

MINUTES
January 23, 2017
Historic Preservation Commission
City of Batavia

Please **NOTE:** These minutes are not a word-for-word transcription of the statements made at the meeting, nor intended to be a comprehensive review of all discussions. They are intended to make an official record of the actions taken by the Committee/City Council, and to include some description of discussion points as understood by the minute-taker. They may not reference some of the individual attendee's comments, nor the complete comments if referenced.

1. Meeting Called to Order

Chair Hagemann called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Chair Hagemann; Vice-Chair Roller; Commissioners Bus, Sherer, Hohmann, and Sullivan

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Jeff Albertson, Building Commissioner; Gary Holm, Public Works Director; and Cheryl Collier, Recording Secretary

3. Items to be Removed, Added or Changed

There were no items to be removed, added or changed.

Motion: To approve the Agenda
Maker: Sullivan
Second: Hohmann
Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion carried.

4. Approve Minutes for January 9, 2017

Motion: To approve the minutes for January 9, 2017
Maker: Bus
Second: Roller
Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion carried.

5. Matters From the Public (for items not on the agenda)

Chair Hagemann asked if there were matters from the public for items not on the agenda. There were none.

6. COA Review: 336 Houston St – Soffit Fascia Replacement (Window Works, applicant)

David Nilset, 3639 Highway Ave, Highland, Indiana was present representing Window Works.

Chair Hagemann indicated that this is a Contributing building. Chair Hagemann asked for a breakdown of what they would be doing and what materials would be used.

Mr. Nilset explained that they would be doing replacement siding and would be doing everything in accordance to the Building Department requirements. He stated that if there is anything out of the ordinary with the home, they would address this.

Sherer questioned if they were doing siding because she thought that there was woodwork and fascia.

Albertson explained that according to the information on the application, he doesn't believe they are doing siding; but just doing soffit and fascia replacement.

Mr. Nilset explained that they are doing 203 feet of white soffit on the front porch and side porch. They are doing 8 feet of white soffit along the side roofline area. They are also doing the back porch and one window, and then reattaching the existing gutters. They will be replacing any rotten wood in these areas.

Roller asked if the house was off by itself in the historic district. Albertson stated that there are no other houses on the block. Bus asked how old the house was, and Albertson responded that it was built in 1897. Bus asked if the house had aluminum siding on it, and Albertson responded that it was wood siding and that the soffits were also wood.

Chair Hagemann asked if they were replacing like for like on everything. Mr. Nilset responded that the new products used were going to be vinyl. Mr. Nilset explained that they were doing the front porch and the side porch, and that everything they are doing is underneath the porch.

Chair Hagemann asked if there were any additional questions. Roller asked if the materials that are being replaced are degraded, and Mr. Nilset thought they were just giving it a facelift and that all of the wood soffit that is already there is going to stay. Roller asked if the Code allowed them to use vinyl. Sherer asked if they were doing anything at the peak or on the roof. Albertson responded that it was just the porches. Albertson explained that there are no windows being replaced, but the trim cap around the window is being replaced with vinyl. Sherer asked why they are using vinyl instead of wood. Hagemann asked what colors would be used and the applicant responded that everything they are doing is going to be white. Roller reviewed that they are not doing siding; they are not replacing the window but just the cap; and they are doing the underside of the porch and not the fascia. Mr. Nilset agreed that this is correct. Bus suspects that it is that the house is contributing because it has been remodeled in the past and is not significant anymore.

Chair Hagemann asked if the Commission had any additional questions or comments. There were none.

Motion: To approve the COA as presented

Maker: Bus

Second: Sherer

Roll Call Vote: **Aye:** Bus, Sherer, Hagemann, Roller, Sullivan, Hohmann

Nay: None

6-0 Vote, 0 Absent, Motion carried.

7. COA Review: 113 East Wilson Street – Structure Demolition (City of Batavia, applicant)

Chair Hagemann mentioned that Item 7 coincides with items 8, 9 and 10 on the agenda.

Chair Hagemann reviewed the process for demolition in a Historic District.

It is a two meeting process. The first meeting is to establish whether or not the Commission has enough information to act on the COA at the next meeting after being able to deliberate on it. The second meeting is to deliberate and make a decision. However, if the building is a secondary or non-contributing building, the process can be streamlined to one meeting.

The current COA that is being reviewed has two contributing and two non-contributing buildings. The two contributing buildings are the Frydendall Insurance building and the Green Home on the Larson Becker property.

The first public meeting is to consider architecture and historical significance, and to initially review and discuss the proposed demolition. Next, it must be determine whether there is sufficient information and documentation with the application to allow thorough review and whether all alternatives to demolition have been considered. If it is determined that there is sufficient information for the application to be considered, the Commission will vote to accept the application for review and continue it for action at the next meeting. If there is not enough information, the Commission can request additional information for the next meeting.

It is at the discretion of the Commission whether to choose to streamline the process for the two non-contributing structures. Chair Hagemann asked if there were any questions about the process, and there were none.

Chair Hagemann asked Albertson to review the information for the structure at 113 East Wilson Street. Albertson advised that 113 East Wilson is the old Fisher Dental Office and is a non-contributing structure. Staff has submitted their take on the demolition factors portion of the findings that the Commission has to make of a Contributing building.

Chair Hagemann reviewed the four primary criteria for a significant or contributing building that are required.

They are as follows:

1. Retention of the structure constitutes a hazard to public safety, which hazard cannot be eliminated by economic means available to the owner, including the sale of the structure on its present site to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure.
2. Preservation of the structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program, which will be of substantial benefit to the community.
3. Preservation of the structure would cause an undue and unreasonable financial hardship to the owner, taking into account the financial resources available to the owner, including the sale of the structure to any purchaser willing to preserve the structure.
4. Preservation of the structure would not be in the interest of the majority of the community.

If one or more of the primary criteria are met, the Commission may consider any or all of the following secondary criteria.

1. The effect of the demolition on the surrounding buildings.
2. The effect of the demolition on the historic district as a whole.
3. The value or usefulness of any replacement structure to the community, and the appropriateness of its design to the historic district.
4. If the lot is to be left open, how the space will be treated and the impact on the district as a whole.
5. The effect of demolition on the local economy.
6. Whether the demolition will foster civic beauty.
7. The effect of the demolition on safeguarding the heritage of the city, state or nation.
8. The effect of the demolition on promotion of the district for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the city.

Albertson reviewed the primary criteria as it relates to 113 East Wilson.

1. *There are no known hazards in the structure, and no cost estimates were obtained.*
2. *The building is being demolished to make way for a major improvement project that will include retail shopping, 300 parking spaces, and approximately 185 apartment units. The property was purchased for the purpose of redevelopment.*
3. *There was no undue financial hardship. The property was purchased by the City for the purpose of redevelopment.*
4. *Preserving the structure would make it difficult to redevelop the property.* Hagemann noted that any money used to improve the property would be Public funds.

Albertson explained that 113 East Wilson did not need to meet any of the criteria because it is a non-contributing building.

Chair Hagemann noted that the reasoning being listed is for both 113 East Wilson and 121 East Wilson, and that is why they were put together into one memo even though they are two separate COA's.

Albertson reviewed the secondary criteria as it relates to 113 East Wilson and 121 East Wilson.

1. *No effect on surrounding buildings. It is not attached to any other building.*
2. *113 East Wilson is a non-contributing building and will have no effect on the historic district as a whole. 121 East Wilson is a contributing building, and although the demolition of 121 East Wilson would reduce the inventory of contributing historical buildings in the downtown area, there are many buildings that remain that are in much better condition. The removal of this one building will have a negligible effect on the historical district as a whole. The proposed new structure will add parking, new residents, and commerce, which will add value to the historic district.*
3. *The building is being demolished to make way for a major improvement project that will include retail shopping, 300 parking spaces, and approximately 185 apartment units. This will add value to the community.*

4. *The lot will be left open only temporarily and construction is expected to start soon.*
5. *The demolition of these buildings will have little effect on the local economy as they were small businesses with little foot traffic. The new commercial space should have a tremendous effect on the local economy with a lot of foot traffic to the downtown.*
6. *This would not apply to the demolition of these buildings. The replacement building will foster civic beauty if it constructed properly.*
7. *No effect on safeguarding the heritage of the city, state or nation.*
8. *The demolition will not promote these factors, but the replacement structure will.*

Chair Hagemann reiterated that the information in the memo presented is for both 113 and 121 East Wilson Street; however the COA's must be done one at a time.

Albertson noted that 121 East Wilson does have to meet one of the primary factors because it is a contributing building. Staff has listed the ways that the building meets the primary factors.

Sullivan asked if the Commission approves this or any of the four demolition requests today and the proposed construction project is not able to be built, would these buildings still be torn down. Albertson indicated that would be up the City Council, but he believes it is the City's intention to take the buildings down for the redevelopment of the area regardless of if there is an approved project. He explained that the City Council could condition the COA on approval of the project.

Bus noted that the COA has not been submitted to the Historical Preservation Commission with this condition, so they are acting on it as submitted. Chair Hagemann stated that the Commission could add that condition to it.

Chair Hagemann stated that since 113 is a non-contributing building so could be acted upon this evening. He asked if anyone from the Commission was opposed to streamlining this and acting on the COA for 113 East Wilson Street.

Motion: To approve the COA for 113 East Wilson and to include the streamlining process and the finding of fact that it meets major standards, as well as most of the minor standards.

Maker: Bus

Second: Hohmann

Roll Call Vote: **Aye:** Bus, Sherer, Hagemann, Roller, Sullivan, Hohmann

Nay: None

6-0 Vote, 0 Absent, Motion carried.

8. COA Review: 121 East Wilson Street – Structure Demolition (City of Batavia, applicant)

Chair Hagemann stated that the Commission is not able to streamline this COA because it is a contributing building, so based on the information submitted he feels that the Commission has enough information to move this to the next meeting and be able to act on the COA. He asked if anyone else on the Commission felt differently.

Sullivan asked if anyone knows of any special historic value that this building has.

No one had any objection, so Chair Hagemann asked for a motion to close part one of the process for this COA.

Motion: That the Commission has heard enough information about this building to take action at the next meeting.
Maker: Sullivan
Second: Sherer
Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion carried.

9. COA Review: 111-117 North River – Structure Demolition (City of Batavia, applicant)

Jeff Albertson addressed the Commission about this project. He describes the property as the Larson Becker properties; which includes the industrial structure on the west side of North River and the green house on the east side Spring and North River. This COA does not include the wood building with all of the signs on it and does not include the steel garage structure that is next to the wood building. The City's intends to retain the structure known as the old Pump House, which is on the very south end of the industrial part on the west side of River Street. This is the building right next to the pedestrian bridge. The City will have to do some work on this building and will be coming back to the Commission for approval in the future for this work. There are currently openings that lead to the lower level of the building, and from that building to the adjacent building that will need to be closed up. Everything else up to this building is planned for demolition.

Albertson reviewed the demolition project in relation to the primary criteria for demolition of a historic building.

- 1. Industrial structure is dated, but no significant issues with the building. The building was purchased for redevelopment. The 124 North River structure has significant deterioration, so does have a public safety issue.*

Chair Hagemann asked if there was any current plan for the property other than using it for parking. Albertson explained that the plan is to install a temporary parking lot for use during the project construction. Bus asked if the threatening signs will be removed. Albertson replied that they will as it will be a public lot with approximately 100 spaces. Long term replacement is not known at this time.

- 2. Removal of these structures is necessary in order to facilitate the redevelopment.*
- 3. The City did not do a cost estimate of repairs or look into selling the property because it was purchased with the intent of redevelopment. The industrial building on the west side has been offered for sale several times in the past few years, but there were no interested buyers besides the City.*
- 4. Preservation of the buildings would not be in the interest of the public because public funds would have to be used to repair and upkeep the buildings, and keeping the buildings would prevent the redevelopment of this block.*

Albertson then reviewed the secondary criteria for demolition of a historical building as related to this project.

- 1. There will no effect on the surrounding buildings. They are stand alone buildings.*
- 2. There would be no effect on the historical district with the demolition of 111-117 North River as these are non-contributing buildings. Staff is recommending retention of the pump house. The 124 North River building is contributing, but Staff believes the poor condition of the building outweighs the positive aspects of saving it.*
- 3. It is not known at this time what will eventually replace these structures, but whatever is proposed will come before the Commission for approval at that time.*
- 4. The lot will only be left open temporarily and will be used as a parking lot.*
- 5. The demolition of these buildings will have little effect on the local economy.*
- 6. This would not apply to the demolition of these buildings.*
- 7. No effect on safeguarding the heritage of the city, state or nation.*
- 8. The demolition will not promote these factors, but eventually the replacement structure will.*

Chair Hagemann asked if the Commissioners had any questions. Hohmann asked if on the 111-117 North River Street, where the City's intention is to keep the Little Red Pump House, if the COA is approved as submitted can the City decide to take down the Pump House or would this have to come back to the Commission? Hohmann noted that the structure is from approximately 1850. Albertson responded that technically the City could take it down if the COA is approved, but all demolition specs have included retaining this building. The Commission could approve the COA and condition that the structure be retained. Hohmann stated that he felt the pump house should be saved.

Chair Hagemann invited Brett Larson to address the Commission with information about the pump house building.

Brett Larson, 1025 South Jefferson, Batavia, Illinois addressed the Commission. He is the President of Larsen Becker. He distributed historic photos of the buildings in 1945, and said that he thought that it was built in the 1890's. He explained that Larson Becker purchased the wood warehouse to the north in the early 1950's and added the cinder block building to join them together in 1955. The final warehouse to the north was built in 1971. He noted that there is metal siding underneath the current wood siding.

Chair Hagemann asked when the sign that said Little Red Pump House came down. Mr. Larson did not know the answer to this. Bus asked the function of the roof structure. Mr. Larson did not know what this was used for, but noted that it was a feed mill when it was originally built. Sullivan asked if it is vacant. Mr. Larson answered that it is still being used as offices at this time; and Albertson explained that the City has closed on the building but has not taken possession yet. Mr. Larson said that saving the pump house is important, and encouraged saving the building next to it too because that is where the utilities are. Bus asked if Hohmann had been

inside of the building. Hohmann replied that he had and the building had wood walls and was in good shape.

Hagemann asked what year Larson Becker started their business there, and Mr. Larson replied that they started in 1945 when Al Larson and Phil Becker came from the Challenge Windmill and decided to open up a water well supply distributorship.

Sullivan asked what the City intends to do with the building if they retain it. Public Works Director Gary Holm addressed the Commission to answer this question. He explained that the utilities come into the building from the north so there is an opening in the basement and an opening on the street level that both open into the office building. If the office building is torn down, the basement opening would be blocked up and the upper opening would have to be treated with some matching material, which would come before the Commission before the work was done. There is no other access to the basement, so the doorway on the south side would have to be restored to access the basement. Chair Hagemann asked if the doorway was right next to the pedestrian bridge, and Director Holm indicated that it was. The City does not plan on having water service to the building but is planning on running electric service. There are currently no plans on what it would be used for.

Director Holm indicated that some suggestions for the use of the building are an information center or a coffee shop for bicyclists. These are just conceptual ideas at this time.

Chair Hagemann would like to see it restored to look like the structure did in 1945. Chair Hagemann stated that although this building is non-contributing, the history of the building and the company that has been there for 72 years shows that it is something that should be taken in to consideration to preserve.

Roller asked if the pump house could be changed to contributing. Albertson explained that when you put a designation on a property, it is on the entire property. Albertson said that it could be reclassified as contributing or significant after the remaining structures are demolished. Chair Hagemann asked if the pump house has a separate address. Mr. Larson said that the 111 N River Street address is just the pump house.

Bus asked if the application is to the demolition of the other buildings, but not the pump house. Chair Hagemann noted that the application is technically to demolish all of the buildings. Bus asked if the Commission could send it back to the City to amend. Albertson explained that the applicant could withdraw the 111 North River structure from the COA.

Chair Hagemann asked if we know for sure that the 111 North River address is for the pump house. Albertson stated that he was not sure.

Chair Hagemann noted that if the Commission sends the COA back to the City, the second meeting about it will become a continuation of the first, but the Commission could choose to streamline the application because it is not contributing.

Bus made a motion to refer the COA application back to the City to amend by removing 111 North River Street, and act on the non-contributing buildings. The motion was seconded by Hohmann.

Motion: Refer the application back to the City to amend.
Maker: Bus
Second: Hohmann

Sullivan asked why the City bought this building if there was a functioning business in it, and they intended to leave the structure up. Albertson responded that they purchased it for temporary parking. Holm explained that the City had to purchase this building along with the other structures as the other structure support the industrial business.

Roll Call Vote: **Aye:** Bus, Sherer, Hagemann, Roller, Sullivan, Hohmann
 Nay: None
 6-0 Vote, 0 Absent, Motion carried.

10. COA Review: 124 North River – Structure Demolition (City of Batavia, applicant)

Chair Hagemann discussed the second structure, which is 124 N River, and said that the Commission needs to make a decision on whether or not there is enough information to proceed with the COA at the next meeting.

Roller asked about the garage. Albertson noted that the garage was previously demolished with a COA within the last 5 or 6 years.

Bus asked if the building is contributing and when it was built. Albertson answered that it is contributing, and Larson said that the building was built in 1865. Bus noted that the building has been significantly altered to a two-unit apartment. Albertson believes that the last time it was used it was a two-unit structure, and it has been vacant at least one or two years. Mr. Larson said it has been vacant for four or five years. Albertson said that it has quite a bit of damage to it.

Chair Hagemann asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Bus asked if they were going to cut down the tree. Albertson said that the parking lot is not proposed on this side of the street so he is not sure. Bus asked if it is the City's intent to tear this down and not to become a landlord. Albertson responded that this is correct.

Motion: That the Commission has enough information for 124 North River Street to take action at the next meeting.
Maker: Hohmann
Second: Roller
Voice Vote: 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent
Motion carried.

Chair Hagemann thanked Mr. Larson for coming in and sharing the information on these properties, and for all of the years his family has been doing business in Batavia.

Sherer asked Holm if the City planned on moving the bike path after the buildings are demolished. Holm responded that there are no plans to move the bike path.

11. Updates:

- **7 East Wilson Street – Historic Inspection**
- **Anderson Block Building – Masonry Maintenance**
- **Significant Historic Building Inspection Program**
- **10/12 North River Street – Historic Inspection**
- **227 West Wilson Street – Historic Inspection**
- **109 South Batavia Avenue – Historic Inspection**
- **8 North River Street – Historic Inspection**
- **16 East Wilson Street – Historic Inspection**

Albertson sent out an update on the historic preservation inspections to the Commission, and Chair Hagemann asked him to review them. Albertson responded that there have been some repairs done on just about all of the projects, and some of them are near completion. The City is working on contacting owners because most of these have been on the list for one construction season or more. The City is going to put out final deadlines to complete the work, and if it is not completed the City will begin enforcement proceedings.

Chair Hagemann asked if the City has notified the owners of availability of micro loans and facade grants to help them pay for these repairs. Albertson stated that this has been done, but the problem is that most of these loans and grants just cover a small portion of the cost and the project still needs to be mostly funded by the owners. Chair Hagemann stated that the micro loan program is not eligible for some of these projects because it has to be for something that will stay with the structure; and the facade grants require a \$5,000 match. Chair Hagemann thinks it would be nice if the City starts to look at more potential programs to help owners with the upkeep of historic structures after the Certified Local Government process is completed.

Sherer said that she was surprised that the Crane Building at Wilson and River still needs so many repairs since the owner wanted to do even better upgrades than the Commission required. Albertson explained that the original contractor disappeared and the new contractor can't find the same materials as were approved. This will be coming back to the Commission for approval on the new materials. Chair Hagemann said that this is a shame because the Commission really liked what had been proposed. Albertson explained that he has talked to the contractor and told him what the Commission wanted.

Chair Hagemann asked if there were any questions about the updates. There were none.

There is nothing additional on the Certified Local Government at this time.

12. Other

Chair Hagemann asked if anyone had anything for other business.

Albertson reported that the City will pick up the tab for anyone who wants to attend the seminar being hosted by Preservation Partners. If the Commission has any other training interests, Albertson need to know this so it can be included in the budget process that starts in the summer.

Bus noted that the Commission is being asked to act on things on North River Street based on the City acquisition in reference to future redevelopment and questioned whether the City has a plan for the redevelopment of this property. If there is no plan now, what if there is opposition to the future plan. He would like to have the City staff give the Commission some kind of redevelopment plan concept in the next 120 days or so. Albertson responded that there is no plan at this time. Bus stated that when the big project is completed, the City should regroup and figure out what the plan is for this area.

Chair Hagemann hoped that as development come in this area, it spurs additional development. Albertson responded that the temporary parking lot will be on this property for the next three to five years.

Sherer noted that the City has a lot of leverage on how it will be developed since they own the property.

Roller asked if Larson Becker is closing or if they are moving. Albertson responded that they are closing.

Albertson will pass along the desire of the Commission to hear what is planned for this property.

Chair Hagemann asked if there was anything else. There was not.

13. Adjournment

There being no other business to discuss, Chair Hagemann asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm; Made by Sherer; Seconded by Hohmann. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Collier