



APPROVED: November 2, 2011

CITY OF ALBANY
LANDMARKS ADVISORY COMMISSION
Council Chambers, 333 Broadalbin Street
Wednesday, September 7, 2011
6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Landmarks Commissioners Present: Kate Foster, Oscar Hult, Trent Jacobs, Erin Johnson, David Pinyerd, Keith Semmel and Camron Settlemier

Landmarks Commissioners Absent: None

Staff present: Anne Catlin, Planner II; Bernadette Feyerherm, Administrative Assistant

Others present: 4 others

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hult called the meeting of the Landmarks Advisory Commission (LAC) to order at 7:29 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 25, 2010 JOINT CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Motion: Jacobs moved to approve the October 25, 2010 Joint City Council Work Session minutes (as written). Pinyerd seconded it. **Motion passed unanimously.**

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 3, 2011 AND AUGUST 16, 2011 MINUTES

Motion: Pinyerd moved to approve the August 3, 2011 and August 16, 2011 minutes (as written). Semmel seconded it. **Motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC HEARING: 2751 and 2753 Salem Avenue SE (HI-15-11)

Hult called the quasi-judicial public hearing on HI-15-11 to order at 7:32 p.m. It is a request to demolish the c.1890 Vunk House, which is on the Local Historic Inventory.

Staff Report: Catlin summarized the written staff report. This is a continuation of the public hearing held August 3, 2011. It was decided to continue the hearing in order to hold a site visit. Two people testified at the first hearing, the applicant and a resident. The applicant intends to construct a multiple-family development on the property. The applicant is willing to offer the house to anyone who is interested in relocating it.

Catlin reviewed the features of the house and property. The Vunk House was constructed in 1890. It is one of the two oldest surviving houses on Old Salem Road. It is also a good example of a rural Italianate Cottage style house. The house is on the Local Historic Inventory, but not on the National Register. The house, along with the other five historic homes on Salem Avenue, serves as a gateway to the National Register Historic Districts. The site is zoned RM (Residential Medium density) which allows for multi-family construction.

Catlin noted that a site visit was conducted on August 16, 2011 by the Landmarks Advisory Commission

along with the applicant, to assess the condition of the house. The site visit confirmed that the house needs repair, but there was no information provided with the application that documented the expense of these repairs, if it was economically feasible to do so, or alternatives to demolition. She concluded that the application did not satisfy any of the review criteria

Catlin pointed out that the Development Code does not allow for denial of the demolition. If the Commission finds that neither of the three review criteria satisfied the request and they can invoke a stay of demolition up to 365 days from the date of the application. The City of Albany, however, has no power to deny the demolition request. Staff concluded there is not enough information to determine whether the house could be saved and recommends a stay of demolition with a requirement to market the house to persons willing to relocate it within the city limits of Albany.

Testimony

Scott Lepman, 100 Ferry Street, Albany. He is the applicant. At the time he bought the property with the existing structure, he wasn't aware of any historic nature with the home. The prior owners' intent was to demolish the home and redevelop the property for residential uses. He wants to get the site available for alternative use but discovered it was on the Historic Registry. According to Lepman, the ability to rehab a structure is through its foundation. In his opinion, the foundation (of the Vunk House) has failed and it has settled so much. He also stated that he has no problem with the staff's recommendation with a stay of demolition but would like to suggest that the recommendation be modified with regards to "developing the site without removing the house". He wants the LAC to consider the financial feasibility of any options. One of the recommendations also stated that the property can be divided and the unaffected site can be used. Lepman has plans to build apartments for the site and will have concerns with parking, ingress and egress off of the busy road if the site space will be reduced.

Chair Hult closed the public hearing 7:45 p.m.

Jacobs abstained from voting, as he was absent during the last two meetings. Settlemier also abstained as he testified during the preliminary meeting. Johnson abstained, but retracted. A short discussion followed regarding the report that Catlin will submit to the City about the site visit.

Commission Action

Motion: Foster made a motion to approve a stay to demolition of the c. 1890 Vunk House to July 14, 2012 with the following conditions. This motion is based on the findings and conclusions of the staff report and testimony as well as evidence presented at the public hearing.

- Within 120 days from the date of the notice, the applicant shall explore options to develop the site without removing the house.
- Within 120 days from the date of the notice, the applicant shall market the house to persons interested in moving it to a site within the city limits. If there is no interest within the city limits, then it could be moved elsewhere.
- If there is no interest in relocating the house, then the house shall be offered up for salvage.
- Prior to demolition, a report shall be submitted to the City confirming these conditions have been met. The report shall include photographs or videotape of the interior and exterior.

Pinyerd seconded it. **The motion passed unanimously.**

OTHER BUSINESS

Catlin provided the following updates:

- Email was sent to LAC to consider paperless meeting packets over the next few months. Several LAC members expressed their preferences.
- Meeting time will still be held at 6:30 p.m. every first Wednesdays of the month.
- Updating Article 7 - Public input for updating the historic preservation goals, policies and development code will be scheduled soon.
- Hult suggested a demolition denial policy. Foster would like to see “until they find a place to move the house to” phrase added to the stay of demolition condition.
- Hult asked if the inventory is ready to be launched online. Catlin said she was waiting for the departmental web pages to be updated.
- Grants – Catlin asked the LAC to consider funding needs for the next SHPO grant cycle. There may be interest to do more research on Post World War II neighborhoods. The recent survey on the Post World War II presentation was received well.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the LAC is tentatively scheduled for October 5, 2011, at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hult adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by

Reviewed by

(Signature on file)

(Signature on file)

Bernadette Feyerherm
Administrative Assistant

Anne Catlin
Planner II