

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission
First Floor Court Room, Rensselaer Community Center, 62 Washington Street
October 11, 2011

Members Present:

Charles Moore – Chair, Christine Van Vorst – Vice-Chair, James Ahlemeyer, Tom Cardamone, and George Farrell

Members Not Present:

Frank Adams and Bob Campano

Staff Present:

Daniel Berheide – Asst. Planning Director, Sarah Crowell – Director of Planning, Jack Spath – Counsel.

Others Present

Dave Gardner, Lou Lourinia, Colleen Pierson, and Greg Danz.

Call to Order:

Chair Moore called the meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission to order at 6:35PM. Roll call was taken and quorum determined.

Adoption of Past Meeting Minutes

A motion by George Farrell to approve the minutes of September 12th of 2011 as submitted was seconded by Chris Van Vorst and passed by those present.

Communications

Announced that on November 16th and December 7th a presentation and training on topics related to the City's MS4 program would occur and all members of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board, and Common Council were invited to attend.

Also presented was the recent draft of "Guidelines for Historic Preservation in the City of Rensselaer", by the City's Historian, Charles Semowich. The guidelines are intended to provide a better resource of information for residents and officials considering improvements within the Historic District

The Director of Planning, Sarah Crowell, announced the recent hire of a new part-time City Engineer, Ozzie Pirotti.

Old Business:

1. A motion from Chris Van Vorst, seconded by George Farrell was made to pay the following invoices #0076355 from Chazen for technical review of Delaet's landing and #358866 from Whiteman Osterman & Hanna for legal services on the New Castle application. The motion carried.

New Business

1. **Greg Danz, 13 Nelson Ave** – Action Requested: Approve revision to Certificate of Appropriateness (20ft by 8ft deck passed 6/17/07) to build a deck (25’ x 10’ with secondary 5’ x 3’ landing and steps) on the back of the residence located in the Historic District.

Greg Danz began to present his proposal to the board stating the secondary landing will actually be a 3x3 landing and not a 5x3. Chris Van Vorst asked whether any previous structure sat at the corner of Cambridge and Mansion that would have acted as a visual barrier to the proposed porch. Greg Danz described how after he acquired the property he removed unsightly trees. His stated interest is in moving the process along so his front and back porch could be constructed. Since he was accepted in the façade program Greg Danz felt the previously approved back porch was a “postage stamp” and inadequate for his second unit. During this conversation it was brought to the attention of both the members of the Planning Commission and Greg Danz that two problems currently exist first with his property and second with his proposal. The first is his current south facing fence appears to have been constructed off his property. Secondly, his proposed back porch does not meet setback requirements of 10 feet from his property line. A survey from 1984 was used as the basis for this finding. It was noted by Chris Van Vorst that her primary issues are the fence is to be located on the property line and there needs to be some sort of screening from the corner of Cambridge and Mansion Ave. At this point, Greg Danz suggested dismissing the proposal so he could move forward with his front porch. The members of the Planning Commission determined it would serve the interest of the applicant and the Planning Commission to table discussion on the application for a certificate of appropriateness to construct a back porch until the Planning Department and Greg Danz have resolved the existing problems with the fence and proposal. A motion was made by Tom Cardamone, seconded by George Farrell, to table discussion on the application by Greg Danz. The motion passed.

Adjournment:

Chair Moore motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 PM. Seconded by Christine Van Vorst. Motion carried.

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2011 at 6:30 PM.

Record of Decisions:

An official record of decisions noting the details of motions and votes from this meeting along with any conditions & stipulations of approval has been filed with the City Clerk and a copy maintained in Planning Department records.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah Crowell
Secretary