

City of Erie
Historic Preservation Task Force
Regular Meeting Agenda
October 14, 2020

A regular meeting of the Erie Historic Preservation Task Force was held Wednesday, October 14th, 2020 at 3:30 pm via a virtual meeting from the City of Erie Municipal Building, 626 State Street, Erie, PA 16501

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

<i>Member</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Emily Aloiz	X	
Dave Brennan	X	
Melissa Hake	X	
Melinda Meyer	X	
Chuck Scalise	X	
Mark Steg	X	

Also present: Renee Lamis, Kathy Wyrosdick, Bill Callahan, Mayor Schember

2. Approval of Minutes from regular meeting of September 9th, 2020.

A motion was made by M. Meyer and received a second by C. Scalise. There was no discussion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. New Business

- a. None

4. Old Business

- a. Review updated timeline

K. Wyrosdick shared the revised timeline and explained that a CLG application and CLG grant application to fund a historic preservation planning position are due by the end of October 2020. By the end of the year the City needs to adopt a historic preservation zoning ordinance to revise/replace the existing ordinance and have a Historic Preservation Review Board in place. After that an eligible district must be designated by the end of March.

An additional item to add to the timeline is the creation of a report from the task force for City Council. E. Aloiz volunteered to work on the report to be provided to City Council by the end of November. The report needs to be done before City Council is required to revise the zoning ordinance.

D. Brennan will refine the timeline for City Council with zoning benchmarks, public involvement etc.

- b. CLG Grant and Certification applications due this month

D. Brennan asked about financial support needed from the budget for the historic preservation planning position.

K. Wyrosdick calculated a budget for the position with salary and benefits would be approximately \$73,000/year. \$25,000 can come from the Certified Local Government Grant, but the City would have to budget for the rest. The professional services line item in the budget may be possible source for these funds.

B. Callahan noted that the CLG grant cannot subsidize a staff position, but K. Wyrosdick and others discussed the funds being applied to what the staff person would do such as create a historic preservation infrastructure within the city government. The grant would be for a new initiative or startup costs instead of subsidizing staff. B. Callahan agreed that would qualify for funding but also said it cannot be an ongoing cost, especially over two years.

M. Meyer asked about the specific application criteria for both the grant and the CLG status. Much of the required information cannot be supplied yet. B. Callahan said that PHMC is well aware of what is going on in Erie and there can be exceptions to the information supplied as long as the needed pieces are in place by the end of March 2021.

Items can be left blank or TBD. Supplemental material such as a timeline to meet the qualifications can be provided. B. Callahan will ask his colleagues exactly what the application should look like. He mentioned the National Park Service will not see application, it is more of an internal document for the City and Pennsylvania.

The SHPO will review the applications for deficits as they have done this before. The main gaps B. Callahan currently sees are:

1. No properties or districts are designated
2. There is not a process in place to designate new historic places

M. Meyer asked about the typical match for the CLG grant of this type. B. Callahan responded that it would be 25% using the planning category (opposed to the staff category).

5. Update on neighborhood toolkit designed to help neighborhood groups understand and plan for neighborhood preservation – M Meyer/K Wyrosdick

<https://www.design.upenn.edu/pennpraxis/work/neighborhood-preservation-toolkit-0>

M. Hake, M. Meyer and K. Wyrosdick spoke with Molly Lester of the Urban Heritage Project in Philadelphia who shared the details of the Neighborhood Preservation Tool Kit creation of the tool kit such as funding--\$82,000. Task force members are confident Erie can create a scaled down model for less money. E. Aloiz mentioned that many staff of the University of Pennsylvania were listed as project advisors on the tool kit and that partnering with a university many be useful. M. Meyer responded that Mercyhurst University's public history program and Gannon University could both potentially be involved, but that needs to be developed through the person hired by the City of Erie to be on staff. The importance of the tool kit is to engage

everyday homeowners. Those conversations lead back to preservation that is needed in the community.

6. Local Historic District

C. Scalise and K. Wyrosdick discussed a potential West 6th Street historic district with Thomas B. Hagen, who owns many of the properties in the area. The historic district status will protect his intellectual, emotional and financial investment in the City. Mr. Hagen was instrumental in the creation of the Historic Erie Preservation Trust for many properties on West 6th Street. Jeff Kidder, a trustee of the Trust, was also contacted to discuss potential CLG status and historic district nomination. Both are favorable to the idea.

C. Scalise spoke of the need to capture Mr. Hagen's engaging conversation about history. Mayor Sember suggested professional oral history videos be created. K. Wyrosdick said that is a potential future task force initiative.

The local historic district would include more properties than just those owned by Mr. Hagen. M. Meyer said about four years ago there was outreach to homeowners of Garden Court to discuss local historic district status. Most were enthusiastic or interested with very few opposed to the idea.

Many properties in the West 6th Street corridor are already on the National Register or have used historic preservation tax credits. B. Callahan said that is not a detriment to the historic district nomination. It makes sense that they should overlay.

The consensus from the task force is that the West 6th Street area makes the most sense as the pilot district. Another potential future district is Lower State Street.

7. Next steps:

Chairman Brennan discussed next steps: K. Wyrosdick will work on the CLG status application; D. Brennan will work on a timeline and reach out to fellow City Council members; M. Meyer will work on the CLG grant application; E. Aloiz will work on the task force report for City Council.

8. Adjourn at 4:37 pm

