

**BISMARCK HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 18, 2022**

The Bismarck Historic Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room in the City-County Office Building, 221 North 5th Street. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom. Chair Sakariassen presided.

Commissioners present were Walt Bailey, Blake Dinkins, Calvin Grinnell, Tory Jackson, Beth Nodland and Amy Sakariassen. Commissioner Steve Bakken joined at a time noted below.

Staff members present were Sandra Bogaczyk – Office Assistant II, Ben Ehreth – Director of Community Development, Will Hutchings – Senior Planner, Stephanie Pretzer – Assistant City Attorney.

Guest present was Shawn Brennan – Talking Trail.

MINUTES

Chair Sakariassen called for consideration of the minutes of the March 16, 2022 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission as there was no April meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Dinkins to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2022 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jackson and with Commissioners Dinkins, Grinnell, Jackson, Nodland and Chair Sakariassen voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Sakariassen asked if there were any public comments.

There being no public input Chair Sakariassen resumed the meeting.

SECTION 106 REVIEW – BURLEIGH COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

Commissioner Dinkins stated that he has a relationship to the project, although not a financial one, and suggested that at the wishes of the Commission he could either participate in the discussion or not.

There were no objections to Mr. Dinkins participating in the discussion and vote.

Mr. Hutchings stated that the City of Bismarck received a Section 106 Review request from the City of Bismarck's Community Development Department for a CDBG funded project that consisted of the proposed demolition of three multi-family housing buildings, with a total of 17 housing units. The buildings are constructed in the newer mansard style that was common between 1960 and 1985. He stated that the buildings are owned and managed by the Burleigh County Housing Authority and the demolished buildings would be replaced with

new multi-family housing consisting of 34 housing units. He stated that the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office had previously provided their concurrence but that since this is a new environmental request, it is before the Historic Preservation Commission for their opportunity to review and provide comments.

Chair Sakariassen stated it is not the only example of the type of architecture in the city and for that reason was not opposed to approving the request.

There was discussion about the type of housing and the replacement property qualities that would replace what is currently there and that the current structures are not in good condition.

At this time Commissioner Bakken joined the meeting via Zoom.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Jackson to approve the proposed demolition of three multi-family housing buildings located at 415, 419 and 423 South Washington Street. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nodland and with Commissioners Bakken, Dinkins, Grinnell, Jackson, Nodland and Chair Sakariassen voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

REVISED FINAL TALKING TRAIL NARRATIVES

Mr. Hutchings stated that staff and Mr. Brennan, the contractor for Talking Trail, have made revisions to the Talking Trail Narratives, as directed by commissioners, which were previously approved at the March 16, 2022 regular meeting. The new edits highlight historically significant items to a higher degree than the previous version and, due to substantial changes made, staff is presenting the revised final version again for commissioners' review.

Additional comments given to staff by commissioners will be incorporated along with any new comments.

There was discussion about corrections and those corrections displayed.

Mr. Jackson thanked the contractor and stated how impressed he was with the outcome and suggested a voice greeting for each point on the map. Chair Sakariassen agreed that keeping the continuity is important and supported Mr. Jackson's request.

Mr. Brennan stated that he was thankful for the level of interest and would gladly incorporate the corrections.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Bakken to approve the Talking Trail narratives as revised and with new suggestions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dinkins and with Commissioners Bakken, Dinkins, Grinnell, Jackson, Nodland and Chair Sakariassen voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

Chair Sakariassen thanked Mr. Brennan for his work and his patience.

CHANCELLOR SQUARE STREETScape ELEMENTS

Mr. Hutchings stated that staff is requesting the Historic Preservation Commission's review and advisory determination of the historic significance of benches, planters and streetscape elements within Chancellor Square. He stated that elements within Chancellor Square have started to show signs of both structural and non-structural damage and staff have received requests to remove or alter some of the features.

There was discussion about the cost of repairs, preservation, historic precedence, and future maintenance of street features.

Mr. Dinkins asked what the timeline is for street repairs. Mr. Hutchings stated that concrete pavement repairs, curb extensions and a few replacement trees are included in the 2022 programmed summer street project. Mr. Ehreth stated that safety concerns with one bench in front of the Belle Mehus Auditorium have been identified and that Public Works has described the difficulty in replacing that bench. Mr. Dinkins stated that he felt that the planters could easily be repaired, and the semi-circle benches were not worth repairing but he preferred rebuilding in the same style, look and feel. Mr. Jackson agreed that curved benches should be replaced in the same location of any which are demolished.

There was discussion about the plantings in the street planters and the popularity of using the street benches.

Mr. Jackson asked for details about the Renaissance Zone tile mosaic bench murals. Mr. Hutchings stated that this was born from a request by artists to the Renaissance Zone Authority and approved by City Commission in 2018 as an allowable streetscape element. The streetscape standards allow artists to create mosaic tile designs to be affixed onto the concrete backs of the semi-circular benches.

Ms. Nodland suggested that the conversation be about whether Chancellor Square is considered an historic area rather than identifying individual design elements. She stated that many individual pieces lack historic integrity, but Chancellor Square does have historic integrity as a social space in the city's downtown and is a cohesive and special identifiable area that should be maintained.

Chair Sakariassen stated that the street elements were part of a distinctive planning movement and therefore finds validity in maintaining structures and vegetation as part of that urban renewal plan. She stated that the Commission would like to continue having a dialogue with the city about existing and proposed individual elements in the downtown. Ms. Nodland agreed with Chair Sakariassen and noted that even though the historic integrity of the one-way streets, planters, benches and the new sidewalk bump-outs have compromised that historic integrity, the area should still be maintained.

Mr. Ehreth stated that he appreciated the thoughtful conversation and complex ideas the Historic Preservation Commission contemplated.

Chair Sakariassen suggested that since the bench in front of the Belle Mehus is at the edge of the downtown and very heavily used by many people and a drop off area, she felt comfortable deferring to the City Planning department as to best solution.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Dinkins to approve removal of the bench at 6th Street and Thayer Avenue due to life safety concerns and that for any future construction that Historic Preservation Commission should be included in the conversation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jackson and with Commissioners Bakken, Dinkins, Grinnell, Jackson, Nodland and Chair Sakariassen voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

Mr. Dinkins, in reflection of his motion asked what specifically the City's intentions are, and amended his motion as follows:

MOTION: An amended motion was made by Commissioner Dinkins to approve removal of the bench at 6th Street and Thayer Avenue due to life safety concerns and that for any future construction City Staff, Public Works and Bismarck Parks and Recreation should communicate with the Historic Preservation Commission so they can be included in the conversation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jackson and with Commissioners Bakken, Dinkins, Grinnell, Jackson, Nodland and Chair Sakariassen voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

Mr. Jackson seconded as amended.

Mr. Dinkins withdrew his amended motion and there was no objection.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Dinkins to recommend approval to demolish the bench outside the World War Memorial Building due to safety concerns and that City staff consult with Bismarck Parks and Recreation for future bench placement and repair and for any planning scheme regarding Chancellor Square the Historic Preservation Commission is consulted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jackson and with Commissioners Bakken, Dinkins, Grinnell, Jackson, Nodland and Chair Sakariassen voting in favor of the motion, the motion was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

UPDATE ON PROPOSED NRHP HISTORIC DISTRICT NOMINATION OF HIGHLAND ACRES

Mr. Hutchings stated that the North Dakota State Review Board on April 29, 2022, unanimously approved the nomination of Highland Acres Historic District with minor edits, as amended by Metcalf Archeological Consultants. Some formal objections were received during a public comment period but not enough to halt the nomination as presented. Some residents who attended the meeting were concerned with the designation and how that affects their property. Mr. Hutchings suggested that the City do more in educational outreach in fully describing what it means to be on the Historical Register. The National Parks Service will review and is expected to make a determination by end of summer, 2022.

2022 CLG CONFERENCE

Mr. Hutchings stated that the 2022 Certified Local Government (CLG) Conference will be hosted by the City of Bismarck. The date and program have not been identified and Mr.

Hutchings accepted suggestions. He stated that there could be a survey of the other CLGs to determine what activities conference members might be attracted to.

OTHER

Ms. Nodland stated that an opponent to the Highland Acres Historic District nomination spoke with her at length. Chair Sakariassen stated that she also fielded a few other concerning calls and stated that she had mostly supportive calls.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Sakariassen declared the meeting of the Bismarck Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 4:24 p.m. to meet again on June 15, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. in the Tom Baker Meeting Room.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sandra Bogaczyk
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:



Amy Sakariassen, Chair