

**MINUTES
CITY OF AMES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

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| Date: August 14, 2023 | Susan Minks | 2024 |
| | Angie Kolz * | 2024 |
| Call to Order: 6:00PM | Mary Jo Winder | 2024 |
| Place: Council Chambers | Scott Huffman | 2026 |
| | Lisa Muccigrosso | 2026 |
| Adjournment: 7:02PM | Robert Ewald | 2026 |

[*Absent]

CALL TO ORDER: Scott Huffman, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Minks/Muccigrosso) to approve the agenda for the meeting of August 14, 2023.

MOTION PASSED: (5-0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAY 08, 2023:

MOTION: (Muccigrosso/Winder) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of May 08, 2023.

MOTION PASSED: (5-0)

PUBLIC FORUM: Devon Lewis, 1002 Brookridge Avenue, spoke to the Commission. Ms. Lewis is part of an Ad Hoc Committee for the Chautauqua Parks/Ridgewood neighborhood. The City of Ames held an informational meeting with the neighborhood in October of 2022, and presented information on the process for listing of the properties in this neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places.

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee contacted owners of each of the one hundred-fifty (150) properties in the neighborhood to determine interest in proceeding with the preparation of a National Register nomination. Eighty-three (83) responses were returned and of those, seventy-one (71) indicated they are in favor of proceeding with the nomination, ten (10) had no opinion, and two (2) opposed moving forward with a National Register nomination. One of the opposing parties indicated they did care for local historic districts such as the Old Town Historic District. The Ad Hoc committee intends to use the feedback from the Historic Preservation Commission in preparation for the City Council Meeting on September 12, 2023. The Committee hopes to have the nomination request on the Council Agenda to obtain approval to proceed with a grant application for a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant through the State Historic Preservation

Office (SHPO). The total project cost is estimated at \$20,000. The grant would cover \$10,000 and the Ad Hoc committee will request the City of Ames pay the remaining \$6,000, and in-kind services of donated labor. The cost of grant administration by the City of Ames is estimated to be \$3,800. Ms. Lewis will send the letter to the City Council tomorrow and will send a copy to the Historic Preservation Commission, as well. Property owners in the neighborhood would not incur any expenses.

Ms. Minks asked if the Ad Hoc committee members live in the neighborhood. Ms. Lewis said that was correct, and that the Ad Hoc committee is open to other neighborhood residents joining the committee.

Mr. Ewald commented since it is an Ad Hoc Committee, it is not an official committee.

Ms. Winder asked who would write the grant for the State. Ms. Lewis noted that the architect historian would write it. Ms. Winder commended Ms. Lewis for getting the neighborhood involved in the process.

Ms. Winder asked if City Council would take action at the September meeting. Ray Anderson, City staff liaison, said he was unsure if the request by the Ad Hoc Committee would be on the September 12, 2023, City Council meeting agenda. He noted the grant application is not due until next spring.

DISCUSS PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 31

Ms. Winder stated that Ms. Minks' serves on the Chapter 31 sub-committee and that her term on the Commission expires in March 2024. Her absence will create the need to include another Commission member on the sub-committee. The sub-committee is allowed to meet without publishing of public notice with no more than three Commission members in attendance. Otherwise, it is a quorum of the Commission and notice of the meeting must be posted/published.

She explained that there have been instances when there are only two sub-committee members that are available to meet on a given day and time. Having a Commission member serve as an alternate member of the sub-committee would be very helpful in moving forward with scheduled meetings and in becoming familiar with the work of the sub-committee to take the place of Ms. Minks on the sub-committee once her term on the Commission expires. If one of the three sub-committee members was unavailable for a sub-committee meeting, the alternate member could attend and participate in the discussion.

Robert Ewald, Commission member, volunteered to serve as the alternate sub-committee member who will be included in the meeting, provided one of the three sub-committee members is not available to attend.

Ms. Winder and Ms. Kolz provided information to the Commission summarizing work the Commission and sub-committee has done in their review of Chapter 31. Ms. Winder stated that additional work and time commitment will be needed for the Historic Preservation Commission to complete their work of proposing revisions of Chapter 31 to the City Council. Ms. Winder explained that the Commission eventually decided to focus on the Certificate of Appropriateness process, rather than on continuing to revise the definitions of the Chapter. Several suggestions

have been made for improving the process to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness. The sections in the Chapter pertaining to the design criteria and guidelines were also discussed as needing attention.

Ms. Winder asked when the Old Town Historic District was established.

Mr. Anderson responded that the Old Town Historic District was established in 1989.

Ms. Winder believes there are inconsistencies in Chapter 31, and it should be written as law without relying on institutional memory. Ms. Winder asked if the Commission has a desire to continue working on the project and if the Commission is committed to moving forward with amendments to the regulations in Chapter 31. Ms. Winder intends to bring the sub-committee together to evaluate the options and draft a proposal on how to proceed. The Commission will then consider the proposal and vote on how to proceed. Ms. Winder stated the project should be included in the Annual Work Program.

Lisa Muccigrosso, Commission Member, asked what is required to revise Chapter 31 and have the revisions approved. Mr. Anderson explained what the process for revisions to the adopted regulations in Chapter 31 of the Municipal Code.

Mr. Ewald asked if the subcommittee made edits to Chapter 31 would the Commission approve them prior to City Council approval. Mr. Anderson replied that the Commission would vote to recommend approval by the City Council of any amendments to Chapter 31 that they support.

Mr. Ewald inquired about how often the subcommittee meets. Ms. Winder replied they usually meet once per month. Ms. Winder described how the Commission evaluated sections of Chapter 31 at each meeting previously.

Ms. Minks thought having illustrated Design Guidelines would make the Certificate of Appropriateness process easier to understand.

Ms. Muccigrosso was concerned about continuing to invest time in the project if it was likely City Council would reject the proposed revisions. She asked if the Commission should speak to City Council to ask if there is interest in proceeding with the project.

Ms. Winder asked what the process would be to do that.

Mr. Anderson explained the Commission would need to write a memo to the City Council that explained their goals and plan for revising Chapter 31. He recommended the Commission send a memo to City Council to gauge their interest. For the City Council to provide direction back to the Commission, it would need to be an agenda item on a future meeting of the City Council.

Ms. Muccigrosso said the process made sense. She did not want to waste time and effort and felt a vision for the next step is needed. She asked if the work on the Chapter needs to continue or can the Commission move forward with a memo to City Council now.

Ms. Winder stated that before the Commission invests more time in the project, they should find out if City Council is interested in proceeding with it.

Mr. Ewald stated the Commission would not be making any substantive changes to Chapter 31.

Ms. Winder discussed what she thought could be a substantive change.

Ms. Muccigrosso recommended the Commission proceed with a memo to City Council. She suggested the new Commission members assist with the project.

Mr. Ewald asked if the current commission supports pursuing this project further.

Ms. Minks asked if Ms. Muccigrosso could write a memo the Commission could review at their next meeting.

Ms. Muccigrosso noted the response from City Council will help determine what the next steps are. Ms. Muccigrosso will draft a memo to review at the next Commission meeting.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Ms. Minks did research regarding Commission education opportunities provided through the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions. She proposed the Commission review the opportunities at the next meeting. Ms. Minks would like to provide educational opportunities to the Commission to better equip them to educate the public.

Ms. Winder went to the Iowa Preservation Summit. She highly recommended each member go if they have the opportunity.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Anderson encouraged the Commission to think of ideas to educate the citizens of Ames on Historic Preservation. The Commission has not had an educational event recently and planning an event for the fall would be beneficial.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Winder/Minks) to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED: (5-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:02PM.

Scott Huffman, Chairperson
Historic Preservation Commission

Laura Colebrooke, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing