

**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