

AGENDA # 7

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 5, 2014

TITLE: Landmarks Ordinance Revisions
(17835)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 5, 2014

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Erica Fox Gehrig, Vice Chair; Christina Slattery, Jason Fowler, David McLean, Marsha Rummel, and Michael Rosenblum. Gehrig left at 8:10 p.m. during discussion of Item #7.

SUMMARY:

Levitan explained that the Common Council has created an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of 5 alders to review the Phase I revisions to the Landmarks Ordinance. A staff team consisting of Steve Cover, Katherine Cornwell, Anne Monks and Amy Scanlon will devise a work plan for Phase II that will be presented to the Landmarks Commission for implementation. The Phase II work when completed in the Commission will be sent to the Ad Hoc Committee for review.

Rummel requested clarification about what is involved in Phase II other than the district-by-district review of the related ordinance sections.

Levitan explained that the staff team will present the Phase II work plan to the Landmarks Commission for Commission review and approval or denial.

Alder Zellers discussed her written comments with the Commission. She requested that the Commission provide mathematical values that would be the threshold for volume and height. Zellers questioned the inclusion of buildings constructed outside of the period of significance in the VRA definition. She explained that the best way to preserve the area is to base the historic district on the appropriate buildings of the period. Zellers explained that the land division and combination language needs clarification and cautioned that the weakness of the Mansion Hill language means that the rest of the Ordinance should be strong. Zellers explained that the maintenance record of the property owner should be tightened or clarified. She suggested that the Ordinance prohibit improper mortar mix and that the Ordinance allow the review of signs in historic districts. Zellers requested that all historic districts have public hearings for accessory building or additions over 100 square feet.

There was general discussion about the possible denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness given the current language regarding non-action and the allocation of number of days to accomplish certain steps in the process. There was also discussion about when to start the clock for the review of the application.

Zellers explained that a section on demolition by neglect be created in the Ordinance.

Staff explained that there is a Building Inspector assigned to historic districts and landmarks in an effort to solve the demolition by neglect problem and raise the importance of the maintenance of the City's building stock.

There was general discussion about the maintenance of buildings in historic districts and the previous record of City involvement.

Zellers explained that land divisions and combinations should be prohibited.

There was discussion about different scenarios of land divisions and combinations.

There was discussion about the definition of the VRA and what language may prohibit VRA creep.

Staff explained that the Landmarks Commission policy document should begin soon after the Phase I work is completed.

Fowler explained that the Ordinance language should be revised to say "licensed real estate professional" instead of "real estate broker."

ACTION:

No action taken.