

**Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Minutes**  
**July 2, 2008**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Alderman Holland, Diane Giles, Merike Phillips and Tom Schleif

**EXCUSED:** Sue Dyke and Don Jensen

**STAFF PRESENT:** Mike Maki

The meeting was called to order by Tom Schleif, Vice-Chairperson, at 5:00 p.m. and roll call was taken.

**Approval of Minutes of May 22, 2008**

A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Giles to approve the May 22, 2008 minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously (4 ayes; 0 noes).

**1. Certificate of Appropriateness for Adolph Epstein House, 6220 Third Avenue, Third Avenue Historic District. PUBLIC HEARING**

Public hearing opened.

Mark Molinaro, Partners in Design Architects, 600 52nd Street, Suite 220, Kenosha, said the Commission is familiar with what the owner is asking to do. Revised drawings were furnished to the Commission. The owner wishes to replace the garage with a similar structure. The shingles and masonry will match the house. Mr. Molinaro passed a brochure around showing possible designs for the garage doors.

The front of the new garage will be located where the back of the current garage is. This will provide additional driveway space and more backyard space for a possible addition to the home.

Public hearing closed.

Mike Maki, Planner, asked if the owner was willing to share the cost of the new garage with the Commission. Dr. Vedder and Mark Molinaro said they do not have a cost at this time. They do not usually construct masonry garages. Dr. Vedder said she would share that information at a later date. Mike Maki said it would be good information to have for future reference.

A motion was made by Alderman Holland and seconded by Ms. Phillips to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new garage at the Adolph Epstein House in conformance with Section 15.14 of the Zoning Ordinance and the Third Avenue Historic District Preservation Plan. The motion passed unanimously (4 ayes; 0 noes).

**2. Certificate of Appropriateness for Yule House, 6300 Third Avenue, Third Avenue Historic District. PUBLIC HEARING**

Public hearing opened.

Ron Henning, Kenosha County Department of Public Works, 912 56th Street, Kenosha, said there is considerable damage to the structure and after getting estimates to repair the structure, the County feels it is in the tax payer's best interest to raze the building. The building does not have a specific use and is a safety hazard.

Public hearing closed.

Mike Maki said he would defer making his recommendation until after the Commissioners comments. Mr. Maki did research the building at the History Center and the City Development office. There are two separate brick structures. The one under discussion is the larger portion. This portion has some conflicting history. It has substantial ornamentation on the outside with glazed tile inside. It was heated at one time and has a bathroom. There were windows, but they have been bricked in.

At one time, there were two separate garages, but the two structures were joined together. The Yule family owned two separate lots that the two garages are located on. We believe the structure in question may have been constructed by Charles Nash. The Yule home was lived in by Mrs. Alford for many years following the Yule family. Mrs. Alford left the home to her maid when she passed, who then lived in the home.

Mr. Schleif said the Register of Deeds office shows the garage is located on lot 7 and the house is located on lot 8. Historical books always show the two as one property. Verbal history is that Charles Nash built the garage and worked on his cars there and also stored cars in it. Additional data can probably be located in support of the verbal history if given time for further investigation.

Alderman Holland said the use of four (4) garage doors, three of which have since been bricked in, is highly unusual. The structure was built between 1918 and 1931. One can tell the structure was not constructed by an ordinary contractor due to the construction detail. More research is warranted.

Ms. Giles asked which garage is older. Mike Maki said the smaller garage went with the Yule house. Most likely the Yule house garage was built first and the garages were joined later. Durkee Avenue was part of Pleasant Prairie when the garage was built. Access to the property was Fifth Avenue which was an alley and Seventh Avenue.

Ms. Phillips said the garage has merit on it's own with the limestone inserts, porcelain tile, etc. Ms. Phillips asked if a structural analysis had been done. The estimate of \$48,500 seems rather high. The estimate of \$19,500 to repair the northwest corner seems more reasonable if the whole corner is missing. The mission of State, County and local Historical Society's is to preserve historical buildings. This structure has historical merit. It also has potential financial value for the property. What is the County's estimate to demolish the structure? Mr. Henning said the County did not get a cost to raze the structure. They thought it would be presumptuous to get a demolition estimate. He also stated that the \$48,500 estimate was to structurally repair the brick. Ms. Phillips asked what the removal of existing block in-fills referred to in the \$48,500 estimate. Mr. Henning said that was to remove the brick fill-in of the garage doors. Ms. Phillips asked that the Commission request an Engineering Report on the structure and a cost of demolition from the County.

Mr. Schleif said with further investigation we should be able to document Charles Nash and his historical connection to the Yule family. If the verbal history is true, then this is an important piece of Kenosha's history.

Mark Molinaro, Partners in Design, said he is a member of the Kenosha County Buildings and Grounds Committee. He said that the west wall is bowed out several inches, in fact, the entire structure is in danger of falling down. Mr. Maki noted that no reference was made to damage to the west wall in the application or estimate.

Dr. Vedder, 6220 Third Avenue, lives next door to the property. She has seen children playing by the structure and has warned them to stay away.

Ms. Giles said it is disturbing that the structure has been allowed to deteriorate to this degree in the first place. Mr. Schleif said the garage has value. It could add value to the property if and when it is sold.

Ms. Phillips asked if the estimate for \$48,500 included the west wall. Mr. Henning said no, it was for the east and north walls only. Mike Maki said the damage they saw was to the northwest corner of the building. The Commission was not aware that the west wall was damaged.

A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Alderman Holland to defer action on the Certificate of Appropriateness until Kenosha County can provide an estimate for demolition of the garage and have a structural engineer examine the building and provide a report on the stability of the building. A special Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be held if this information is provided prior to the regularly scheduled July 30, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously (4 ayes; 0 noes).

### **3. Certificate of Appreciation Presentation**

Mr. Schleif presented Mr. Sampica with a Certificate of Appreciation for his dedication and service to the Commission over the past six years. Mr. Sampica said he enjoyed working with and getting to know everyone on the Commission. He felt the Commission had accomplished many good things during the six years he served. Mr. Sampica said he would miss working with everyone.

### **4. Any Other Business as Authorized by Law**

Mr. Maki said he did want more time to investigate the historical background of the garage on the Yule House property. The information on the west wall was new information, but the most deterioration is found at the northwest corner of the building. Given the verbal history of the structure, it is not wise to jump right into allowing the building to be demolished. Ms. Phillips asked what caused the damage. Mr. Schleif said the History Center used the garage for storage. Don Shepherd said the garage was spotless until they moved which was six years ago. Kenosha County has owned the property since 1965. There probably was never a formal agreement with the County regarding the upkeep of the structure. Ms. Phillips said a historic structure can not be demolished due to neglect. The County will have to notify the State regarding their wish to demolish the building. The County will be limited to certain funds to demolish the building. There is no value to the property right now because it is County owned and tax exempt.

Alderman Holland said the building could be stabilized to stop further decay. Ms. Phillips said possibly if the house is sold, it could be a museum and the structure could be a small cafe or a gift shoppe.

Mr. Schleif said we need to convince the County there is value associated with the structure. Mr. Maki said he could talk to the County and tell them to provide a Preservation Brief and stabilize the structure until they have the funds to restore it.

## **5. Public Comments**

Public comments opened.

Kevin Sampica, 8818 43rd Ave, Kenosha, thanked the Commission for the Certificate of Appreciation. In reference to the garage on the Yule House property, as a safety measure the structure should be shored-up or a small fence put up around it so it does not become a liability.

Public comments closed.

## **6. Commissioner Comments**

No Commissioner comments.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Giles and seconded by Alderman Holland. The motion passed unanimously (4 ayes; 0 noes). The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.