

WEST CHICAGO HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING JUNE 4, 2013

Approved at the July 3, 2013 meeting.

Members Physically Present:

Janet Hale
Jennifer Timbrook
Cheryl Waterman
Garth Keck

Also Present:

Keith Letsche Special Counsel for the Commission

Member Absent:

Richard Vigsnes

Guests and Audience Signed in:

David Sabathne, of the West Chicago Community Center
Jeffrey Stibal
Jean Follett, of Landmarks Illinois
Lee Marks, of the Glen Ellyn Historic Preservation Commission
Mike Fortner
Ray Waterman
Steve Hale
Colin Hale
Frank Fokta
Mike Gunther
Shannon Gunther
Matt Michael
Scott Fraser
Milica Wolfgram
Steven Wolfgram

Staff:

Michael Guttman City Administrator
John Said Community Development
Director
John Fincham Assistant Director of
Community Development
Jeff Harris City Planner

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 475 Main Street, West Chicago, Illinois. A quorum was established.

2. Certificate of Appropriateness Review

- a. Continuation of Public Hearing C.O.A.-12-20, 151 West Washington St.
Denial of Demolition**

The public hearing on this matter, continued from, April 16, 2013, was convened at 7:04 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 475 Main Street, West Chicago, Illinois. Physically present: President Hale and Commissioners Timbrook Waterman, and Keck. Absent: Commissioner Vignes. A quorum was established for the public hearing. President Hale recited for the record the standards for a Certificate of Appropriateness (“COA”). The City of West Chicago (“City”) then presented its testimony and evidence in support of the COA.

After an opening statement, the City called Mr. John Fincham, the City’s Assistant Director Community Development. Mr. Fincham testified as to previous code violations on the property and to two contractor estimates for repairs, one for the interior and the other for the exterior, totaling approximately \$550,000. The City next called Mr. George Mochta, an architect engaged by the City to do an assessment report of the building’s condition and a cost estimate for repairs. Mr. Mochta testified as to the condition of the building and to an estimate of \$937,927.60 for its repair and restoration to code, including a parking lot. The City finally called Mr. Kenneth Polack, a State-certified real estate appraiser. Mr. Polack testified to two appraisals of the property by him, one done in 2010 which valued the property in “as is” condition at \$260,000 and the other, done in 2013, which value of the property as repaired to code at \$325,000. On this basis, he testified that it was not economically viable to repair the property. The City then closed its case. Each witness was cross-examined and questioned by the Commission and audience immediately following his testimony.

Commission special consultants, Mr. Sean Gallagher and Mr. James Greetis, then testified. Mr. Gallagher, an architect and university professor, testified to the architectural importance and structural soundness of the building. Mr. Greetis, a structural engineer, also testified as to the soundness of the building.

Members of the audience then testified. Among them, Mr. David Sabanthe, President of the West Chicago Community Center, a property owner in the Turner Junction Historic District, testified to the interest of his organization in partnering with the City to restore the property and its willingness to commit approximately \$400,000 to doing so. Dr. Jean Follet, of the Landmarks Illinois, testified as to the architectural importance of the building and the need to tie its restoration to a plan for the redevelopment of the City-owned 14-acre site surrounding it. Mr. Lee Marks, of the Glen Ellyn Historic Preservation Commission, testified to the architectural importance of the building and his belief, based on his experience with the restoration of historic properties, that it could be done much less expensively than in the City’s estimates. Mr. Scott Fraser, Dr. Frank Fokta, and Mr. Jeffrey Stibal also testified in favor of preserving the building.

At the conclusion of testimony by the audience and there being no further comment, upon motion by Commissioner Timbrook, seconded by Commissioner Water, and unanimously adopted, the Commission adjourned the public hearing at approximately 12:00 midnight, and continue the matter to June 25, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. for discussion.

A transcript of the proceedings of the public hearing was taken down by Joanne Ely, a Certified Shorthand Reporter.

3. Preliminary Review

None.

4. Historic District/Landmark Update

None.

5. Approval of Minutes

None.

6. Other Business

None.

7. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Timbrook to adjourn meeting, seconded by Commissioner Keck. The motion carried by an all aye vote. The meeting was adjourned at 12:01 a.m.