

CITY OF ABILENE
HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA

February 20, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.
Abilene Public Library – Jordan Room
209 NW 4th Street

AGENDA ITEMS	
Call to Order	
Approval of the Agenda	
Approval of the Meeting Minutes – December 19, 2019	
Business	
1. Introduction of new Planning and Zoning Director	
2. National Register Workshop – March 2 Topeka	
3. Call for proposals for Kansas Historic Preservation Conference	
4. Replacement Pool Windows at the City Pool	
5. Letter Distribution to downtown Abilene historic district	
Comments	
Adjournment	

**CITY OF ABILENE
HERITAGE COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**December 19, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.
Abilene Public Library – Jordan Room
209 NW 4th Street**

Members Present: Mary Burtzloff, Phil Hamilton (Vice-Chair), Joanne Hamilton, and Duane Schrag (Chair) – By Phone, Nanc Scholl

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Kara Titus, Jane Foltz

Others Present: Fred

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by P. Hamilton

Approval of the Agenda

Scholl made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Burtzloff. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

Approval of the Meeting Minutes – October 18, 2019

Burtzloff made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by J. Hamilton. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

Business

1. State Law Review

- **321 North Spruce Street – Sign Permit**

Titus reviewed the staff report.

Fred Clarified what the second sign listed on the permit was for.

There was brief discussion about the colors and style matching that of a previous sign approved by the Heritage Commission

Scholl made a motion to approve the sign permit as it will not damage or destroy the historical significance of the structure. The motion was seconded by Burtzloff. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

2. State Law Review

- **320 N Cedar Street – Sign Permit**

Titus reviewed the staff report.

There was a brief discussion regarding the signs and how the sign will not be affixed to the building

Duane Schrag made a motion to approve the signs as they will not damage or destroy the historical significance of the structure. The motion was seconded by J. Hamilton. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

3. Certificate of Appropriateness 320 N Cedar Street – Sign Permit

Titus read the provision in Section 29-9 regarding how sign permits should be considered by the Heritage Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Titus explained that two separate motions were necessary on this permit because the property is listed both locally and nationally and required two different levels of approval.

Burtzloff made a motion to find that the sign permit met the standards as laid out in Section 29-9 of the Abilene Zoning Regulations. The motion was seconded by Scholl. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

4. Administrative Review Policy

Titus discussed the need of an administrative review policy. She stated this policy is to be responsive to customer feedback and also to help with staff resources. Schragg asked a question about the Heritage Commission being asked whether they want to review an application before administrative review is granted. Titus explain that is a grey area and could solicit a KOMA violation as it could be perceived that the body is making a decision outside of a public meeting.

There was discussion about different safeguards to ensure staff doesn't incorrectly use this policy. Titus mentioned that staff will be held accountable by the state just like the Heritage Commission is. The same standards for evaluation will be used for administrative review.

J. Hamilton made comments about the importance of education and outreach. There was further discussion.

Burtzloff had a question about like -kind materials and windows and doors falling under that category. Titus explain that she understands the Heritage Commission cares to review window replacements and would respect that when those applications came before the city. Titus also explained that this is the Heritage Commission's policy which means they can amend or appeal it if they believe it is being misused. She also explained it will be important for the Heritage Commission to give staff guidance on how to interpret and use this policy.

Schrag made the comment that he appreciated present staff and agreed that the policy would be useful.

Schrag made a motion to adopt the Administrative Review Policy for State Law Reviews. Burtzloff Seconded the motion. The Motion passed unanimously (5-0)

Scholl made a comment that she believes staff will er on the side of heritage commission review.

5. Outreach letter to Property Owners

Titus explained some changes she made to the letter for clarity purposes. She mentioned she has been working on some different materials for the website and to have printed at city hall. Titus said she would get a list of property owners.

It was decided to include all historic districts and not just the downtown historic district.

Members would like to sign the letters at their January meeting.

Adjournment.

Scholl made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Burtzloff. The motion passed unanimously (5-0) and the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Attest:

Minutes Approved,

Kara Titus
Assistant to the City Manager

Duane Schrag, Chair
Phil Hamilton, Vice-Chair



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February 17, 2020

Dear Building Owner,

Over the past 10 years, dozens of businesses in downtown Abilene have missed an opportunity to recover up to 45 percent of the cost of expensive repairs and restoration to their building.

The reason? They are unaware of the benefits of their building being listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The city's *Heritage Commission* decided recently to take a proactive role in providing owners of these properties with information about the program so that they are aware of these opportunities.

Abilene Historic Districts were placed on the *National Register* and on the *Register of Historic Kansas Places* (see the attached map) through a local process facilitated by the Heritage Commission, with support of property owners. Properties within historic districts are said to be either "contributing" or "non-contributing", the designation is made by the State Historic Preservation Office based on the historic integrity and significance of the property. "Contributing" properties are eligible for state and federal tax credits.

Abilene's historic districts have over 107 *contributing structures*. Yours is one of those contributing structures. A contributing structure in a historic district is eligible for tax credits that are based on the amount spent on qualifying repairs, renovation and remodeling. In Kansas, properties are eligible for state income tax credits up to 25 percent of the cost of qualifying work; income-producing properties can apply for an additional 20 percent in federal income tax credits. The owner has up to 10 years to use the tax credits and is free to sell them if they don't want to use them.

As with any type of permitted work done to your building, you must have approval from city and state officials before work begins in order to qualify for the credits. More information is included with this letter.

In addition to historic preservation tax credits and grants, most of the downtown historic district is also eligible for the Downtown Neighborhood Revitalization Program which is a tax rebate of 90% for 10 years on improvements made to a structure. Other districts may be eligible for the General Neighborhood Revitalization rates.

While applying for these incentives may seem like more work than they are worth, the City of Abilene is here to help you navigate the paperwork. They have produced guides and brochures to help inform the process

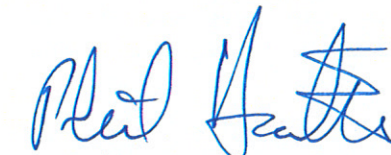
and are happily available to walk you through that process. Start by visiting <http://abilenecityhall.com/HeritageCommission> for more information.

Abilene's historic heritage is one of its most precious assets. As the owner of a historic property, you are in a position to help preserve something that is irreplaceable. The program for tax credits is one way to help make that possible.

Sincerely,

The Heritage Commission


Duane Schrag, Chair


Phil Hamilton, Vice-Chair


Joanne Hamilton


Mary Burtzloff


Nanc Scholl


Brenda Bowers


Andrew Pankratz



- ☐ Listed in the National Register
☐ Priority Contributing
☐ Non-Contributing

