



**Minutes of the  
Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)**

**Held at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 11, 2021  
Committee Room, Anoka City Hall**

I. **Call to Order** Vice Chair Thurston called the regular meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

II. **Roll Call**

Members present: Vice Chair Barb Thurston, Peg Flaig, Colleen Hansen, Elizabeth McFarland, Cory Rahn, Lisa Silberg-Jurek

Members absent: Chair Bart Ward

Others present: None

Staff present: Clark Palmer, City Planner

City Planner Clark Palmer issued Commissioner Flaig's oath of office.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chair Thurston asked for a correction on Page 2, Paragraph 4: "Commissioner Thurston said she had shared a list with Mr. Palmer of additional properties where new sandwich board signs would be beneficial."

Commissioner Flaig noted corrections on Page 2, Paragraph 2: "Mr. Palmer shared ~~on an~~ an update on infill standards that included the Economic..." and "...with the ~~Commission's~~ Commissions..."

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 13, 2021, MEETING BY COMMISSIONER FLAIG, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SILBERG-JUREK AS CORRECTED. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.**

IV. **Old Business**

A. **2021 Goals**

Mr. Palmer said each year the Commission adopted their previous year's top five accomplishments and five goals for the upcoming year and that review of the adopted goals should be discussed at each meeting for progress checks. He reviewed the five adopted goals and spoke specifically about proposed legislation regarding infill standards that would limit cities' ability to impose architectural elements. He said the organization Housing First was leading the effort and the League of Minnesota Cities was working to inform cities and actively opposing the legislation.

Commissioner Rahn explained Housing First's goal was to stop multi-tenant homes from going on properties that could result in segregating neighborhoods and

gentrification as they believed infill standards could affect affordability and price homes out of reach of diverse communities.

Mr. Palmer noted the definition of family has evolved over time and was not inclusive and that the motivation was to legalize new starter homes. He said Minnesota had the lowest housing inventory in the nation but the widest housing disparity for people of color and that cities need to work to include exemptions for historic neighborhoods.

Vice Chair Thurston asked if this legislation would affect the rental density cap ordinance. Mr. Palmer said it would not but the property maintenance code and others would still apply. He said this legislation would essentially legalize cheaper new home construction and that the City was working to contact local representatives to oppose. He spoke about construction and labor costs and how developers work to create larger projects for more profit and that not one size fits all and how the focus of this law should be on where there was a lack of affordability, adding Anoka currently has a sufficient supply of affordable housing. He explained the legislation would state that the minimum standard was the building code and could not be exceeded and staff's concerns were that brick and other architectural elements would not be allowed.

Commissioner Rahn said this legislation could affect many historic cities like Stillwater and that constructing a minimum standard home could lower the value of the entire area.

Mr. Palmer shared the differences in HRAs and who can develop property through Planned Unit Developments. He said Anoka has stringent architectural requirements regarding elements such as brick, stone, and masonry and how developers work to negotiate materials down.

Vice Chair Thurston asked who would enforce such legislation. Mr. Palmer said the difficulty will come should cities interpret the law differently and could potentially make cities liable.

Mr. Palmer referred to the awards ceremony later this year and the idea for an interim televised meeting for presentation but said the property owners who he had suggested be recognized unfortunately lost their home to a fire and suggested not holding the televised meeting at this time.

Mr. Palmer reviewed the inventory of damaged sandwich board signs and the need for new frames and suggested discussion be held on transitioning to another program if a new frame source could not be identified. He suggested trying to find another welder but noted these were custom frames and difficult to find.

Commissioner Silberg-Jurek said the program was worthy and said we should work to identify a new vendor. Mr. Palmer said he will be contacting the vendor who created the pumpkin sculpture at City Hall as well as contacting the Sign Station.

Vice Chair Thurston noted they were running out of homes to recognize and could retire the program but should replace the faded signs first. Commissioner Flaig noted the sign material has to be a type that does not fade.

Commissioner Silberg-Jurek shared a possible vendor with Mr. Palmer for approximately \$60 for consideration. Mr. Palmer said he would follow-up, adding the current sign faces were 18x24.

Commissioner Rahn offered the possibility of doing the work if a vendor cannot be identified.

#### **B. Expansion of City Register**

Mr. Palmer shared background regarding expanding the City Register including how it was established, nomination by commission and criteria for designation. He noted how the Stonehouse would likely meet the outlined criteria and should be focused on first. He shared staff received three proposals from consultants to assist with expansion of the Anoka City Register and reviewed Cultural Services LLC submitted a proposal of \$8,114 not to exceed cost. He shared how the City Manager was supportive of the cost as it was important to memorialize the City's history to have an accurate, well-referenced report on properties. He said while this was an unbudgeted cost staff was trying to identify funding and suggested the HPC has money in an escrow account that could be used for this expense.

Discussion was held on fundraising activities and being specific for the item and balancing funds to do both this project and new sandwich board signs and the need to designate \$1,500 towards this project.

Commissioner McFarland said expanding the City Register was in line with the Commission's focus. Mr. Palmer agreed that this work would contribute to a very important goal and was the right way to do it by empowering the HPC to achieve goals as stated by Councilmember Skogquist.

**MOTION TO APPROVE UP TO \$1,500 TO ENGAGE A CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR EXPANSION OF THE CITY'S REGISTER BY COMMISSIONER RAHN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SILBERG-JUREK. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.**

Commissioner Flaig said after the report was complete and identified properties would the action help preserve the buildings or just grounds. Mr. Palmer explained the goal was to expand the City Register and the importance of sites to Anoka and not the State and to make those properties subject to historic preservation regulations and

allowing the HPC a seat at the table to provide input and create a list of properties for future commissions and councils.

**C. Witch Medallion Pavers**

Mr. Palmer spoke of the paver options that included a 12x12 at \$47.50, 8x8 at \$26.50, and 4x8 at \$18.50. He shared the vendor's proposed fundraising guide and how items could sell for a range of \$50 to \$500 and how the HPC's idea of the City purchasing pavers for reimbursement by the HPC was shared at the development team meeting and was still working on getting the idea further pursued. He spoke with Public Services Administrator Lisa LaCasse regarding their paver program and learned that clay is a much higher quality material than concrete but limited to only a reddish color then suggested ordering 10 for samples to gauge interest.

Commissioner Flaig suggested pavers be displayed at businesses too and suggested sending a sample to other companies for better pricing. She said she would try to identify another local vendor too if possible.

Commissioner McFarland said she was not excited about the price and believed only a small number would be sold at the proposed \$100 price.

Consensus was to table the topic until next month's meeting.

Commissioner McFarland left the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

V. **New Business**

None.

VI. **Committee Reports**

A. **Heritage Preservation Award Committee (Thurston, Silberg-Jurek)**

Vice Chair Thurston noted the HPC should be looking to identify commercial properties too for awards. Mr. Palmer agreed then shared consideration would be given to the new speak easys, Jim Nielson's photo donations, and one new group who was renovating a home on 1808 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, then asked if the awards presentation should be at a regular meeting or the event center.

Commissioner Hansen suggested waiting on holding an event this year due to possible COVID-19 restrictions.

B. **Fundraising Committee (Rahn, Flaig)**

The Commission noted there would be no garden tour this year but that work needed to create a list of possible properties.

Commissioner Flaig said he did not like the sandwich board sign program and that the home and garden show was a lot of work for not much return and said she would rather spend time and energy and identifying and registering historic properties and not on signs that are not taken care of.

Discussion was held on fundraiser flagging possibilities to better raise funds for the Commission's goals.

**C. Event Committee (Ward, McFarland, Hansen)**

No report.

Commissioner Rahn requested an update on park signs, stating they were becoming difficult to read and should be addressed.

Mr. Palmer asked how the Commission would like to see assigned tasks included on agenda.

Vice Chair Thurston shared that the local Daughters of the Revolution received a \$20,000 grant to be used for counseling and a commercial kitchen at Haven for Heroes and how they were working to announce this grant through press releases and presentations.

**VII. Adjournment**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN BY COMMISSIONER RAHN, SECONDED BY  
COMMISSIONER FLAIG, MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AT 6:50 P.M.**