

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**109 James Street**  
**Geneva, Illinois, 60134**

**April 19, 2022**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Zellmer called to order the April 19, 2022 meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Present HPC: Chairman Zellmer, Commissioners Jensen, McManus, Salomon, Hartman, Stazin and Zinke

Staff Present: Preservation Planner Michael Lambert and City Attorney Ron Sandack

Others Present: Applicant Dave Patzelt with Shodeen Family Foundation; Colin Campbell, 18 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.; David Shephard, 117 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St.; Patricia MacLachlan, 318 S. Fifth St.; Sharon Jones, 27 N. Bennett; Lena Serpico, 29 S. Bennett; Al Watts, 8 Indian St., St. Charles; Lee Eysturlid, 108 Oak St.; Rodney Nelson (remote), 23 Kane Street; Deborah Smith (remote) and Mike Lewis (remote); Recording Secretary Celeste Weilandt and Gabriel Martin with Planet Depos Reporting

**3. Approval of March 15, 2022 Minutes**

Minutes of March 15, 2022 – **Motion by Commissioner Salomon to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner McManus. A voice vote followed and the motion passed. (Stazin and Zinke abstain.)**

**4. HPC Public Hearing**

A. 4 East State Street (Case No. 2022-012). Applicant: David A. Patzelt, representative for Shodeen Family Foundation. Application for Rescinding of Historic Landmark Designation. Chairman Zellmer asked if anyone on the commission needed to recuse themselves. Commissioner Zinke proceeded to read a statement which summarized that while her husband, Fred H. Zinke, was the original petitioner to ask for Historic Landmark designation of the site, she had recused herself from the meetings at that time. However, because her husband was not the petitioner at this time, Commissioner Zinke would participate in the public hearing for the boundary amendment.

**Motion by Commissioner Salomon to open the public hearing. Second by Commissioner Zinke. Motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of 7-0.**

Chairman Zellmer proceeded to read the procedure for the public hearing. Following, he swore in those individuals that would be providing testimony in tonight's public hearing.

Preservation Planner Michael Lambert confirmed that the petitioner's petition packet was received appropriately and proper notice was given to the neighbors. Reviewing an overhead presentation, Mr. Lambert identified the current designated landmarked property that was under discussion, and the applicant's submitted request to reduce such boundaries to a one-foot area outside of the existing limestone structure. Mr. Lambert referenced two definitions from the City's ordinance that applied to the request: historic integrity and architectural integrity, and shared the

seven points in determining historic context for a property: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Historic and current photographs of the structure followed.

A review of staff's evaluation of the site (outlined in red) was also explained in greater detail. Mr. Lambert referenced several letters of support for staff's evaluation:

- a letter from Susan Wisniewski dated 4/14/2022;
- a letter from Lisa DiChiera dated 4/18/2022;
- a letter from Shauna Wiet, Kane County Historic Preservation Commission Chair, dated 4/18/2022;
- a letter from Janet Craft of Geneva dated 4/18/2022;
- a letter from Al Watts, Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley, dated 4/19/2022; and
- a letter from Patricia MacLachlan, dated 4/19/2022

Mr. David Patzelt, 77 N. First Street, Geneva, IL, applicant and on behalf of the owner, discussed that while he had some objections to the staff report, the applicant was accepting of staff's report. But, as Mr. Patzelt explained, the petitioner had a "friendly" objection in that the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission was now considering the land around the structure to be historically significant – where the petitioner believed that the land was significantly disturbed and such disturbance had been witnessed by members of the HPC and City staff when visiting the site. Also, he said the petitioner objected to the dimension to the south of the structure since it appeared the dimension was a random number with no basis for significance.

Per Commissioner Zinke's questions, Mr. Patzelt confirmed he was accepting of the description that included additional land around the structure and staff's report, as written and as proposed. Commissioner Zinke confirmed with Mr. Lambert his proposal for the area in the "pink" (red) color and if it was accepting to the applicant. Mr. Patzelt clarified the "red" line would demarcate the area of historical significance and the landmark designation for that area but would not be identified as a specific parcel. Clarification then followed by Chairman Zellmer that the commission was to focus upon the historic significance of the property as identified by "the red boundary line versus the green boundary line of the entire property" and not potential or idealized, future development.

Chairman Zellmer invited public comment.

Mr. Collin Campbell, 18 S. Sixth Street, extended appreciation to Mr. Patzelt for agreeing with staff's proposal.

Ms. Patricia MacLachlan, 318 S. Fifth Street, also extended her appreciation to the applicant and the Shodeen family for their proposal and for making the right choice for the community (by accepting staff's evaluation) because the larger area of designation added value to the surrounding property and community.

Ms. Lena Serpico, 28 S. Bennett Street, believed the property should not be historically preserved but instead have something else constructed on it.

Mr. Al Watts, with Preservation Partners of Fox Valley, explained what his agency does, referenced his letter, and agreed the structure and a portion of the property was significant due to its history. It met landmark requirements. He supported staff's recommendation.

Mr. Lee W. Eysturlid, 108 Oak Street, opposed the pink (red) boundary line and preferred the green box. He shared the importance of having the footprint around the building; otherwise the

building would be consumed by taller developments. He intended to research whether the structure was ever part of the Underground Railroad.

Mr. Rodney Nelson (remote), 23 Kane Street, shared some extensive history about the site before Mr. Herrington purchased it years ago. (Commissioner McManus steps away at 7:50 pm). He believed the property and the area around it was very significant, beginning with its association as Thompson's Woods, immortalized by Forrest Crissey (McManus returns 7:53 pm).

Ms. Sharon Jones, 27 N. Bennett, stated she previously served on the Historic Preservation Commission and explained that effects of climate change in coming years is a reason to protect the Fox River and remaining open lands around it from future development of the river's shore. She supported the designation of additional land around the structure.

Mr. David Shepherd, 117 N. Fifth Street, supported the site with the land around the site and emphasized that its perimeter needed to be maintained with visual accessibility from public locations. He believed the "pink" (red) area was too small and objected to it, especially the south and east lines being too short.

Ms. Deborah Lewis posted an on-line question: She asked if the boundary line is decreased from green to red was it paving the way for the historical site to be completely enveloped by a structure that totally obscures the historical characteristics of the original structure.

Mr. Lambert reminded the public (attending in-person and remotely) that the public hearing was not about potential future development. Only appropriate boundaries that represented the historical development of the structure and the land surrounding it (in pink/red) was to be considered.

Mr. Mike Smith (remotely) asked whether the reduction would impose the Mill Race on the water.

Ms. Patricia MacLachlan returned and voiced that she believed the access to the water was very important and the proposal did not include it, wherein Mr. Lambert explained that the structure was only part of the "race". It had been the building that received the least power source from the water. Additionally, he explained the shoreline had been altered by flood and by development which was why he suggested the 20 feet. The actual mill pond was currently the existing lagoon with an exit at the southern end of Island Park.

Chairman Zellmer inquired of Mr. Lambert whether the blacksmith shop would have used the river as a power source, wherein Mr. Lambert shared the research he found about the existence of 1847 blacksmith shop and the operations of such industries.

Applicant, Mr. Patzelt, responded to a public comment made, referencing the Underground Railroad. Mr. Patzelt confirmed that no mention was made within the original nomination or subsequent research that identified any relationship to the underground railroad associated with the property and that staff has not referenced any such relationship.

No further questions followed from the commission or the public.

**Motion by Commissioner Stazin to close the public hearing. Second by Commissioner Salomon. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote of 7-0.**

Commissioners' questions or comments centered on the depth of the boundary lines, whether they were arbitrary or not (they were not), and the fact that the commissioners were fine with the proposed boundary line in red. Chairman Zellmer asked the commissioners their thoughts regarding the south boundary line and whether it was appropriate. Chairman Zellmer supported staff's recommendation and believed the south boundary line was "as good as any" since the river's waterline could rise or fall. He invited a recommendation from the commissioners.

**Motion by Commissioner Salmon to recommend the rescinding of designation for a portion of the subject property per the applicant's request, subject to staff's recommendation. Second by Commissioner Hartman. Roll call:**

**Aye: Hartman, Jensen, McManus, Salomon, Stazin, Zellmer, Zinke**

**Nay: None**

**MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7-0**

## **5. Secretary's Report (Staff Updates)**

Historic Preservation Planner Lambert reminded the commissioners that the meetings have been light due to what he has heard from architects and builders in the community: the rising cost of construction and supply chain issues. Mr. Lambert also announced that tonight's meeting would be the last historic preservation meeting for Recording Secretary Celeste Weilandt. He thanked her for her transcription services over the years to the City and to this commission.

## **6. New Business**

A. From the Commission: Commissioner Zinke expressed high concern about the preservation of the Mill Race stone structure until such time that something is done with it. She asked Mr. Lambert if he could ask the owner to better maintain the building until the property is developed. Mr. Lambert relayed that the City's Code Enforcement Officer (Mr. Jim Forni) is the appropriate staff person to contact and that he does speak to Mr. Forni frequently about distressed properties in the historic district. Commissioners could contact Mr. Forni about their issues, but Mr. Lambert would speak to the Code Enforcement Officer. However, Mr. Lambert emphasized that this commission's charge was not code enforcement. Conversely, the commission's charge was to designate historic properties significant to the community and review development requests related to those designated properties.

B. From the Public: Mr. Colin Campbell, 18 S. Sixth Street, thanked the commission for its decision and proceeded to distribute renderings to the commissioners for a possible use of the Mill Race structure. Commissioner Zinke thanked Mr. Campbell for distributing the renderings.

## **7. Adjournment**

**There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Salmon. Second by Commissioner Jensen, A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote of 7-0.**