



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final

Landmarks Preservation Commission

Monday, September 9, 2019

5:15 PM

City Hall, Room 303

Call To Order

Chairman Monefeldt called the meeting to order at 5:21 p.m.

Present: 4 - John Monefeldt, Chris Flynn, Mollie Jones, and Pippin Michelli

Excused: 1 - Tony Veranth

Approval of Minutes for the June 10, 2019 Meeting

A motion was made by Alder Jones, seconded by Commissioner Flynn, to approve the minutes of the June 10th meeting. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

[1029-19](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Review of proposal, submitted by Jessica Guzman of Cardinal Capital Management, Inc., for the mitigation of adverse effects from the demolition of a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 1520 Clark Street (Walker Manufacturing Company-Ajax Plant) (LPC 19).

Attachments: [Walker-Ajax Mitigation Plan](#)

Planning Manager Matt Sadowski explained the request and introduced Jessica Guzman from Cardinal Capital Management Inc. Sadowski stated that some Commission members have toured the site in the past and that there is a new proposal for the site which includes demolition of all of the buildings on the site. He informed the Commission that because of the proposal to demolish, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has asked for a mitigation plan for the site.

Ms. Guzman explained her request. She stated that the property is on the national register for industry and invention; she stated it was the last remaining automobile plant in the Racine area. Ms. Guzman explained that Cardinal Capital has worked with the city on the site for about two years and the original plan was to rehab the properties, however, rehabilitation turned out not to be economically feasible. She explained the property continues to deteriorate and asbestos is present throughout the site. She stated that Cardinal Capital owns the Pabst Pub on the corner near the property and that building will remain and be rehabilitated.

Ms. Guzman explained the proposed mitigation measures for the site. She explained they have three ideas for mitigation which includes preservation of the oldest building's bricks and using them as an outdoor exhibit and a website. She stated an 8x10 brick wall with display cases and a website for the history of the property is being proposed. She showed an example for a website for the Germania Apartments in Milwaukee and stated there is a page for the history, an interactive timeline, and a narrative for the

history of the building. She stated the website also serves as a website for the residents of the apartments – Cardinal Capital is proposing something similar for the Ajax property. Ms. Guzman stated the exhibit would be on the rear of the pub property, to the east of the apartments.

In response to Commissioner Michelli, Ms. Guzman explained the pub is in a different financial phase of the project.

In response to Commissioner Flynn, Ms. Guzman stated that the pub would be a restoration project.

Mr. Sadowski commented that the design has an industrial feel.

Commissioner Michelli asked if the bricks would be taken and physically relocated to the wall.

Ms. Guzman stated yes.

Mr. Sadowski explained that he spoke with Chris Paulson from the Racine Heritage Museum and the question was asked if there would be some tie-in with the overall history of invention in the area – Modine, Dumore, Johnson’s Wax, etc. – something to show that the industry is an important part of the whole of the area. Mr. Sadowski explained that the project could be similar to what the Journal Times did when they demolished the old fire station. He stated that the Journal Times used the bricks from the station to make the decorative wall along Wisconsin Avenue and took the medallion from the station and incorporated it into the wall.

Mr. Sadowski also explained the Indian Motorcycle’s homage to the old Klinkert building (522 Sixth Street).

Mr. Sadowski asked if there were any gears in the building.

Ms. Guzman stated that she was unsure.

Chairman Monefeldt explained the scale of what is being proposed compared to the amount of what is being torn down. He stated a small wall is kind of insignificant. He stated there are tons of bricks at the location.

Mr. Sadowski stated the previous plan was to save the oldest building. In response to Chairman Monefeldt, he stated the site is on the national register because of what happened there.

Ms. Guzman stated they would do a better job of emphasizing the history on the website.

Mr. Sadowski explained the Commission is being asked to comment on the mitigation concept.

Commissioner Flynn asked about the size of the building next to the Pabst Pub and how many stories it would be.

Ms. Guzman stated it will be three stories.

In response to Ms. Guzman, Commissioner Michelli stated that a concern would be overwhelming the Pabst. She stated it is a very attractive pub.

Chairman Monefeldt stated a concern is how the architecture relates to what is going to be kept. He stated it should not be mentioned, the pub and the rest of the site, if it is not part of the same project.

Ms. Guzman stated Cardinal did not mean to include the pub as part of the mitigation measure.

Alder Jones asked if the steel beams would be left as part of the courtyard.

Ms. Guzman stated that it was not part of the plan.

Chairman Monefeldt stated he would like to see more development of the concepts and more integration of the old pieces. He suggested the possibility of salvaging materials and reusing and reconfiguring to possibly be part of a pergola. He stated there are really cool ways to reuse more of the fabric without adding a tremendous amount of cost. He stated he would like to see something more significant to act as more of an area to learn about the building and make the space more private – utilize it more as an architectural feature of the project.

Mr. Sadowski stated Matt Rejc, Manager of Neighborhood Services, spoke with Katie Kaliszewski from the SHPO. Rejc stated that given the past history of the site and its difficulty, the SHPO understands the difficulty of rehabbing the buildings as well as the history of the buildings. He stated what has been proposed will be sufficient based on the SHPO standards. He explained that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) federal funds are being used which require a full section 106 process which this is part of. Mr. Rejc explained that there will be a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the SHPO and the City that will bind the City to the agreed mitigation measures.

In response to Mr. Sadowski, Mr. Rejc stated that the timelines are sensitive.

Mr. Sadowski asked if an approval of the concept would be ok.

Mr. Rejc stated if there were a signed MOA with actions defined that might get the job done.

Chairman Monefeldt stated he would like see the use of additional salvaged materials on the site.

Ms. Guzman stated that Cardinal Capital will make the best efforts to preserve materials.

Discussion ensued regarding the proper motion. Staff recommended that the motion be based on the details provided in the presentation, communication from Chris Paulson regarding recognizing other industries and a mention of other area industries, and other building materials being salvaged to use for the mitigation.

Ms. Guzman stated best efforts would be made to salvage the steel beams and the bricks and to use it a decorative around the site. She stated the final design of the exhibit would be presented to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Alder Jones asked if it would be possible to use some of the bricks for the flower pots.

Ms. Guzman stated yes.

Commissioner Michelli asked if photographs were thought about for the exhibit and their possible fading. She asked about the hallways being potentially used.

Ms. Guzman stated she wanted a public display. She stated she will research the possibility of how to keep the photos from fading.

Alder Jones mentioned the possibility of glass and enclosing the photographs.

Discussion after the motion:

Commissioner Flynn stated the little area between the pub and the building looks narrow and the perception is that it should be well-lighted and appear to be safe.

Ms. Guzman explained it was an older site plan and stated the lighting will be reviewed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flynn, seconded by Alder Jones, to recommend to the Wisconsin Historical Society the approval the mitigation plan concepts, as presented to the LPC on September 9, 2019, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. That the installation(s) be based on the concept details presented to the LPC.**
- 2. That the installation(s) include a brief statement of recognition of the immediate areas heritage as an industrial hub of innovation and invention in the cultivation not only of Walker Manufacturing and their products, but also companies and products such as InSinkErator garbage disposals, Modine heat exchangers, Twin Disc transmission discs, Johnson Wax consumer products, and Dumore fractional power motors, and in 1905 the creation of the business incubator at the Racine Business Center.**
- 3. That a best effort be made by Cardinal Capital to incorporate into any decorative and/or educational installation(s) the materials from the razed structures, such as bricks, beams, machinery or mechanical parts.**
- 4. That the final design of installation(s) be presented to the LPC for review and approval.**
- 5. That subject to these conditions, the LPC does not object to the execution of a MOA being entered into between the Wisconsin Historical Society and the City of Racine.**

The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

Administrative Business

Raze Permit

None.

Progress on re-designations

It was explained that re-designation letters were sent out, however, none were returned. One person showed interest. However, information was not returned by them.

Mr. Sadowski explained the Mayor introduced two Tax Incremental Districts to provide funds to homeowners for rehabilitation projects.

Commissioner Michelli asked about the possibility of having a discount on property taxes for locally historically designated properties

Mr. Sadowski explained that Wisconsin is a Uniform Tax State.

Update on Racine Community Health Center at Julian Thomas School

Mr. Sadowski stated that staff attempted, however was unable, to schedule a special meeting to review the project.

Associate Planner Jeff Hintz reviewed the items that were shared with the City Plan Commission. He stated the addition is for the purpose of having an elevator to get people down to the health clinic. Hintz showed the proposal and stated it was found that the proposed cream city brick to be used was similar to the Julian Thomas School building and required a date blocker or plaque showing the date of the addition.

Mr. Sadowski explained the Secretary of the Interior Standards do not like additions to match historic properties.

Chairman Monefeldt stated he felt the spirit of the standards pertained more to bigger additions.

Mr. Sadowski showed the design of the addition and Mr. Hintz showed the elevation for the project.

Review of WHS report on Certified Local Governments

Mr. Sadowski stated that over the past year, the SHPO did a study of all of the certified local governments and summarized the survey of the state and the responses received – which community has the highest number of landmarks, etc. He stated, as a result of the survey, it was shown that people appreciate what Landmarks Commissions do. He explained the concerns and statewide statistics. Mr. Sadowski stated copies of the report will be given to members of the Common Council.

Brief discussion took place regarding the cigar building.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.