



Historic Preservation Commission

Chair: Joe Chappell

Commission Members: Lynn Bilodeau, Patrick Kerr, Adam Ropp,
James Hensley, Erin Brown, Valerie Duncan and James Long - Ex-Officio

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Monday, January 6, 2020 at 5:30 PM
City Hall – 2nd Floor Council Chambers
101 North Second Street, Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044

1. Call to order.
2. Public comments.
3. Election of Officers
 - a. Nomination and Election of Chair
 - b. Nomination and Election of Vice-Chair
4. Approval of previous minutes from the regular meeting on December 2, 2019 meeting.
5. HPC Application 19-028 – Discussion and potential action on a request for the approval of a minimum maintenance plan for a building located at 202 W. Harrison.
 - a. Staff Report
 - b. Discussion
 - c. Decision
6. Staff comments.
7. Commissioner comments.
8. Adjournment.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

December 2, 2019

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was posted on or before November 27, 2019 before 5:00 PM. The meeting was held December 2, 2019 at Guthrie City Hall.

Members: Joe Chappell, Chair
Erin Brown
James Hensley
Valerie Duncan
Lynn Bilodeau
Patrick Kerr
Adam Ropp
James Long – ex officio - *Absent*

Also Present: Dan Kassik, Planning Director

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 5:30 PM. Commission members were present and a quorum declared.

Public Comments

None

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Kerr and seconded by Brown to approve minutes of November 14, 2019 regular meeting. All voted aye. Motion passed 6-0.

Discussion Item 1

HPC Application 19-027 - Discussion and potential action on a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new information kiosk to be located on the City owned property at the corner of Harrison and Division.

Staff gave a report on the item. It was noted that the proposed kiosk was identical to the existing information center that ODOT installed at the end of 2nd Street by the bridge. Commissioner Chappell mentioned that he preferred the previously approved kiosk design. The Commission agreed that they preferred the previously approved version. A motion was made by Kerr and seconded by Ropp to keep the originally approved version of the kiosk. All voted aye. Motion passed 7-0.

Discussion Item 2

Discussion and potential action on an amendment to the Guthrie Historic Preservation Ordinance, Sign Guidelines, Recommended Sign Types, to allow for horizontal and vertical freestanding banners/flags.

Staff gave a report on the item. The Commission agreed that allowing horizontal flags without limiting wording and/or colors was acceptable, however the Commission was not in favor of allowing feather flags or any vertical type flags/banners.

Cherie Gordon, Lucy Swanson, and Gary Good all spoke against allowing feather flags.

A motion was made by Brown and seconded by Hensley to approve the proposed amendment with feather flags or any vertical flags/banners being prohibited. All voted aye. Motion passed 7-0.

Discussion Item 3

Review and comment on the final design elements of the Mineral Wells 2018 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Project.

Staff gave report on the item. The Commission as a whole supported the project but had the following recommended changes:

A landscape architect be hired to review the project.

Preservation of all the existing trees.

Reduce the number of parking spaces, especially along the front/initial drive area into the park. Place parking on the south, across the pond possibly.

Add a gazebo or gazebo's across the pond.

Abby Ropp, Kailyn Swonger and Lucy Swanson all spoke about reducing the number of parking spaces.

No formal vote was necessary; All the Historic Preservation Commission recommendations were forwarded to the City Council for their consideration.

Staff Comments

None

Commissioners Comments

Lynn Bilodeau thanked Staff for their work on the park project.

Erin Brown encouraged everyone to attend the Victorian Walk in the downtown.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.



Leroy D. Alsup, City Manager
PO Box 908, Guthrie, OK 73044
lalsup@cityofguthrie.com
(405) 282-0496

To: City of Guthrie Historic Preservation Commission
From: Dan Kassik, Planning Director
Subject: Staff Report – HPC Application 19-028
Date: December 27, 2019

APPLICANT: Lauren Ladd

LOCATION: 202 W. Harrison

REQUEST: A request for approval of a minimum maintenance plan (Victor Building).

NOTIFICATION: Notice of the meeting was published in the Guthrie News Leader on January 1, 2020 and the agenda was posted by 5:00 p.m. on January 2, 2020.

DISCUSSION:

Section 13 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance details minimum maintenance requirements for any building within the historic district. Section 13 states:

- (1) In order to prevent public hazards and to maintain the structural integrity of Guthrie's historic resources, every owner or other person having legal custody and control of a landmark, landmark site or property in a historic district shall keep in good repair:
 - (a) All of the exterior portions of such resources including but not limited to roofs, foundations or floors, and exterior walls including windows and doors to ensure the resources are structurally safe.
 - (b) All interior portions thereof which, if not so maintained, may cause or tend to cause the exterior portions to become public hazards or structurally unsound.
- (2) When a property is found to be in need of maintenance as specified in (a) or (b) above, City staff shall notify the owner(s) of said property. The owner shall within 30 days present a proposed plan to the Commission describing how and when the identified work will be completed. By owner request with reasonable justification, the Commission may grant the owner a thirty (30) day extension in order to provide more time to prepare the plan. The Commission shall approve the owner's plan as presented or approve the plan subject to certain conditions.
- (3) Failure to respond to the minimum maintenance notice, to submit a plan, or to implement the approved plan will constitute a violation of this ordinance.

The Planning Department had originally become aware of the disrepair of the building in September 2019. Staff had met with Mr. Ladd at that time to discuss options moving forward. Mr. Ladd stated he was working with a company that specialized in brick facades and was going to remedy the issue. At that time, Staff had hoped for compliance from the owner and did not move forward with any formal process. After a few weeks of no progress, Staff issued a formal letter to the building owner requiring that a minimum maintenance plan be submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission to be heard at their January 16, 2020 meeting per Section 13.2 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

The plan submitted by the applicant is very generic in nature outlining a broad overview of past issues and remedies taken to date. The more pertinent issue, bricks on south façade, is vaguely explained. The plan lacks any specific timeframes and does not provide any specifics about the façade issue. Staff has no way to enforce the minimum maintenance plan without specific dates.

The plan should address specifically the issue at hand and how that issue will be remedied, including specific timeframes for each step/task. The owner states that the bricks coming apart are not a structural issue, but the owner is not a structural engineer and has only stated he has talked to an engineer. Staff has not received any information from a licensed engineer.

Section 13 allows the Commission to approve the owner's plan as submitted or the Commission may approve with conditions.

If justifiable, the Commission may grant a 30 day extension at the request of the owner. However, in this particular case the owner has had sufficient time to not only prepare the plan, but to actually complete the work. Given the situation, Staff does not feel there is a justification to grant an extension.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the above discussion, Staff recommends that the Commission approve the minimum maintenance plan with the following conditions:

1. Timeframes need to be determined and set for each step/task. This should include the timeframe for the hiring of contractor and each task the contractor will take to complete project. Staff recommends a final completed project deadline of February 14, 2020.
2. A letter signed/stamped from a structural engineer must be submitted to determine the extent of the issue (structural). If necessary, the appropriate building permits will need to be obtained
3. Design/pictorial plans be submitted to ensure the façade repair will match existing colors and architecture.



Application NO 19-028

HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPLICATION

The Historic Preservation Commission meets the first Monday of each month. Applications must be submitted to Community Development at least 14 days prior to the meeting. Required drawings, photos, samples, and related materials must be filed with the application. Business and property owners within the historic district must have approval for any alteration, new construction, or demolition before work is started. *Fees double for work started without approval.*

Application Type:

- Sign
- Paint (to apply or to remove)
- Awning
- Window
- Door
- Façade Change (minor/major)
- New Construction
- Demolition
- Other Minimum Maintenance Plan

Property

Present Name of Building VICTOR BLDG Historic Name of Building VICTOR BLDG Date Built 1893

Address of proposed work 202 W. Harrison Ave. Guthrie, OK 73044

Property Owner Lauren Ladd

Email Larry@TheSandPlum.com Daytime Phone (405) 410-6477

Mailing Address 210 W. Harrison Avenue Guthrie, OK 73044

Applicant same as above

Email _____ Daytime Phone _____

Mailing Address _____

Brief description of proposed project: (attach more pages if needed)

Repair facade bricks on south facing Victor Bldg.

The applicant or a representative for the applicant must be present at the meeting.

Applicant Signature [Signature] Date 12/6/19

Minimum Maintenance Plan for the Victor Block

202 West Harrison Avenue

Guthrie, OK 73044

HISTORY

To start with we have a long history with The Victor Building.

We originally bought the building in 2002.

At that time it was empty other than two small spaces; one being used as a clock shop and the other as part of "Elks Alley mercantile". Both businesses were located on the main floor, however the rent they paid did not cover the cost of utilities.

Eventually they both closed and we set our sites on making the building more viable. Obviously, it could not continue running a negative income.

We first completely renovated the top floor. We removed the 1982 staircase that was flagged as a fire hazard and was out of code. This not only made the top floor safer, but more functional. We restored the 1920 hardwood floors, built a stage, created custom window treatments and installed sound systems. It was a large investment, but within two years we were considered the number one ballroom in the state and we hosted 25-50 high-end weddings a year. We renamed the space the Sand Plum Event Center.

The success of the Sand Plum, and its income stream gave us the funds to remodel the lower level. This again was a large project. We first opened the space as a second event center we called the Barrel Room. Again, it was met with success, however, Rob Farris and Ronnie Gage approached us with the concept of opening a steak house. We actually would make less money and it would cost us over \$150,000 for the renovation, but we felt it was in the best interest of the town. We installed a new hardwood floor and commercial kitchen, as well as, remodeling and updating the restrooms.

In total, we invested over \$800,000 into the renovation of the Victor. None of which would have been possible had we not created profitable, businesses inside the building. Once profitable this also gave us the means to completely paint the entire building twice through the years, to tuck point the bricks, rebuilt windows as needed and maintain the roof. We also updated the sprinkler systems, electric, plumbing, and heat and air. None of which would have been possible without an income stream.

I share that history to emphasize the importance of financial viability to preservation.

EXPLANATION OF SITUATION

On May 9th, 2014 four boys burned down Banner School, then later that day, after the fire went out, the city tore down most of the walls . . . leaving in its wake a mess impossible to clean up. We were threatened by the EPA regarding the clean up, while being held for contempt of court for not cleaning it up. In the end the city accepted our donation of the school and a park has been placed at that site. However, it left us financially devastated.

Even though our payments were current on the Victor, the bank called the note due to loss of collateral due to the fire.

And in March of 2016, the Victor was placed in receivership.

While the bank controlled the building, we watched all of our hard work unravel. I called the receiver several times, as vagrants took up residence and as I witnessed wood rotting needing restoration and a coat of paint, windows falling in and roofs leaking, but nothing was done.

Then we regained possession of the building on December 24, 2018, along with several other buildings. It was a good day, but we had lots of work to do.

As before, my plan was to stabilize the building and then restore financial viability to fund my continued restoration and maintenance of the building.

Not to make excuses, but literally the day we closed, we drove to California to see my dad. This meant celebrating Christmas on the road, but my dad's health was fading.

Following that trip I flew out three more times to visit my dad, and on April 12th he passed away.

I treasure the time I spent with my dad, but this did put our plans behind schedule.

MINIMUM MAINTAINANCE

With the Victor we once again inherited a mess. We decided to address the worst first. Literally there were vagrants who had made camp in the building, along with pigeons in the top floor and raccoons in the basement. Buckets were set about to catch the water raining through the ceiling and several windows needed immediate attention to keep them from falling out.

Eviction

1) People

The police helped extract one couple shortly before we regained control of the building. My wife had noticed them on the roof, but by the look of things they had come back. So we found their access points and sealed them up. This was more difficult than one might think. They were very clever. They even created a secret entrance through the Ansel hood system. In all, I found four entrances.

2) Pigeons

This was easier than the people and raccoons. I found three openings letting them in, so as they headed out during the day, I simply locked them out. There was only one pigeon left in the building and I was able to catch it in a towel.

3) Raccoons

These were the toughest to catch. Animal control gave us a trap that caught the first one in short order and they took it away. But the second took us a while. It took two borrowed traps, but we finally got it out of the building.

I share this information, not because getting rid of these residents was that big of a deal, but more to give you an idea of how bad the state of the building was. I am not good at shooting before and after pictures, but literally during the two years of our absence the Victor had become part of the eco system.

Roof

Water was leaking everywhere through the roof bad. The water was coming in and making its way all the way into the basement. To us this was our greatest concern.

1) Building on the roof

A small out building on the roof was left completely open on one side. Evidently the siding blew off in a storm, and the bank never addressed the issue. The missing side allowed any rain blowing south to enter directly into the building. I hired Eric Carr and he resided it.

2) Roof Drainage

The one and only roof drain was pouring copious amounts of water into the building at the North West Corner. It was this breach that was allowing water to make its way all the way through the building to the basement. I hired a local handy man named Forest and he repaired that situation.

3) Roof Leaks

While Forrest and Eric, corrected those breaches, my son and I personally dealt with the roof. The banks apparent fix for a leak was to place a rubbermaid trash can under it. There were several sections needing attention so I bought 5 gallons of patch and 4 squares of commercial roofing. It was a lot of work, but apparently did the job.

4) Other Breaches

Lastly, as mentioned, the vagrants caused breaches as well. One couple had set up camp on the roof and created several openings to get in and out. These openings were additional entry points for not only water, but also birds, animals and as designed, returning vagrants.

Windows

In my experience wood trim in Oklahoma requires attention every four years at least. Well the Victor was in need of attention when the bank took it over. And the years left unattended left its mark.

1) Secure all openings

Our first goal was simply to secure all windows and cover all breaches. I say simply, but this took almost a week. Rain and birds could come in through openings and several windows were at risk of falling out. We went window by window and sealed up all breaches and secured all windows.

2) Rebuilding the windows

This is a work in progress, but we are making our way through the building rebuilding the windows from the worst to the best. Pablo Santos was contacted a few months ago, but his schedule is now clear and he is available to help us as weather permits.

Doors

The bank had to replace the front door due to their neglect. They did a good job, but apparently did not finish it properly. I sanded the door and have stained it twice. Our plan once the moisture content in the wood is low and we have proper temperature, is to seal it with a marine finish. We did that originally and it held strong for around eight years.

Bricks

Here is what is at this point your primary concern, as is ours.

A fissure on the outside facade of the south facing wall has formed.

I started contacting masons and ACME brick in months ago.

Then I was introduced to Billy Lord. He had decades of experience as a mason and was excited to tackle the job.

Then in September I received a letter from the city regarding the bricks on the Victor.

As I walked with the guys from the city, it was brought up that it might not be cosmetic, but rather structural.

So I halted things with Billy Lord. Better safe than sorry. But the position of the city at that time was I did not need approval from townsite, and that I just needed to do what I needed to do to stop further damage.

This brought on a new battery of calls. I contacted engineers, architects and brick manufactures, as well as companies in Europe. Evidently Europe has lots of experience addressing old wall issues.

The first thing we established was that it was not structural. The fissure is on the outside wall and after thorough investigation, we found no pulling away or stress fractures in the building. Also a study of old photos showed the sag in the wall very apparent over 40 years ago.

So we were back to hurriedly fixing the bricks.

I met again with Billy, and said we were back on. He walked me through the process and stated it might take awhile. The first step was to support the wall, then to excavate the site, saving all the bricks we could. At this point we could inventory what bricks we needed and take samples to get a match.

Since the process could take awhile, instead of using old scaffold, I went out and bought three brand new sections with OSHA approved guardrails. I thought if it is going to be set up downtown for an extended time, I wanted it to look as good as possible. The parts were not in stock, so it took several weeks for the parts to arrive, but I personally picked them up to save time, and erected the new scaffold the same day. But by then unfortunately Billy got tied up working other jobs.

I waited, but kept pushing.

While I waited, I got on the scaffold with my son, and we braced the bricks as instructed. I was told to strap the bricks using mason screws through the mortar and galvanized steel hanger straps. Which I did.

Unfortunately, I was still on hold with Billy

Then when I got back from Ohio after spending Thanksgiving with my wife's family, I found a letter that had been mailed out two days before thanksgiving. It is that letter that I am responding to.

I immediately called for clarity, and Bill Darbe confirmed that at this point I was not able to continue work on the protecting my building until the townsite approved my plan.

I was very reluctant to stop, in that I do not want additional damage to occur, but I was told I had no choice.

Bill and I discussed what the best course of action would be in the meanwhile.

If we took down the scaffold he would get calls from concerned citizens thinking no one was aware of the issue. But he had also received calls complaining about a scaffold in front of the building.

In the end, it meant additional delays, more work and an inability of anyone I spoke with regarding the situation from getting "eyes" on the project. But we agreed to take the scaffold down, primarily due to Victorian Walk.

TIME FRAME

The project is currently on hold pending approval of townsite.

While on hold I have had my focus on obtaining financing and making the building viable again. I have also used this time to research and find qualified masons to look at the job.

One problem I have had is that getting things done between Thanksgiving and Christmas was difficult. It seems like everyone was pushing things off until "after the holidays". But I have been successful finding traction in just the past two days.

I met with ACME onsite yesterday morning (12/26/19) and they have been very helpful.

They were able to give me a list of twelve companies qualified and capable. Unfortunately, ACME let me know that right now masons are in high demand so getting one interested in a project like this is difficult. However, I did find three on their list willing to meet with me and interested in the project: Hansen Masonry, CIA Masonry and Kinnamon Construction.

I have a meeting with Hansen tomorrow at noon and Kinnamon on Tuesday of next week. The meeting with CIA is TBD.

As for a time frame, every one I have spoken with have stated that there are three phases. The first phase is securing the facade and taking down the bricks. This will take less than one week. The second is to create or locate replacement bricks. This can get very involved and we should plan on 2-8 weeks. Creating custom bricks is a difficult trial and error process. Both shape and colors are difficult to predict and therefore match. The third phase is securing the wall and rebuilding it. Again, this should take less than a week, but the time in-between to create the missing bricks is the X factor. This makes scheduling the final phase difficult, and might cause additional delays.

Optionally, the facade could be rebuilt with square bricks until the custom bricks are located or made. Square bricks can be cut down from existing stock, and pose no real problem. The custom shaped bricks are the problem.

Keep in mind, mason work is weather dependent and must also fit in their schedules.

I will report to Dan Kassik what the three groups propose next week.

For clarity, once we obtain approval from the city, we then need to contract the repair with the masonry contractor and fit it into their schedule.