

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Jackson Historic District Commission

Teleconference (602) 580-9846, 5542693#

Thursday, September 3, 2020 at 12:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tony Raykovich, Scott Slagor, Bob Cole, Maurice Imhoff, Russ Desy

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thaddaus Williams, Mary Lee Clark

1. Call to Order

Chairman Raykovich called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm

2. Public Comment

Elaine Robinson- architectural historian and preservationist- Stated that she has concerns about placement of murals on buildings that are historically significant. The entirety of the building must be reviewed, and all of the building must be treated as historic. Regarding the request before the HDC, she stated the back wall cannot be disregarded because it is the back wall. The addition was constructed in a manner that complied with SOI standards. If wall is painted, the addition will no longer blend into building, but will stand out distinctly. A mural would be a distinct, inappropriate addition to the historic structure. Believes HDC should decline the request and the primer should be removed from the building.

Jacque Austin- Jackson Young Professionals and Bright Walls team- explained the steps the Bright Walls team had taken to ensure they followed the proper process. She stated that the application was presented some weeks ago to the Public Arts Commission and the Planning Staff and stated that no issue was raised with the application. Staff Member East clarified that the packet with locations was only presented to the Planning staff Thursday, August 27th and the primer was installed on the building Monday, August 31st.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Imhoff moved, with support from Commissioner Cole, to adopt the agenda as presented.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

4. Approval of the August 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the August 17, 2020 meeting were not yet compiled and were not presented to Commission.

Commissioner Slagor moved, with support from Commissioner Imhoff, to table the approval of the minutes to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

5. Applications for Review

A. 244 W. Michigan Ave- Carnegie Library Proposed Mural

Commissioner Cole- architect on the Commission, Mr. Cole provided his recollection of the history of when the building addition was added to the rear of the building, noting that he was not awarded the project, but recalled the budget being reduced considerably. He added that the building was constructed with an EIFS exterior and did not believe it was correctly installed, noting a lack of a vapor barrier or any sort of mesh fabric to reinforce the EIFS. He stated that moisture damage could be observed on the building and that it would likely need to be repaired in the next few years. Personally as an architect and member of the HDC, he expressed concern about putting a mural on building stating that he has no problems against Bright Walls program, but this is not the appropriate place for it. Recommendation is to put a primer on the balance of the EIFS area and paint the building appropriately.

Commissioner Desy-stated that it appeared the existing EIFS color was a deliberate choice to match the color of the building.

Commissioner Imhoff- question for Jacquie/applicant- is there any reason the artist did not wrap around the entire addition of the building? Clay McAndrews answers- Artist chose to have a straight line to have a neat canvas area, but the mural will spill over slightly. Artist was chosen over hundreds that applied (not able to get international artists due to Covid). Mr. McAndrews explained that Bright Walls had already purchased a flight for the artist and had made arrangements for her stay in Jackson.

Ms. Austin also added that the Bright Walls team was under the impression that library had bigger plans for this structure in the future anyway and this was one of the reasons that we chose this location. Her understanding was that the 1980s addition may be demolished in the coming years as part of a proposed building addition.

Sarah Tacket- director of Jackson District Library- our board and staff are excited about the collaboration with the Bright Walls team. We are looking at a potential expansion of the Library with a different type of addition, addition was completed in 1983, library had gone out for a more substantial millage, but it was not approved and this is why the current structure was created as Mr. Cole previously explained. Was probably done very inexpensively and we have had a number of issues as a result. If a mural went up, it would potentially come down in 2-5 years, but our Board was very excited to participate in Bright Walls in the meantime. We felt that since it was an addition that we did not consider it as a part of the historic building.

Clay- noted that the building has been referred to as "the silo", it was built in inexpensively, and it needs repairs. If Commissioner Cole's recommendation is to repair the wall and the library states that it may come down in the future, we would love to paint the wall to bring attention to it and have people enjoy it for the next couple years until the building project takes place. Chicago Tribune has listed Jackson as top 20 places to visit in Midwest and a large part of that was because of Bright Walls.

Commissioner Slagor- have done some research with this particular request and have reached out to preservation professional across the country and have heard from many of them. While the Commission should consider whether the work is proposed on the original structure or the later addition, the building must be reviewed holistically. This is not painting an existing painted surface, it's taking a rough natural finish material

and painting it. Rough natural finish was installed as to blend in with the existing building. He stated he could not support a certificate of appropriateness on account of Standard 9 of the SOI standards for rehabilitation.

Commissioner Desy- no matter how careful you are about setting precedent, it does set a precedent. This is a highly visible location. While the addition may have been poorly constructed, it was constructed to meet Standard 9 of the SOI Standards for Rehabilitation. If I were on the MEDC, i would approve. If I were on the DDA, absolutely yes. However, the HDC has a very narrow scope and the role is to preserve historic structures and their character.

Commissioner Cole- recommends to move mural to another location and that he is not in favor of this location.

Chairman Raykovich expressed his concerns were also about setting precedent with murals on historic structures.

Commissioner Imhoff- stated that he agreed with concerns about precedent but stated that he agreed with the rationale from the applicant when they say that they are going to tear down building for a future building addition. He was not opposed to the mural if the building would be coming down in the future.

Commissioner Slagor- unfortunately, the HDC cannot make decisions about what may happen, but what currently is. He added that he's seen many public projects get delayed or never happen based on availability of funding and it's possible that a mural could be painted and the building project may never come to fruition. Commissioner Desy agreed.

Commissioner Desy moved, with support from Commissioner Cole, to deny the application to install a mural at the Carnegie Library referencing Standard #9 of the Secretary of the Interior Standards. "New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment."

Commissioner Cole recommended that the library repair the remainder of the EIFS (façade material on the 1980s addition) and paint a color that is complementary to the existing building to preserve the existing material. Commissioners clarified that the follow-up repair work should also be reviewed by the HDC.

**The motion to deny the application passed 4-1 on a roll call vote
(Desy-Y, Cole-Y, Imhoff-N, Slagor-Y, Raykovich-Y.)**

6. New Business- None.

7. Old Business- None.

8. Final Comments

A. Public Comment-

Clay McAndrews- Final Public Comment- apologize we did not know this work needed permission. We also don't want the Library to have to bear the cost of remediation. Would you all be open to us painting the mural and have a plan within a certain time frame to paint over the mural – proposed 2 years? We understand your concerns about setting precedent and we don't want to put a mural on the side of the Michigan Theater. We do respect historic buildings in town.

Chairman Raykovich added that per the rules of order- Commissioners cannot debate or answer any questions during final public comment.

Elaine Robinson- would like to applaud the Commission for the decision they've made. I know it is a difficult decision to make but this is our cultural history. I understand the addition may not be everyone's "cup of tea" but it was constructed to be complementary to the building. Thank you to Commission.

B. Commissioner Comment- None.

9. Reminder: Next Regular Meeting

Mr. Raykovich reminded the Commission that the next scheduled meeting will be Monday, September 21, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam East". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adam East
Planner/Zoning Enforcement Officer