

CITY OF WILDWOOD
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MEETING OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WILDWOOD CITY HALL (HOSTED)
16860 MAIN STREET
WILDWOOD, MISSOURI 63040
January 27, 2022

I. Welcome and Roll Call

Meeting: Thursday, January 27, 2022, hosted at Wildwood City Hall, via Zoom, at 6:30 p.m.
Attending: Commissioners Bachert, Hensic, and Hrubes, Commission Liaison Broyles, Council Liaisons Nyhan and Jakscy, and Acting Chair Stevens
Absent: Commissioners Hammond and Rowton, Alternates Adams and Quarternik, and Secretary Scott
Staff: Director of Planning and Parks Joe Vujnich and Planner Robyn Keefe

II. Opening Remarks

None.

III. Approval of the Historic Preservation Commission's Minutes from its December 2, 2021 Meeting and January 14, 2022 Site Visit

Commissioner Bachert motioned to approve the December 2, 2021 minutes as distributed. Commissioner Hrubes seconded the motion. Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Hrubes motioned to approve the January 14, 2022 site visit minutes as distributed. Commissioner Bachert seconded the motion. Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

IV. Public Comment (comments can be provided via Zoom Chat)

Mr. Chivetta extended his thanks to the Commission for coming out to visit his property and hearing his request.

V. Old Business

A. Ready for Action – Three (3) Items

1. **H.R. 1-21 The Marianist Province of the U.S., c/o Merle Wilberding and Chris Conard, 4425 West Pine Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63108** - A request to remove a family retreat lodge, which is located at 4000 State Route 109 (Locator Number: 26V310045), known as *Marycliff (formerly Woodcliff)*, c. 1905, per St. Louis County Tax Records, c. 1891, per City of Wildwood's Historic Building Inventory [Survey 2014-15,

Updated July 2019, Page 120 of 343], from the City's Historic Register. This tract of land is zoned NU Non-Urban Residence District, with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The property owners have applied to rescind the Wildwood Historic Registry designation (Ordinance #2475), noting the original plans to renovate and preserve Marycliff are no longer feasible. The owners are entitled to remove the property from the list, given the designation was not in conjunction with a historic zoning district or overlay, or along with an ordinance expressly granting economic or regulatory incentives. **(Ward Six)**

Planner Keefe gave a brief slide presentation on the Marycliff Residence asset, ending with the Department recommending the Historic Preservation Commission support the applicant's request to remove the asset from the Wildwood Historic Register. It was noted the owners are entitled to remove the property, given the voluntary nature of Wildwood's Historic Preservation and Restoration Ordinance.

Commissioner Hammond asked, assuming the asset were removed from the Register, if it would still have to come back to the Historic Preservation Commission for review, in the event alterations to the exterior of the residence or demolition of it, were/was proposed, given the age of the structure. Director Vujnich affirmed that there would be significant review involved, if a demolition action was requested for the Marycliff Residence, including review with the Historic Preservation Commission. Commissioner Hammond then followed up with asking what would happen if the structure were allowed to deteriorate beyond salvaging. He noted this course of action would be the worst-case scenario. Director Vujnich acknowledged this practice had been taken by some property owners in the area, but noted that the Marianists, until very recently, had been actively utilizing the residence as part of its mission.

The applicant's representative and attorney, Chris Conard, noted there was no intention to let the structure deteriorate, until there was no other option. The intent, as he understands it, is to explore all options for the property. He noted that he had spoke to Staff before the meeting, and that he expected there would be conversation between Staff and the Province about various options. He noted he thought the Marianists would go forward in a collaborative way and acknowledged that the Marycliff Residence was a community asset.

Commissioner Hammond motioned to support the petitioner's request to remove the Marycliff Residence asset from the Wildwood Historic Register. Commissioner Hrubes seconded the motion. Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

2. Wildwood History Book Discussion **(Wards – All)**

Planner Keefe gave a presentation on Department recommendations for edits and next steps for the Wildwood History Book, including recommendations for edits to Chapter Five (5), Chapter Six (6), and addition of an Epilogue.

Acting Chair Stevens noted the Department's recommendations were thought-provoking and informative, and asserted that she felt the tone of the book should be a positive one. Commissioners Hammond, Bachert, and Hensic agreed.

Commissioner Hrubes echoed everyone's agreement, except for the comments regarding the attack on the Capitol. Commissioner Hammond noted that it was the history of "us" during this time and that it was one (1) of two (2) major news items during this time. Director Vujnich noted that he was not aware of any Wildwood residents that participated in the attack, and that it was within the purview of the Historic Preservation Commission to remove that portion if it chose. Commissioner Hammond asserted the book had covered national news items in other sections, and, in his opinion, it was important. Acting Chair Stevens suggested that a mention of it was appropriate, though it could be limited to a few sentences. Planner Keefe noted the section, as it stood, was only a few sentences, and clarified the Department recommendation was not intended to increase its length, just be more descriptive. Acting Chair Stevens asked if more comments should be presented to Staff (by the following Friday), before a decision on the matter was made. Staff encouraged that a vote be taken at the meeting, but exclusive of the Capitol attack comments and content, to provide some direction to Ms. VonGruben and show consensus. Some language regarding the Capitol attack would be presented to the Commission at a later date for review and action.

Commission Liaison Broyles commented there was also some dilemma in Wildwood within the area schools concerning Critical Race Theory, noting the impacts to the community as a whole. Acting Chair Stevens suggested Staff bring that matter back to the Commission, after talking to Ms. VonGruben.

Commissioner Bachert motioned to approve all Department recommendations, as presented, withholding the issues concerning the Capitol attack and Critical Race Theory, for further discussion. Commissioner Hrubes seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Commissioners Hensic, Bachert, and Hrubes, and Acting Chair Stevens

Nays: Commissioner Hammond

Commissioner Hammond asked the Commission if there was any direction that would be provided to Staff and Ms. VonGruben concerning the Capitol attack and Critical Race Theory topics. He commented he felt the current language around the Capitol attack was fine, as it stood, and the Critical Race Theory topic should not be addressed in the book. Director Vujnich clarified that the Department's position pertaining to the Capitol attack content was a mere rephrasing to obtain a more neutral tone. Planner Keefe added the Department intended to present language to the Commission at the next meeting with the proposed rewording, and this rewording would also be influenced by any comments received from Commissioners.

Planner Keefe concluded with next steps and a timeline targeting Celebrate Wildwood Event 2022. Director Vujnich noted that the Commission would have an opportunity to review the remaining work on the book at each step.

3. Update on 2022 Work Program (Wards – All)

Director Vujnich noted some projects are on-hold due to seasonal conditions. He noted the Route 66 Roadside Park was moving forward in 2022. Staff are meeting with the selected consultant in February and would come before the Commission soon after. He also noted that the advocacy of Council Liaisons, Council Members Jacsky and Nyhan, resulted in City Council funding of the comprehensive planning effort for the park.

Director Vujnich stated the Orrville Historic Community Marker was in the process of being relocated to better reflect the location chosen by the Commission. The parking pad will be added soon after.

Commissioner Hammond asked about the funding set aside for the Essen Log Cabin. He noted the funds were tagged for 2023. Director Vujnich clarified that multiple decisions will be made in 2022, in preparation for the reconstruction in 2023.

- B. Not Ready for Action – Three (3) Items
 - 1. Discussion Regarding the Future Location for the Essen Log Cabin **(Wards – All)**
 - 2. Development of Work Program for Historic Route 66 Promotion **(Wards – All)**
 - 3. Update on Kohn Park Sign **(Ward One)**

VI. New Business

A. Ready for Action – No Items

- B. Not Ready for Action – Two (2) Items
 - 1. Discussion Regarding the Age Threshold Used to Determine Qualification as Historic **(Wards – All)**
 - 2. Overview of Maintenance Bids for Old Pond School **(Ward One)**

VII. Review of Proposed Zoning/Plats/Site Development Plans/Demolition Requests – One (1) Item

- A. Review of findings from a site visit to a property located at 25 Centaur Road (Locator #19Y220066), with demolition proposed for the existing single-family dwelling/retreat center, swimming pool and related structures, guest cottage, and bathhouse. The primary structure, built circa 1860, has been surveyed, and is included in the City of Wildwood Historic Building Inventory. At the January 14, 2022 Special Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, five (5) Commissioners and one (1) Alternate toured the site to provide comment in the attached site visit summary and letter. **(Ward One)**

Planner Keefe gave a slide presentation of the site visit. Mr. Chivetta, the owner, then presented, noting he and his wife purchased the property with the intention of turning it into their estate. He mentioned that many of the buildings were in disrepair after nearly a decade of deferred maintenance. He noted the multiple additions to the main residence make it difficult to use the structure as a residence. He is before the Commission to request removal of the four (4) structures identified in the permit application. Mr. Chivetta noted that he would be happy to contribute the stone, if a plan were in-place to do so.

Commissioner Hrubes motioned to approve the demolition. Commissioner Bachert seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

VIII. Other Matters for Consideration – Three (3) Items

A. Meeting Format 2022

Director Vujnich noted the Omicron variant has become an issue affecting events across the City. He asked the Commission to delay this discussion for a few more months, until there was more information as to the impact of it.

B. Election of Officers

Secretary Scott (absent), Commissioner Bachert, and Commissioner Hensic, the appointed Nominating Committee, presented their slate of candidates.

Commissioner Bachert presented the slate as follows:

- Jan Stevens, Chair
- Steve Scott, Vice Chair
- Alan Bachert, Secretary

Director Vujnich noted that other nominations could be presented from the floor at this time.

Commissioner Hammond asked if any term limits would be reached within the next year. Chair Stevens noted that some were up for reappointment, but none had reached their term limits.

Commissioner Hammond motioned to accept the officers, as nominated by the Nominating Committee. Commissioner Hrubes seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. Upcoming Training Opportunities

Planner Keefe reminded the Commission about an upcoming training opportunity available on January 31, 2022, relating to the topic of Adaptive Reuse. Commissioner Hensic asked if the session would be recorded. Planner Keefe stated that she would reach out to the organizer and send out an email to the Commission with the information.

D. Missouri Main Street Connection

Planner Keefe noted that she and the Assistant Director would be attending a Grant Workshop for the Missouri Main Street Connection Community Empowerment Grant on February 2nd. Missouri Main Street Connection is a statewide nonprofit specializing in a preservation-based economic development model. Staff will attend the workshop to determine if there is a fit for its services.

IX. Upcoming Meeting Date – February 24, 2022 (Thursday)

X. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Commissioner Hammond motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Bachert seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.