

## **MINUTES OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING 9/20/2023**

**Date and time:** 09/20/23 01:00 pm

**Present:**

Crystal Aulbur, Steve Moore, David McDaniel, Mary Sheridan, City Engineer Kyle Bruemmer, Mayor Steve Myers, Director of Administration Courtney Doyle, City Clerk Kathie Ratliff, Council Liaison Jeff Stone

**Absent:** Carl Brauner, Frances Vaughn

**Location:** Fulton City Hall Executive Conference Room

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER.**

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. with the Historic Preservation President, Crystal Aulbur, presiding.

#### **2. ROLL CALL**

There were four members present, two members (Brauner, Vaughn) absent. Quorum met.

#### **3. COMMENTS FROM VISITORS**

There were no comments.

#### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Decision** Motion was made by David McDaniel and Seconded by Mary Sheridan to approve the minutes for July 19, 2023. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

#### **5. FORMAL REVIEW**

City Engineer Bruemmer reviewed the Unsafe Structure Commission hearing on the property at 410 E. 8th Street in Fulton. He described who was there, the evidence offered, and how the decision was made. The Unsafe Structure Commission decided that demolition was the only solution for such property.

"Is the evidence structural?" asked Commission President Crystal Aulbur. Is it the state of the home and its surroundings, or the house itself?" Building Inspector Scott Olds discussed the structural integrity of the building, which he found to be unsound. He believes that in order to be preserved, it would have to be torn down and rebuilt.

The state of the building, the condemnation procedure, the appeal process, and the costs involved were all discussed. Bruemmer, a city engineer, remarked It's not something we enjoy doing because it requires a significant investment that is seldom repaid. It can cost up to 20,000 dollars, and the vacant lot isn't worth that. So it becomes an administrative judgment as to what portion of the expense we reclaim.

Director Doyle said that because there has been no communication with the building's owner, this is where we are in the process. It would be a different conversation if the homeowner came to us and offered it to us. However, I believe that would involve legal proceedings.

"Can we offer to buy it after the 30 days appeal expires?" stated David McDaniel. "Would it be removed from the demo list?"

City Engineer Bruemmer stated that in order to halt the process, a person or company must come up with a solid plan of action.

According to David McDaniel "I know houses that have been condemned have been saved before."

"Yes," responded City Engineer Bruemmer. According to the code, this property could be fixed (in 90 days). However, when our inspectors go through it, they must determine if it meets all intended fixes." He went on to say, "We have seen other properties who stepped up to fix the problem and one who gave the property to the city so we could do something with it."

"We can go the bare minimum if we have someone making strides," said Director Doyle. "We will go the distance to work with them."

**Decision** Motion was made by David McDaniel and Seconded by Steve Moore that the Historic Preservation Commission acknowledges the notification of demolition for the structure located at 410 E. 8th Street. All in favor, motion carries.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Kiln Project**

City Engineer Bruemmer announced that the EPA has completed a market analysis on a site, and the DNR's contractor is conducting an environmental study. A community visioning meeting is scheduled to gather input on future community usage of the property. The Historic Preservation Commission is focused on retaining the kiln and stack primarily.

The commission considered the possibility of erecting a fence around the site of the kiln. However, they are hesitant because it could attract attention to the area, which has been relatively quiet. They also discussed the possibility of the kiln being deemed unsafe and the fence being dismantled, which would make it a wasted effort. At this time, they plan to wait for the brownfield results before making a decision and intend to submit the fence project in the 2024 budget for council review.

### **Historic Properties Survey**

In 1979, a historical survey in Fulton which involved interviews with property owners and detailed descriptions of their residences. When it was first completed, it was a joke, but now has become valuable information. The information is valuable for homeowners who are applying for the national registry.

With this project being grossly behind schedule and it being a duty for the commission she said the commission should be seeking to set an example by completing our own historic property survey.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **Designated Historic Properties: Discussion of Purpose**

The City Council inquired about about the Historic Preservation designation, which the commission thinks, as the ordinance's principal goal, symbolizes community pride, adds charm, and promotes curiosity through the use of signage on the property's lawn highlighting designated homes.

### **Strategic Plan**

President Aulbur discussed her vision for a Strategic Plan. She believes that 5-7 years of planned vision and initiatives along with marketing and outreach strategies would be proper in order to avoid repeating business with new members and leadership coming on board. She believes it would assist all members with a focused direction as they work to fulfill their terms. Aulbur said "It's something we can strive towards."

### **Other Business**

Discussion about an unsafe structure on 9th Street where George Washington Carver may have stayed in Fulton in the 1930s. The GWCCC board refused to buy the property. The GWCCC board was frustrated because the owner wanted to sell it for 30k (to steep of a price) five years ago but feels it's too late now to fix this cultural landmark. The Historic Preservation Commission discussed looking for a restorer to save the structure.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

The Historic Preservation Commission is scheduled to meet again on Wednesday, November 15, 2023

## **9. ADJOURN**

**Decision** Motion was made by David McDaniel and Seconded by Steve Moore to adjourn at 2:33 p.m. All in favor, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathie Ratliff