

CITY OF AURORA
OHIO
LANDMARK COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
December 27, 2011

The Aurora Landmark Commission met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, December 27, 2011, in the Council Chambers of Aurora City Hall. Chairman John Kudley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present:	Sue Sutton John Kudley Jeff Clark
Absent:	Richard Fetzer Melanie Miguel-Courtad Ron Lowe, Advisor to Landmark Commission
Also Present:	Susan Dombeck, Secretary

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 22, 2011 as printed.

Mrs. Sutton moved for approval; Mr. Clark seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0, on a voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

JOHN UPDIKE – MAD JACK’S GRILLE & PUB, 204 SOUTH CHILLICOTHE – SIGN

John Burge represented the applicant. He said there was an existing sign from the previous restaurant and showed photographs of the existing frame, which will be used for the proposed sign. He described the old sign and explained the design for the new one. Mr. Burge pointed out that the new sign will be at least four square feet smaller than the previous one. He explained the new design in further detail and the colors to be used.

There was a long discussion on the colors, design, the placing of the panel, the font used for the letters and the visibility from the road. Also discussed at great length was the “Grille and Pub” text. Mr. Clark mentioned that it was pointed out at the last meeting that there must be some white on the sign since that is the color of the building.

MOTION: To approve the sign for 204 South Chillicothe.

Mr. Clark moved for approval; Mrs. Sutton seconded, and the motion carried, 2-1, on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mrs. Sutton, Mr. Kudley
Nays: Mr. Clark

MELISSA MALICH, 290 SOUTH CHILLICOTHE – DRIVE TURN-AROUND

Mrs. Malich explained the need for a turn-around in the driveway. She said they have the only house in that area that does not have a turn-around and it is a busy area with a lot of traffic. Visitors have difficulty getting in and out of the drive. The mailbox has been hit twice, so she would like to have a turn-around put in to make it easier for them to enter and exit.

Referring to the site map submitted, she explained why it would be difficult to place it in the back of the house. She added that, apart from the safety issue, their drive is the one that people use to turn around when they have driven too far. Unfortunately, not all of them want to wait for a break in traffic so they use the yard to turn around, which has left ruts on their property.

Mr. Kudley noted that the neighbors who live two lots away appeared before this board requesting a turn-around in their front yard. The discussion centered on the location and whether it could become a permanent parking place. He added that the applicant tried to assure the members that it would not be used for parking, but the board still denied the request. Mrs. Malich stressed that they really do not want to put the turn-around in the front, but for safety reasons and due to damage done to their yard, they really have no choice.

Mr. Lowe stated that most of the parking in that district area is in the rear of the property. A turn-around in the front could always become a permanent parking area, and this proposal is to have it in front of the porch and landscaping. He explained that the central part of the district does not have any turn-arounds or parking areas in front of a house. However, having it in the back makes it difficult for deliveries, etc. Mr. Lowe then pointed out that other neighborhoods do have circular drives in the front that are landscaped and used for more than one vehicle.

Mr. Clark said that he visited the site and understood why they did not want to have it in the rear yard. Mrs. Malich said that the only way they could have it in the back is to take down the old, large tree on the lot, which is also the only shade tree. Mr. Clark stated that a vehicle can pull out from the driveway if they are willing to wait for a natural break in traffic.

Mr. Clark told the applicant that he would not be in favor of the request at this point, and would like to see a complete landscaping plan before making a decision. He explained that the city is trying to keep the historic district's atmosphere and build on it.

Mr. Lowe gave Mrs. Malich some information on types of materials that could be used for their project while helping maintain the aesthetics of their yard.

There was a discussion on the request, and Mr. Kudley noted that when the neighbor asked for their turn-around, they mentioned the newly constructed house that had one installed. The commission explained that if that owner had appeared before this group it would most likely not have been approved. Mr. Lowe said that another perspective is whether it is a hardship and if there is enough room in the back of the property to have the turn-around located there. Mr. Kudley pointed out that if they denied another homeowner the same request, he would have a difficult time putting the city in a position justifying an approval for this when a neighbor was denied.

Mrs. Sutton began a conversation on other layouts. Mr. Kudley reiterated that approving one resident while having denied a neighbor the same request puts the city in a possible legal bind. More discussion followed, and Mr. Lowe pointed out that the turn-around is only about twelve feet long and if a car were parked there it would block the driveway.

After additional conversation, Mr. Kudley told the others that the commission's secretary would check with the Law Director on the legal question of two neighbors with very similar requests receiving different decisions. Mr. Kudley suggested waiting for the Law Director's opinion and addressing the request at the next meeting. There was a discussion on the amount of space in the rear yard for parking or a possible turn-around.

MOTION: To table this item.

Mr. Clark moved for approval; Mrs. Sutton seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0, on a voice vote.

CAPITAL FUND MONIES

Mr. Kudley raised the subject of a grant to help with historic signs, etc. He said City Council agreed to put the \$10,000 requested in the budget. He explained that the Finance Director said the \$10,000 found in one of the commission's line items could be carried over as long as City Council approves.

Mr. Lowe explained the grants, procedures and possible grant requests to the commission. He raised the subject of the district's signage and sign maintenance. Another item he noted was a booklet giving several useful types of information to new residents of the district. Additional conversation followed, and Mr. Lowe mentioned that Councilman Vaca was interested in having a historic sign for the Geauga Lake area. He added that design guidelines could also be considered for buildings as well as signs.

Mr. Clark noted that there are commercial buildings in the historic district that need to have information supplied as well. Mr. Kudley felt that doing the educational information would be a good project for a grant. A long conversation followed and the members agreed that signs and an informational handout are good ideas to consider.

MOTION: To apply for a CLG grant for a Landmark Commission and building department handout.

Mr. Clark moved for approval; Mr. Kudley seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0, on a voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Clark mentioned that he would like to see the city's Christmas holiday decorations expanded through the center of town. He said he would like to approach the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to see about decorating telephone poles, etc. He felt it would be a great

way to highlight the historic district. A short conversation followed, and Mr. Kudley asked Mr. Clark to provide a report on the subject.

Mr. Clark said that the Church in Aurora plans to take the siding off of the building and replace it with hardi board.

Mr. Kudley informed the members that Mr. Fetzer was not reappointed to the commission, and a brief conversation followed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Clark moved to adjourn at 7:50 p.m.; Mrs. Sutton seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0, on a voice vote.

John Kudley - Chairman

Susan Dombeck - Secretary

AUDIO TAPE ON FILE