

Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes
May 23rd, 2023

The Cedar City Historic Preservation Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 10 North Main Street, Cedar City Utah.

Board Members Present: Chairwoman Aleese Cardon; Farah LeFevre; Paula Mitchell; Ryan Paul; Maria Twitchell; Councilmen Scott Phillips; City Planner Don Boudreau; Executive Assistant Natasha Nava.

Excused: Kearney Wood.

Others Present:

1. **Call to Order:** Aleese welcomed everyone.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Paula led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Ryan motions to approve the minutes from the April 11th meeting; Maria seconds; all in favor unanimous decision.
4. **Public Agenda:** None.
5. **Business Agenda:**

Discuss ideas on education and outreach regarding Historic Downtown:

Scott I have concerns about applying for another grant with the response we received from the public. We've discussed the need for education and outreach; however, we have not identified a plan of action. **Paula** maybe the Railroad Centennial Celebration will be an opportunity for the public to see the positive things this board does. **Ryan** what is the focus of our education and outreach? Tax credits; the preservation of history. **Scott** back in December, when we proposed these historic districts, there was a great mistrust of the impact to the property owners. The assumption was that it would landlock property owners and they would not be able to develop their property how they want. They saw this as a government agency telling them what they can and can't do with their land. **Don** the complaints to the State were greater than they had ever experienced. There was so much public resistance. **Aleese** the ordinance that was in place generated a lot of hostility and mistrust from the public. We have since repealed. **Don** I'm not convinced that's the case. It was more of a general resistance. **Scott** I had a property owner in the proposed Northwest District that said "the last thing we need is the government telling us what to do with our land". Another person said we were "opening Pandoras Box". Even though the establishment of the historical districts in no way restricts them on what they can do with their land. It was a fear that future City Council could place additional restricts on them. A fear of "what if".

Ryan I'm surprised people are so fearful of Democracy. I'm surprised they have so little understanding of their city government. I am not surprised that people listen to propaganda that is self-motivated by businesses in this community for their own personal gain. I would love to create a hypothetical banner saying "you could have saved \$5,000 a year on your property taxes, but Frank Jackson decided you didn't need that". We are trying to do things to save people money, and the people that are milking other people for money are convincing them that this is bad for them. I only want the government to tell me what to do when it benefits me. I don't know how effective our outreach will be if their fear is of the future. **Scott** I was contacted by a property owner that wanted to know how this would impact them. I explained it would have virtually no impact on them. If they decided to develop their property and wanted to keep it true to its historic era, then they could benefit from tax credits. They could demolish the building tomorrow and we couldn't stop them. **Farah** I think an open forum where the public can meet us and know who we are and what we're trying to accomplish will help. **Scott** it's interesting the amount of people that want to live in Cedar because of our charm and the character of the historic nature. We need to find a way to show that it's to the betterment of everyone if we all try to save and restore our historic buildings and homes. **Farah** could we do a tourism survey about what people like to see when they're here. Help educate owners about what brings people here.

Maria there was a survey done by the Chamber of Commerce, and preservation was important to the citizens. Maybe we need to bring that survey back out as proof the citizens care about preservation. **Don** we might even want to look at the General Plan, it addressed some things downtown. **Scott** I think the pushback is from commercial development. I didn't speak to a single homeowner that had any pushback regarding the nominations. **Maria** the anonymous letter and the creation of the website did not help. **Scott** SHPO is willing to send someone down to answer any questions the citizens have. Maybe hearing from the experts would alleviate some concerns. We can advertise a town hall meeting encouraging the community to come with their questions. We would have the opportunity to share what this board has done to better the community. We're trying to get things registered in a way that can help the community. **Ryan** if the concern is of government overreaching, we are not going to be able to fix that. No amount of outreach will change their minds. **Farah** I think July could be a great time to have this town hall. July is a month of history for our state. **Ryan** maybe we tie it into a fall event. **Maria** I think we should start with City Council, and figure out where to go from there. I'm not sure if people will show up if we hold a town hall in July. **Ryan** at the City Council we could address the concerns in the letter. We don't refer to the letter directly, but we correct the misinformation.

Maria we have 3 City Council seats that are up for election, we could have 2 new members on the board. I think we need to focus on building rapport with them. **Maria** I think we need to prioritize having more of a presence at City Council on a quarterly basis. **Ryan** since the public outcry, not a single citizen has appeared before this board to voice their concerns. No one from the City Council has shown up wanting to understand exactly what's going on. **Maria** I think we need to be proactive and not reactive. By keeping the City Council apprised of what we're doing and why. We can investigate other entities that may be impacted by what we're doing like; The Home Builders Association; The Board of Realtors. Let's identify who might have a problem with these nominations and address concerns on the forefront. For example, the city is allowing these auxiliary buildings on the backs of people's houses, mother-in-law units. That's great for historic preservation because the house in the front is being saved. We could go before the City Council and explain how this idea of creating more housing is also beneficial to historic preservation. You're saving homes. We need more housing; we are tearing down homes to build student housing. I think SUU might be another great entity to help educate on the resources available as they do have historic buildings. **Scott** I think we need to start with this board and make sure we are well versed in the ins and outs of historic preservation. We can have someone from SHPPO come out and we can ask them all our questions. We can go over each of the complaints in the letter. **Maria** what if we invite them to our retreat and set aside 3 to 4 hours to have an in-depth conversation? **Don** I can reach out to Alena and start the conversation about them sending someone out. **Scott** from an action standpoint, in the next few months let's arrange for our retreat where we can address roles, responsibilities, and guidance from SHPPO. I think we really need to better understand the benefits so that we can educate others. Remember when the folks from the Cedar Theater expressed interest in their building being added to the registry. At the time we were not aware that to be considered for the registry they must complete the entire project. But they only wanted to do a little remodel. Maybe we need to help them develop their plan so that they can qualify for credits.

CLG Direction:

Don I reached out to Alena regarding amending our contract with CLG. We can do that. The issue is the theatre, in the original RLS that building was listed as contributing. However, it's not contributing anymore because of how they have remodeled it. Because it is ineligible, we are unable to nominate it to the registry. **Ryan** do we have a clear understanding of what makes a property ineligible? My understanding was you can do whatever you want to the inside of a property or building, as long as the façade remains true to the era. **Don** I do not have a clear answer regarding what makes a property ineligible. **Scott** what about the Wells Fargo building? It could undergo serious changes depending on the next ownership. **Don** what is the final decision regarding moving forward with this round of CLG? **Scott** I would be in support of moving forward. **Don** it does look like education and outreach is a covered use of the CLG funds. **Scott** how do we feel about doing a residential RLS in Maria's neighborhood? **Farah** let's do it. The people I've talked to in the neighborhood are excited about it. **Scott** I asked for a \$10,000 budget line item for Historic Preservation from Paul. He informed me that we are an advisory committee, the City does not budget funds for advisory committees. However, if you have a project that you want done, and it's approved by the City Council. We can get the funding to do that project.

Maria could we create a façade incentive program where we help citizens with the historic preservation of their homes? **Scott** possibly. I think that is something we could take to the Council as a proactive step in historic preservation. **Maria** we are not working against anyone. **Scott** we are trying to elevate everyone. For example, encouraging home-based businesses in historic homes. **Maria** we already have a historic neighborhood. And look what has happened there. Clearly no overstepping has happened from this board. And there is the street where the neighbors all came together to establish their own ordinance. **Scott** a perfect example of how the City Council will listen to what the citizens want.

6. **Other Business:**

Retreat

Maria what if the retreat replaces the July meeting? We could have it at the Visitors Center for an extended time, maybe from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.? Does July 11th work for everyone? **Scott** works for me.

Historic District Sign 100 West

Maria the sign is back up on 100 West. **Aleese** it was stolen. **Maria** I had to have another one made.

Cedar City the birthplace of film

Maria we are having a celebration for film. Cedar City is the birthplace of films in Utah. It is the centennial this year. I would like members of this committee to be part of that celebration.

7. **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at **4:00**