

CITY OF WILDWOOD
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MEETING OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WILDWOOD CITY HALL (HOSTED)
16860 MAIN STREET
WILDWOOD, MISSOURI 63040
December 2, 2021

I. Welcome and Roll Call

Meeting: Thursday, December 2, 2021, hosted at Wildwood City Hall, via Zoom, at 6:45 p.m. (meeting delayed due to technical difficulties)

Attending: Secretary Scott (Acting Chair for Public Hearing), Commissioners Bachert and Hensic, Commission Liaison Broyles, Council Liaisons Nyhan and Jakscy, and Acting Chair Stevens (post Public Hearing)

Absent: Commissioners Hammond and Rowton, and Alternates Adams and Quarternik

Staff: Director of Planning and Parks Joe Vujnich and Planner Robyn Keefe

II. Opening Remarks

None.

III. Approval of the Historic Preservation Commission's Minutes from its October 28, 2021 Meeting.

Secretary Scott (then Acting Chair) asked for clarification on the following language:

- "Secretary Scott noted that most people would engage, if they didn't feel sold on anything." Planner Keefe rephrased it to promote understanding. The decision was to leave the language as is.
- "Secretary Scott asked if the survey was to be supplied to the State. Planner Keefe confirmed the City of Wildwood was in good-standing". The decision was to change the language from, "Planner Keefe confirmed the City of Wildwood was in good-standing," to "Planner Keefe confirmed."

Commissioner Bachert motioned to approve the October 28, 2021 minutes, as adjusted. Commissioner Hensic seconded the motion. Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

IV. Public Comment (comments can be provided via Zoom Chat)

Acting Chair Scott asked if there was any public comment prior to the hearing, specifically asking if Mr. Irvine was planning to present tonight on his issue in Orrville Historic District. Director Vujnich noted there were three (3) attendees, two (2) of which were present for the Public Hearing, as well as Council Member Clark. Council Member Clark indicated she had no comment. Director Vujnich noted Mr. Irvine has decided not to present, and that consultation with the City Attorney had concluded that Mr. Irvine's issue was a zoning and code enforcement matter, not one under the authority of the Historic Preservation Commission.

No public comment was therefore provided.

V. New Business

A. Ready for Action – Two (2) Items

1. **H.R. 1-21 The Marianist Province of the U.S., c/o Merle Wilberding and Chris Conard, 4425 West Pine Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63108** - A request to remove a family retreat lodge, which is located at 4000 State Route 109 (Locator Number: 26V310045), known as *Marycliff (formerly Woodcliff)*, c. 1905, per St. Louis County Tax Records, c. 1891, per City of Wildwood's Historic Building Inventory [Survey 2014-15, Updated July 2019, Page 120 of 343], from the City's Historic Register. This tract of land is zoned NU Non-Urban Residence District. The property owners have applied to rescind the Wildwood Historic Registry designation (Ordinance #2475), noting the original plans to renovate and preserve Marycliff are no longer feasible. The owners are entitled to remove the property from the list, given the designation was not in conjunction with a historic zoning district or overlay, or in conjunction with an ordinance expressly granting economic or regulatory incentives. **(Ward Six)**

Director Vujnich, read the request into the record and introduced the pertinent codes and materials, including the Department's file on the item. Planner Keefe then gave a slide presentation, noting the history of the designation to the Wildwood Historic Register and the process for removal of it, and then providing a history of the area and reviewing photographs taken at the Staff site visit.

Secretary Scott asked who did the stain glass window depicted in the presentation and some of the art inside the building.

Chris Conard introduced himself as the attorney representing the Marianists. He noted the reason the Province was removing the property from the historic register was as follows: the original goal was to renovate the building and utilize it for the Engage Discovery Program for couples anticipating getting married or seeking spiritual renewal. He noted the facility was not adequate for this purpose, and the campaign for fundraising was premature. While some of the funds were raised, it was not enough to support the renovation. The money that was donated has since been returned to the donors. Right now, the Province is considering a comprehensive plan for the facility and exploring the highest and best use for the property. He noted that he thought the historic treasures on property would be thoughtfully considered, as well as the existing green space.

Brother Bernie Ploeger then introduced himself as the Assistant Provincial of the Society of Mary. He noted the artist inquired about by Secretary Scott was Mel Myer, who was prominently known, contributing his art to many locations in St. Louis, including in Forest Park, near the Jewel Box. He then expanded upon what Mr. Conard had said, noting the financial difficulties and constriction experienced by the Province during the pandemic, resulting in many personnel taking an early retirement. He stated that two (2) weeks ago there had been a meeting about the property, and this designation removal was to allow time for a comprehensive look at options for the property and facilities.

Secretary Scott asked what removal from the list would allow the Province to do that wasn't currently allowed with the designation in-place. Attorney Conard noted there were additional portions of the Wildwood Code that

would need to be met. Director Vujnich expanded, noting the Certificate of Appropriateness process was required, if there were exterior alterations to the building at the site. If the Province were to consider demolition, the Historic Preservation Commission would still have a right to visit the site and document the asset. The removal of the designation, therefore, does eliminate a layer of review.

Secretary Scott noted that in any review, the Historic Preservation Commission would seek to be flexible with the owners, in service to maintaining the asset.

Director Vujnich noted that the Province had been a good community organization in the area, providing land to Great Rivers Greenway for the extension of Al Foster Memorial Trail and allowing City of Wildwood to utilize facilities onsite for its events. He stated he was confident the assets on the property would be thoughtfully considered.

Secretary Scott asked if there was a motion to close the hearing and asked Director Vujnich to review the process again. Commissioner Bachert motioned to close the hearing. Vice-Chair Stevens seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Proposed 2022 Work Program **(Wards – All)**

Vice-Chair Stevens took over as Acting Chair and asked Planner Keefe to present the 2022 Work Program. Planner Keefe gave a brief overview, noting the items to be removed from the program in 2022, including the Memorial Tribute program and Missouri Bicentennial activities, and then identified the redesign of the Points of Interest Map, and addition of outreach activities targeted to youth, historical review of the Poërtner Park property, and exploration of a partnership with the community of Westland Acres in celebration of its 100-year anniversary.

Secretary Scott noted outreach to youth could be closely tied into Essen Log Cabin. Secretary Scott motioned to approve the work program. Commissioner Bachert seconded the motion. The motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

B. Not Ready for Action – Two (2) Items

1. Discussion Regarding the Age Threshold Used to Determine Qualification as Historic **(Wards – All)**
2. Overview of Maintenance Bids for Old Pond School **(Ward One)**

VI. Old Business

A. Ready for Action – Three (3) Items

1. Certified Local Government Annual Reporting Process **(Wards – All)**

Acting Chair Stevens noted Planner Keefe did a fantastic job on the report. Planner Keefe stated that the report had been submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

2. Draft of Nomination Form for Champions of History Recognition **(Wards – All)**

Director Vujnich presented the history of the process in developing the Memorial Program. He noted that City Council had ultimately endorsed the program. He then brought up a comment from Vice-Chair Stevens regarding the inconsistency of the eight-year requirement for Champions of History, given the maximum six-year term limit for Historic Preservation Members. He noted the Department would correct that issue, but was seeking final approval of the application form to go forward.

Secretary Scott stated he felt the criteria listed on the forms should be more of an example, not a requirement, for being nominated. Director Vujnich noted he would bring the program back to the Commission for final review, but he would like acceptance of the application form.

Secretary Scott made a motion to accept the application form. Commissioner Bachert seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Update on 2021 Work Program (**Wards – All**)

Director Vujnich noted this work program involved the end-of-year update. He spoke to the installation of the parking pad at the Orrville Historic Marker, noting it was not yet been completed, but a priority for the Department. He then noted that Jill VonGruben's edits to the Incorporation Chapter had been provided to Commissioners in their packets. He suggested comments should be ready for the January meeting. He then thanked Commissioners for participating in the training opportunities offered in November.

Finally, Director Vujnich suggested that the promotional efforts for Route 66 should take priority in the next year, in preparation for the upcoming Route 66 Roadside Park.

Secretary Scott asked if the City had recorded the three (3) trainings he had attended. Planner Keefe confirmed that she had received that information and noted that every Member on the call had participated in at least one (1) training. She gave her thanks. Director Vujnich noted the Department would try to get back to providing local speakers to the Commissioners as additional training opportunities.

B. Not Ready for Action – Three (3) Items

1. Discussion Regarding the Future Location for the Essen Log Cabin (**Wards – All**)
2. Development of Work Program for Historic Route 66 Promotion (**Wards – All**)
3. Update on Kohn Park Sign (**Ward One**)

VII. Review of Proposed Zoning/Plats/Site Development Plans/Demolition Requests

Director Vujnich noted Chris Chivetta had purchased the property at 25 Centaur Road and planned to develop it for a few home sites. Before he finalizes his plans, he has offered to do a pre-meeting with the Commission to discuss the historic buildings present on the site. Planner Keefe will be scheduling the tour.

VIII. Other Matters for Consideration – Three (3) Items

A. Meeting Format 2022

Secretary Scott said he would like to meet in-person. He suggested all present could wear masks and sit six feet apart. Commissioner Bachert said he would like to meet in-person, and he felt that the Commission could accomplish so much more that way and get to know one another.

Commission Liaison Broyles expressed a concern, stating she would love to meet in-person, but her son has cancer and consequently has a compromised immune system. She noted that, while she has received all her shots and wears a mask, she is very cautious.

Acting Chair Stevens asked about the possibility of a hybrid meeting. Director Vujnich confirmed it was an option, but that there were challenges associated with it, and the group would need to meet in City Council Chambers to achieve it versus the Community Room.

Commission Liaison Broyles asked if City of Wildwood has considered requiring people to show proof of vaccination. Director Vujnich stated he did not believe it had yet been considered or required. He was hesitant to comment on it without guidance from the Mayor or City Administrator. Council Liaison Nyhan noted she was not aware of any conversation around it and felt it was a question for the City Attorney.

Acting Chair suggested a memorandum be sent out to the Commission, and Director Vujnich confirmed it would be after consultation with the City Attorney and City Administrator.

Commissioner Hensic typed into chat that in-person would be fine, depending on the future of the pandemic.

B. Election of Officers

Acting Chair Stevens appointed Secretary Scott, Commissioner Bachert, and Commissioner Hensic to the Nominating Committee. It was determined the group would meet with Planner Keefe, prior to the January meeting, to develop a slate of candidates.

C. Cancellation of December 2021 Meeting

Commissioner Bachert motioned for the December meeting to be cancelled, and Secretary Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

IX. Upcoming Meeting Date – January 27, 2022 (Thursday)

X. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Secretary Scott commented he would like someone to come in to speak to “Adaptive Reuse of Historic Buildings.” He suggested working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to preserve the Route 66 buildings utilizing this strategy. He mentioned some bungalows that had been preserved in the City of Pacific.

Director Vujnich suggested Planner Keefe could contact SHPO regarding that topic and see if they’d be willing to connect with the Commission on the Zoom platform.

Director Vujnich reminded the group to look over the Incorporation Chapter.

Secretary Scott motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Bachert seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.