

MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING
OWOSSO HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
Virginia Teich Council Chambers

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 6:02 p.m. by Chairman Steven Teich.

ROLL CALL was taken by Owosso City Manager, Nathan Henne.

PRESENT: Commissioner Lance Omer, Commissioner Scott Newman, Secretary Philip Hathaway, Commissioner Matthew Van Epps, Commissioner Gary Wilson, Commissioner Dianne Acton, Chairman Steven Teich.

ABSENT: None.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Nathan Henne, Owosso City Manager, Brad Hissong, Owosso Building Official, Jamie Garmo and Roman Bonislawski (representatives for the Matthews Building owner) by phone, Scott Gould, City Attorney.

AGENDA APPROVAL: January 19, 2022.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL BY COMMISSIONER VAN EPPS. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILSON.

AYES ALL. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES APPROVAL: DECEMBER 15, 2021 MINUTES.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL AS PRESENTED BY COMMISSIONER HATHAWAY. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OMER.

AYES: COMMISSIONER LANCE OMER, COMMISSIONER SCOTT NEWMAN, SECRETARY PHILIP HATHAWAY, COMMISSIONER MATTHEW VAN EPPS, COMMISSIONER DIANNE ACTON, CHAIRMAN STEVEN TEICH.

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONER GARY WILSON. HE STATED WAS NOT PRESENT AT THE DECEMBER MEETING.

MOTION CARRIED.

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

1. Demolition Permit Approval – 300 West Main Street, Matthews Building. Jamie Garmo on behalf of the property owner and Roman Bonislawski, architect on record. 2010 report lists 300 West Main as a resource within the Historic District. Engineering report and application have been submitted. Third party architect gave a report the building is safe to demolish. The building next to the river will remain.

Brad Hissong, Owosso Building Official, detailed his review of the building and presented and explained photos taken today (January 19, 2022). Concrete center supporting wall has collapsed. East wall foundation is completely gone, among other issues.

Secretary Hathaway read a portion of the engineer's letter, written just before Christmas (Dec, 2021), "At the time of my inspection, buildings two and three looked to be in good shape." The Building Department had requested a determination by a licensed professional that it was safe to demolish. Commissioner Van Epps added this excerpt, "Also, there was no clear evidence or signs of any serious or significant structural problems on any of them except building 3 roof has some falling or collapsed area that is not safe to walk on." Commissioner Van Epps stated the report does not reflect what the photos show. Jamie Garmo clarified the engineers letter was requested to confirm there was no dire safety issue, but that the building was safe to demolish. Hathaway wants to agree as a commission that the paragraph was only setting up for a safe demolition, not that the building could be saved. Commissioner Van Epps wants to take the letter to say what it says. Secretary Hathaway feels comfortable taking action tonight regardless of the letter's ambiguity.

Commissioner Wilson read a letter he wrote regarding this application. Commissioner Van Epps detailed the reasons a structure that is a resource can be demolished. He voiced concern if buildings two and three were demolished, would building one continue to be in disrepair as no redevelopment plans for that building are included in the packet. He requested the demolition approval and the anticipation of future plans be linked together. Garmo stated plans are underway, but not finalized. Commissioner Newman would like to know future plans of lot, also. Roman Bonislowski detailed plans for safety of the public during demolition and confirmed he has been contracted for redevelopment of building one.

SECRETARY HATHAWAY MADE A MOTION TO ISSUE NOTICE TO PROCEED FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE RESOURCE UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC ACT 169 OF 1970 THAT THIS BUILDING CONSTITUTES A HAZARD TO THE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION IS THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE OR CORRECT THIS CONDITION SUBJECT TO THE CONDITION THAT THIS COMMISSION WILL HAVE A SUFFICIENT REMAINING PARTIAL DEMOLITION TO SUCCESSFULLY REVIEW THE RESTORATION OF THE EAST WALL OF BUILDING NUMBER ONE. COMMISSIONER VAN EPPS ADDED WITH THE INCLUSION OF SUBSECTION 1 & 4 (A or D). SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NEWMAN.

Board Comments: Commissioner Wilson hesitates to approve with subsection number one included in the motion.

MOTION AMENDED BY COMMISSIONER WILSON TO REFERENCE ONLY SUBSECTION NUMBER FOUR AND OMIT THE REFERNECE TO SUBSECTION NUMBER ONE. SECONDED BY SECRETARY HATHAWAY.

ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED AS AMENDED.

2. Demolition by Neglect-110 West Main Street-Facade. Chairman Teich asked this item be tabled after reading an email communication from owner Nicholas Pidek. It was reiterated the Commission is supportive of restoration. He is asking for an extension of the Demolition by Neglect.

MOTION BY SECRETARY HATHAWAY TO TABLE THIS ISSUE. SECONDED BY ACTON.

ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.

3. State Historic Preservation Office Presentation (SHPO). Allen Higgins, Certified Local Governing Coordinator outlined the program and noted Owosso has participated since 2015. Training, outreach, education and grant opportunities are available. He also detailed the State Historic Tax Credit. Commissioner Omer asked if the DDA Director will be participating with HDC. City Manager Henne indicated the DDA and HDC will now be separate and he will be the liaison for the HDC. It was asked the Commission be copied on communications from SHPO. Fire suppression was discussed.
4. Corrective Action Notice-214 West Exchange Street. This property is non-contributing. Vinyl siding was used to repair the front of the building. Commissioner Van Epps asked where the contributing/non-contributing terminology originated. Commissioner Wilson stated it was a judgment that was made on each property doing a ground level survey. It was determined whether they were contributing/non-contributing based on the amount of historical or original part of the building still remained intact. National Register criteria of evaluation uses this terminology and it has carried over to Historic Districts. A permit was not pulled for the work at 214 West Exchange as it is considered maintenance. The building department will make the City Manager aware of any facade updates being made within the Historic District.
The group came to a consensus that no action will be taken.
5. The next meeting on February 16, 2022 at 6:00pm will be at City Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Brad Hissong detailed information regarding the building code.

BOARD COMMENTS: Secretary Hathaway thanked Commissioners Wilson and Van Epps for their contributions to the Matthews Building research and discussion. Commissioner Van Epps requested a procedure be put in place for review and follow up of redevelopment plans for buildings in the Historic District. He also would like to discuss the process by which Demolition by Neglect letters can be issued in a timely manner. Commissioner Wilson requested a vote on approval of the proposed guidelines at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

CHAIRMAN TEICH ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 8:36 P.M.

Philip Hathaway, Secretary