

CITY OF MERRILL
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday, August 4, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers
1004 E. First Street

AGENDA

Voting members of Committee: Alderperson Paul Russell, Chairman, Bea Lebal, Elizabeth McCrank, Michael Caylor, Jr. and Alderman Steve Sabatke.

To attend remotely, call 857-529-8340 and meeting PIN 492 220 252#

1. Call to order
2. Approval of July 7, 2021 Minutes
3. Consider changes to the Historic Preservation Repair Guidelines
4. Update on Legion building
5. Public comment
6. Set date, time of next meeting.
7. Adjourn

Agenda prepared by Shari P. Wicke
Agenda reviewed by Chairman Paul Russell

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**City of Merrill
Historic Preservation Committee
Wednesday, July 7th, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Common Council Chambers, 1004 East First Street**

Voting Members Present (4 of 5): Alderman Paul Russell (Chairperson), Alderman Steve Sabatke, Elizabeth McCrank and Bea Lebal.

Others meeting attendees (either in-person or remotely) included: Mayor Derek Woellner, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Alderman Mark Weix, Linda Tryczak and City Clerk Bill Heideman. Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

Call to order

Alderman Russell called the meeting to order at 5:36 P.M.

Minutes of previous meeting(s)

The minutes were in the meeting packet.

Motion (Sabatke/Lebal) to approve the June 10th, 2021 minutes. Carried.

Change order of agenda items

Mayor Woellner requested that he be allowed to change the order of agenda items and consider the "Update on Scott Mansion & Legion building" agenda item next. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Update on Scott Mansion Tower and former Legion Building

Alderman Sabatke reported that the tower from the Scott Mansion has been moved and is now being reassembled. The cross will not be reattached to the tower. Alderman Sabatke remarked that the tower will be a positive asset on the River Bend Trail.

Alderman Russell reported that the Merrill Historical Society has sent him a letter related to the former American Legion building.

Bea Lebal provided verbal information on the history of the building, including the reversionary clause (1999). The Merrill Historical Society is nearing the end of their use of the building, and have already received a Letter of Intent to purchase the building.

The Board of Public Works will be discussing this at their July meeting.

Actual ownership of the building is unclear at this time. Alderman Sabatke stated that he believes the City owns the building. A legal opinion on ownership is pending.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel stated that, before the building receives any historic designation, the Historic Preservation Ordinance should be clarified and potentially amended.

Discussion on the former Legion Building will be an agenda item for the next meeting. No action was taken at this time.

Consider changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance

An draft ordinance amendment was in the meeting packet.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel explained the ordinance. It would make the Historic Preservation Committee primarily an advisory group, with the exception of demolitions.

Alderman Sabatke stated that he is in favor of the ordinance amendment "on the whole". Bea Lebal agreed with that assessment. It was suggested that, at some point, the word "shall" could be changed to "may" in several places in the ordinance.

Linda Tryczak reported on the historic-building procedures that Wausau currently has in place.

Motion (Sabatke/McCrank) to refer the ordinance amendment to the City Plan Commission, so that a public hearing can be scheduled. Carried.

Public Comment Period

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel suggested that "standards" be placed on the next meeting agenda. Establishing standards would not require holding a public hearing.

Linda Tryczak suggested conducting a historic survey. She also provided information on historic structures in Wausau.

The Committee then made comments and discussed several items that were not on the agenda.

Establish date, time and location of next meeting

Wednesday, August 4th, 2021 at 5:30 P.M. in the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

Adjournment

Motion (Sabatke/Lebal) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:36 P.M.

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

William N. Heideman CMC, WCMC
City Clerk

Historic Residential Building Repair Guidelines for Historically Significant Properties in Merrill, WI

June 20, 2000

All additions, exterior alterations and repairs shall be compatible with the historic character of the building.

Porches. Porches that are original to the building, or that pre-date 1930 and blend with the historic character of the building, shall be retained whenever possible. If such a porch is on a street facade, and is beyond repair, then a new porch shall be constructed in its place, although the dimensions of the new porch do not necessarily have to duplicate the dimensions of the old. Construction of new porches to approximate the dimensions of original porches is encouraged.

All porches shall present a finished appearance, e.g., all floor joists hidden from view and all porches finished with ceilings and frieze boards. Porch ceilings shall have the appearance of narrow beaded boards. First floor porch flooring shall be tongue-in-groove boards. Carpeting or two-by-four decking on the porch is prohibited. All wood on exterior porches, except flooring and stair treads, shall be painted or opaque stained.

All railings on porches shall be constructed of wood with top and bottom rails. Bottom rails should be raised above the floor level and should be no higher than 3.5" from the floor. All balusters on porch railings shall be square posts, unless a different design is original to the building. Railings on stairways shall be either wood to match the railings on the porch or wrought iron with one-by-one plain vertical balusters. Twisted or other decorative wrought iron is prohibited. All balusters shall be constructed such that a 4" ball may not pass through the railing at any point. All balusters shall be located in between the top and bottom rail and shall not extend across the face of either. Siding on porch rails is prohibited unless the existing "original" rail was sided. Porch posts shall be trimmed with decorative molding at the top and bottom of the posts.

All porches and stairways shall be enclosed between the frieze under the first floor and the ground with a framed lattice. The lattice shall be designed such that a 3" ball could not pass through any portion of the lattice. All stairways shall have solid wood risers.

Porches on street facades can be enclosed by storm windows. Storm windows on porches shall have the appearance of double-hung or casement windows, with or without a transom, and shall fill the space between the top of the railing and the upper frieze board. When porches are enclosed the railing underneath can be filled in with solid framed panels. Porches on street facades shall not be enclosed as a four-season heated space.

Decks. Decks, if constructed, shall be to the rear of the building, closely follow the porch design guidelines listed above, never replace an entrance porch, and not detract from the historic character of the building and neighborhood. Tongue and groove flooring is suggested but not required.

Windows. On the front facade, and within ten feet of the front facade on the side facades, all original windows, or pre-1930 windows that are compatible with the historic character of the building shall retain their existing historic size, appearance and trim detail. If any of the original windows or pre-1930 windows that are compatible with the historic character of the building have true divided lights (i.e., with small panes of glass between muntin bars), replacement sash shall duplicate the existing appearance and have true divided lights. If windows have been altered in the past, restoration to the original appearance is encouraged. If installing new windows, insulated glass units are acceptable as long as they conform to the original historic size, style and appearance especially in the area of sash widths.

On the building sides not within ten feet of the front facade and on the rear facade, the sills of original windows or pre-1930 windows that are compatible with the historic character of the building can be raised to serve bathrooms and kitchens. In all other respects the design shall duplicate the original appearance of the existing window. On the sides of the building beyond ten feet of the front facade and on the rear facade, new windows in locations where no window previously existed can be installed. They shall retain a similar ratio of height to width as the original windows, be the same type of window as others on the building (e.g., double-hung or casement) and be trimmed and finished to match the appearance of the other windows.

Entrance Doors. If the entrance door is original or is pre-1930 and blends with the historic character of the building, it shall be retained unless it is beyond repair. If beyond repair, the door shall be replaced with a wood door that closely duplicates the original door. Other material doors such as fiberglass or metal shall only be used if wood is not available and shall blend with the historic appearance of the building and the original door. Doors without panels and modern-style doors are prohibited. Doors shall be painted or varnished.

Patio Doors. Patio doors shall never be installed anywhere except to the rear of the building, always have frames similar to full view doors, and always be hinged doors, rather than sliding doors. Raw aluminum doors or other metallic appearing door finishes are prohibited. Patio doors shall be painted or finished with a material that resembles a painted finish. They can also be stained and varnished.

Storm Windows and Doors. Storm windows and doors shall be enameled, painted or otherwise coated with a colored surface to resemble a painted surface. Raw aluminum or other metallic finishes on storm windows and doors are prohibited. Painted or varnished storm doors of wood and glass to match the original design on the building are encouraged. Storm doors of simple design with no stylistic references and full view storm doors can be used. Storm doors with metal grills are prohibited.

Skylights. Skylights on the roof slope over the main street facade shall never be installed unless they are not visible from the street. Skylights can be installed without too much detriment to building appearance on rear roof slopes and on side roof slopes provided the front edge of the skylight is at least ten feet back from the front edge of the main roof. The skylight shall not be obtrusive to the general appearance of the building. The design of new skylights shall be as simple as possible, of the flat (not bubble) type, and finished to blend with the color of the roof.

Roof Materials. Roofing shall be done with asphalt shingles, fiberglass or other rectangular composition shingles similar in appearance to 3 -in- 1 tab asphalt singles. Sawn wood shingles, or shakes appearance shingles as those used on the Christ Methodist and Christ Evangelical Episcopal Churches in Merrill may also be approved. Modern shingles as thick wood shakes, Dutch lap, French method and interlock shingles are prohibited. Vents shall be as inconspicuous as possible and shall be similar in color to the color of the roof. Ridge vents are one method of being fairly inconspicuous. Rolled roofing, tar-and-gravel, rubberized membranes and other similar roofing materials are prohibited except for use on flat or slightly sloped roofs that are not visible from the ground.

Dormers and other Roof Alterations. New dormers shall match the appearance of original dormers on the building in roof shape and material, width of overhang, siding, window design and trim details whenever feasible. If the original roof shape is not practical, another shape may be approved provided that it does not detract from the historic character of the building or the neighborhood. New dormers shall be no less than twelve feet from the front edge of the roof. The ridgeline of a new dormer shall not extend above the ridgeline of the main roof of the building unless such higher roofline is not visible from the ground. Shed dormers behind existing dormers or gables on non-street sides of the building may be approved provided that the roof material, siding, window design and trim details match the original features of the building. Other roof alterations shall be compatible with the roof shape and other historic features of the building, such as siding and trim details, and shall not extend above the ridgeline of the building unless such extension is not visible from the ground.

Chimneys. The exterior appearance of original or pre-1930 chimneys visible from the street shall be maintained in good repair. The removal of the exterior portions of such chimneys is prohibited. Chimneys not visible from the street may be removed. New chimneys shall be constructed of brick or other historically accurate material; metal chimneys are prohibited.

Siding. Restoration of original wood siding and original decorative details is encouraged. Soffits may be replaced or sided with wood or artificial materials provided the appearance of the proposed material matches as closely as possible the original appearance.

Alternate # 1. Original wood siding, or pre-1930 siding that blends with the historic character of the building shall be retained and restored as necessary. If the original siding is beyond repair, it shall be replaced with wood siding to match the original or existing pre-1930 appearance.

Alternate # 2. Residing with artificial materials is prohibited except for the possible approval of steel siding. The new steel siding shall duplicate the original in appearance. Wood-grained, textured or glossy siding is prohibited.

All architectural details including, but not limited to, window trim, frieze boards, cornices and other ornament shall either remain uncovered or be duplicated exactly in appearance and shall project beyond the siding the same dimensions as the original. Restoration of lost architectural trim is encouraged.

Original brick, stone and stucco siding shall be retained. Unpainted brick shall never be painted. Mortar and other materials used in brick repair shall match the original in color, hardness and appearance.

Foundations. All original foundation masonry, such as brick, stone or rusticated concrete block, shall be retained unless significant repairs are required, in which case replacement with materials to duplicate the original appearance is encouraged. If duplicating the original appearance is not practical, other materials can be used provided they blend with the historic character of the building.

Additions. New additions on the front of the building are prohibited except for open porches. Additions on the sides or rear shall be permitted if they are compatible with the building in architectural design, scale, color, texture, and proportion of solids to voids and proportion of widths to heights of doors and windows. Additions and exterior alterations that exactly duplicate the original materials in composition are encouraged. Additions or exterior alterations that destroy significant architectural features are prohibited. Side additions shall not detract from the design composition of the main facade. Siding on new additions shall be the same as the building, unless the building is masonry, in which case narrow gauge clapboards (alternate: or narrow-gauge steel that duplicates the look of wood clapboards and is not wood-grained, textured or glossy) will be permitted. Foundation material on new additions shall duplicate the original foundation material whenever practical and if allowed by the building code. Other foundation materials may also be permitted provided they do not detract from the historic character of the building.

Fire Escapes and Rescue Platforms. Fire escapes and rescue platforms shall be located such that they are as unobtrusive from the street as possible. No fire escapes or rescue platforms shall be permitted on the front facade of a building unless the Building Inspector determines no other location is practical. The design of fire escapes and rescue platform shall comply with the requirements of the (porches) above, except that balusters on fire escapes and second exit platforms can be metal with one-by-one plain vertical balusters, painted to blend with the colors of the house. Twisted or other decorative wrought iron is prohibited.

Shutters. The installation of new shutters requires the approval of the Historic Preservation Committee. Shutters will be permitted provided they are compatible with the historic character of the building and are of a size that, if the shutters were workable, would cover the window opening.

Repairs. Repairs to buildings shall either match the existing or the original appearance. Restoration to the original appearance is encouraged.

Garages. The adding of a garage or similar accessory building on a historic residential property requires the approval of the Historic Preservation Committee. If permitted, the building shall always be compatible with the design of the historic residence. Garage doors shall either be entirely flat or have approximately square panels. Horizontally paneled garage doors shall never be installed. Roof pitches shall always approximate the roof pitch of the residence and roof material/color/style shall always match that of the residence. Windows shall always be either double or single-hung units of a similar proportion to the windows on the residence or shall be six-paned (three panes across and two panes high) units similar to those seen on 1920s era garages. Siding shall always nearly duplicate the siding on the residence (reference the siding discussion on page #4). For brick residences, a knowledgeable architect shall always design new garages that are not to be brick.

Storage Sheds/Pole Buildings. Storage sheds and pole buildings are prohibited.

Fences. Chain link and rustic style fences, such as rough sawn wood or split rails. are prohibited.

Retaining Walls in Front Yards. Poured concrete walls less than 24 inches in height, flagstone and other stone ashlar will be permitted. The use railroad ties, landscape timbers, boulders, or concrete blocks in the front yard are prohibited.