donated to the Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society, and that he will facilitate contact between City staff from Public Works and the Society. He hopes it to be in place before the meeting in December.

ii. Monona Mound Marker update

There was little additional information to provide on the Monona Mound marker. Planner Plowman is working to get quotes for mounting the plaque, and will then coordinate with the landowner and local press regarding its placement.

iii. Miscellaneous

Ms. Murrell asked Chair Kuhr about the Black Bridge marker – she will provide an update at the next meeting. Mr. Bernstein asked about maintenance of marker signs, and specifically the one located at Monona Motors/Ernie's Trading Post. Planner Plowman will look into this and share a response at the next meeting.

Minutes Approved on December 11, 2019

Mr. Bernstein discussed a number of properties and sites that could probably be de-listed as local landmarks. Chair Kuhr suggested tabling this discussion and adding it to a future agenda.

Upcoming meetings

Upcoming meetings are scheduled for December 11, 2019 and January 8, 2020.

Adjournment

A motion by Mr. Bernstein, seconded by Ms. Murrell, to adjourn carried. (5:45pm)

Submitted by,

Doug Plowman, City Planner