

AURORA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Tuesday, January 9, 2024
6:00 p.m.



Aurora History Museum
15051 E. Alameda Parkway
Aurora, CO

Present: Chair Elizabeth Hamilton, Vice Chair Mike Ackman, Emma Bertrand, Lynne Evans, Gordon Tucker, Lynda Heckendorn, Laura MacDonald, and Todd McMahon

Absent: Charlie Peters

Guests: Tyler Lovejoy, Ron Sladek (via Zoom)

Staff: Chris Geddes, Scott Williams, and Courtney Mosca

I. Call to Order

- A quorum being present, Chair Hamilton called the Historic Preservation Commission meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
- The minutes from the HPC regular meeting on November 14, 2023, were approved as distributed.

II. Staff Report: Historic Preservation Specialist Chris Geddes (HPS Geddes):

- AHM Exhibits
- AHMHS Programs & Other Exhibits
- Compliance/Section 106 Review:
489 Newark Street: NOT ELIGIBLE
- Landmarks Report:
Senac Site: Commissioner McMahon provided an update on the Interpretive Plan and will be setting up a meeting with Aurora History Museum and Historic Sites (AHMHS) staff soon. Museum Director Williams discussed his conversations with the tribal representatives of the North Arapahoe and North Cheyenne tribes along with a potential gathering to go through the interpretive materials prior to presenting the info to Parks Recreation, and open Space (PROS).

Melvin School: State Historical Fund (SHF) grant was denied. Cherry Creek School District (CCSD) to fully fund the work and is working with HPS Geddes to complete the Minor CoA; Major CoA for ADA concrete ramp and shrub removal will come before the HPC in March or April.

Fox Arts Center: Multiple site visits over the past three months related to the SHF grant for the neon sign restoration. Original neon colors revealed via found shards of glass/neon tubing: rose, tangerine, and white and firsthand knowledge of Shorty Hanger's son Mark, both of whom worked on the sign in the 1980s. Extensive roof access and research of Fox Theaters across the country helpful for determining original paint scheme. Final paint colors approved during Da Vinci site visit in early January. Seating/Carpeting Replacement – HPS Geddes to complete Minor Alterations CoA for these projects; the fence/security gate installation will come to the HPC as a Major Alterations CoA at the February 13, 2024, meeting.

DeLaney Farm: At the Gully House, west side porch is in bad shape. Estimate is around \$3,000 for repair of the porch; estimate is approximately \$4,000 for the ADA ramp installation. HPS Geddes will handle Minor Alterations CoA for these. Bryan Neill is awaiting approval from Facilities Manager for the west porch repair and ADA ramp is about to go under

contract. The east and west Coal Creek outhouses were stabilized in December. Both outhouses as well as the stable will need significant repairs in the spring. Approximately 20 people attended the DeLaney Farm Open House Days in December.

Centennial House: Bullet hole found in arched window found on December 3, 2023, when DAR put up holiday decorations; the source was the apartment complex across the street. Bryan Neill brought window company out to look at it for cost estimate. Facilities ordered the window pane and will pay for the glass as well as install. Open House Day and Architectural Tours of Galena Street were well attended on December 16, 2023, with approx. 25 people. May consider a spring tour.

Fitzsimons: Golf Shelter Relocation is still in progress. Chair Hamilton brought Wakeen Barrett to inspect shelter on December 7, 2023, for disassembly and transport to Springhill Golf Course. Mr. Barrett's estimate came in at the cost of \$5,500. Next step will be a meeting with PROS, Manager of Golf, and the Spring Hill Superintendent in late January for discussion of how to proceed and funding. Discuss \$\$ HPC is willing to put towards move; HPC decided on \$2500.00 maximum for HPS Geddes to share at the Golf meeting.

Chapel Local Landmark Nomination: Virtual meeting with Mayor Coffman, City Manager Jason Batchelor & Deputy City Manager (DCM) Laura Perry on December 18, 2023 went well. HPS Geddes is working on putting Local Landmark Nomination together from 1998 nomination prepared by Ron Sladek with Tatanka Historical Associates. According to Mayor Coffman, he thinks the Local Landmark nomination can be reviewed by the HPC at the February 13, 2024, meeting. FIC/FRA Board (owner) meets January 24, 2024, and HPS Geddes will likely attend to answer questions by the Board. Once Local Landmark status is approved by City Council, it is recommended the owner apply for an Historic Structure Assessment (HSA) grant through the SHF to understand work needed on building as well as costs associated with such work, then apply for SHF grant to do some of the work. There is a desire to open the Chapel as a quiet meditation place/non-denominational space for the staff and students at CU Anschutz, but that it can also be used as public gathering space upon request. DCM Perry would like to see it used for art gallery space as well.

Robidoux House: Boiler Replacement – Minor CoA as there were revisions to original one approved by former HPS Brownfield in 2022.

Lowry Building 880: HPS Geddes met with architect Barb Darden on site; no need for an HSA; need a structural engineer to look at building and possibly do some investigation. Follow up meeting scheduled with architects, structural engineer, and Facilities North Manager Bryan Neill to assess building; work to be done on plan after pricing comes in from Structural Engineer. Depending on costs for repairs, the building is eligible for a Save America's Treasures Grant (National Trust for Historic Preservation). First priority: get the building stabilized/fix the foundation. Then the work can focus on repair of holes in the siding and window sills as well as roof replacement and chimney repointing.

HPC Retreat Prep: Set for Saturday, January 20, 2024, from 8:30am to 4:00pm at CAPSTC. HPC Members can also see the George Ackman Exhibit. Abbey Christman, Chair of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) to do a mini-CAMP Training followed by historic preservation facilitator Ron Sladek, Tatanka Historical Associates for the remainder of the day. Agenda includes updating HPC Strategic Plan and discussion of subcommittees. A thank you was extended to Commissioner Ackman for use of the CAPSTC facility. Breakfast and lunch will be provided; Historic Sites Staff will provide breakfast and beverages; HPC will provide lunch and snacks.

- o HPS Geddes requested approval of up to \$325.00 for lunch/snacks. Commissioner McMahon made a motion to approve up to **\$325.00** for HPC retreat lunches and snacks; Commissioner Bertrand seconded the motion.
Motion APPROVED unanimously.

Colfax BRT Project: HPS Geddes met with Historic Denver, City & County of Denver Landmarks Preservation Commission staff, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and CPI to discuss potential mitigation options as part of the Section 106 process. It appears there was a failure to follow proper Section 106 procedures and survey historic resources along the Colfax Avenue corridor early in the project. The local preservation groups are looking for ways to achieve positive tangible projects for those impacted by the BRT in the form of façade grants, sign work, access assistance during construction.

Show and Tell: Commissioner Ackman brought in a WPA mural from the Fitzsimons gym that traveled with the Police Department when they vacated the gym for CAPSTC. There was a discussion surrounding how to determine artist and where to possibly it (askart.com website, Library of Congress, etc.) HPS Geddes announced that Save the Signs Facebook page administrator and 9News photojournalist Corky Scholl and Morry's Neon glass bender and shop manager Todd Matuszewicz both agreed to serve on the Colfax Avenue Subcommittee along with Commissioner Ackman.

- **Other News:** HPS Geddes provided information about upcoming public outreach presentations she will be doing, reminded Commissioners of preservation-related trainings through the NAPC and CLG programs in the next few months, new HPC member appointments, and a slight delay on the La Cueva Cultural Heritage Site nomination form review. HPS Geddes also informed the HPC that the Universal Development Ordinance (UDO) is missing significant information and the entire document will need to be revised. A meeting with the Deputy City Attorney is planned to discuss how to proceed. HPS Geddes also attempted to bring forward changes/corrections to the HPC Rules and Procedures she worked on for months for review and approval by the HPC. After much discussion by HPS Geddes and the Commissioners, it was decided to table the update and correction of errors in the Rules and Procedures for a future date and deeper discussion. Officer Elections were also tabled by the Commissioners. HPS Geddes asked the HPC to think about potential candidates for the Elizabeth Johnson Preservation Award. It was suggested to do the award presentation in May as part of Historic Preservation Month. AHMHS is discussing funding sources for overdue alarm system updates at Delaney Farm and Centennial House.

III. Site Report:

- Eastern Aurora: Aurora Local Landmark #16 **KOA Building** is in great condition and well-cared for by CDOT.
- **CHS Victory Grange** needs some exterior cleanup of weeds and trash; Commissioner MacDonald noted some interior water damage behind the stage. HPS Geddes offered to communicate this information to the building owner and look at a workday to help the aging membership. The building sees much use as a rental facility. A workday was not of interest to the Commissioners, so HPS Geddes will look for other groups interested in a clean up day at the site (Scout groups, Smoky Hill HS community service clubs, etc.).
- **CHS Colorado Freedom Memorial** is in excellent condition.

IV. Old Business:

- CPI Conference Registration – Completed with six Commissioners attending. Brief report

from attendees at February 13, 2024, meeting.

- Phone Booths Project Update – tabled for immediate future due to technical issues.

V. New Business:

- Call for items of business by Commissioners or Staff
 - Rules & Regulations Revisions - VOTE REQUIRED
→**TABLED** until future date (possibly March 2024 meeting)
 - Officer Elections – Chair & Vice Chair - VOTE REQUIRED
→**TABLED** until future date (possibly March or April 2024 meeting)
 - State Tax Credit (STC) Review by HPS/Certified Local Government (CLG) vs State - VOTE REQUESTED
HPS Geddes explained that in 2021 the CLG Coordinator recommended Aurora return the STC back to the SHPO as the HPS and City of Aurora do not receive many applications. SHPO staff is better equipped to answer questions and review these projects.
Commissioner Tucker made a motion to return the STC review to the SHPO;
Commissioner Ackman seconded the motion;
Motion APPROVED unanimously.
- Optional field trip to Morry’s Neon for tour of shop
 - Sunday, February 25, 2024 selected by majority of the HPC
 - HPS Geddes will provide more information prior to tour.
- Local landmark designation
 - HPS Geddes met with owner of the Big Top Building in the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center. She is supportive of a Local Landmark nomination for her building.
 - HPS Geddes will write nomination and hopes to present at a public hearing for HPC review in Spring 2024.

Agenda February 13, 2024, HPC meeting

Councilman Curtis Gardner Attending
Fitzsimons Chapel Local Landmark Nomination Public Hearing
Retreat Recap
Possible CoAs with Public Hearings

VI. Adjournment

The Commission adjourned its meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Submitted by: Courtney Mosca/ Revised Chris Geddes Date: 02/02/2024

Approved by:  Date: 2/13/2024