

Quincy Preservation Commission

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Quincy Preservation Commission

Wednesday, October 7, 2025

730 Maine, City Hall, council chambers, Quincy, Illinois 62301

MINUTES

Attendance

Members Present: Darin Prost (chairman), Karol Ehmen (vice chair and alderman), William Arp, Paul Geers, Suzanne Irwin-Wells, Michelle Khoury, Olivia Rueter, Harrison Clark, Dick Wellman, Jake Reed (alderman).

Members Absent: Walt Giesing.

Staff Present: Jason Parrott, David Adam.

Vacant: 2 (at-large).

Prost calls the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Reed makes a motion to approve the minutes from the Sept. 3 meeting. Ehmen seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

Parrott says Michael Vera Eastman and Aaron Clark have applied to fill two vacancies on the commission. Geers makes a motion to put Eastman and Clark on the commission. Ehmen seconds. Motion carries unanimously. Parrott says those names now will be presented to the mayor, and they will be placed on an upcoming City Council agenda. Aaron Clark addresses the commission and introduces himself as Harrison Clark's father. He says he wants to help preserve the history of the community.

Parrott said Janet Conover, who is helping coordinate the Oct. 22 preservation dinner, is concerned that only 16 or 17 people had registered. She said Anthony Rubano needs a computer for his presentation. Parrott said anyone from the Quincy Art Center who attends the dinner would have their meal comped, as would Rubano. He will send a copy of a past script to the commission to use during the dinner.

Scott Koontz speaks to the commission about a certificate of appropriateness for 1469 Maine. He said the front wooden steps are a protected feature of the home, and the first riser has disintegrated and needs to be rebuilt. The house has a big arch walkway with an ornamental fence with two openings, and a brick paver walkway forms an arch that comes up to the front door. One of the 14 protected features of the home are all-brick walks on the property, and the brick paver walkway needs to be replaced.

Koontz says a big brick paver patio in the back is accessed off a couple of back porches there. A sidewalk on the east side is sunken and dirty. An old wooden fence that previously was up was not a protected feature, and the homeowner wants to get rid of it and put an ornamental fence on the east side. The homeowner has said he doesn't want to redo the East Side sidewalk and would rather have a tall planting area. Parrott said the front part of the home was intended to protect, but because of the vague language, Koontz wanted to check with the commission. Rueter asks what the homeowner intends to do with the kitchen brick patio. Koontz says the intention is to keep the back paver patio, even though some of it was

put on sand and some had concrete poured underneath. He said it all may come up to make everything level, and older bricks from the back may be used. Prost says he has no problem with Koontz's recommendation. Ehmen encourages the salvage of any historic brick to be reused in repairs to the front. Wellman makes a motion to approve. Rueter seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

Parrott discusses an application from Quincy Preserves, which is asking the commission to review applications for facade grants and recommend approvals, with Quincy Preserves having the final decision. Colin Ash, owner of 114 N. Sixth since 2015, has a photo that shows a connecting building on the north side years ago where the alley is now. He said he wants to replace the black paneling, and he ripped off a panel and found nothing but insulation and drywall. He said the whole project will be windows, much like the Quincy Brewing Company. Ash said the bid is for about \$32,000, with \$5,000 for masonry work and \$1,500 for painting. Prost offers to visit the site if the project is delayed. Prost also suggests learning what was done when the former Kresge/Kirlin's building went for national landmark status. Ehmen asks for a sketch of what is planned.

Ash expresses frustration that other things (such as the garage doors) nearby have met approval by Quincy Preserves. Irwin-Wells said one of the reasons why Quincy Preserves came to the Preservation Commission to review historical appropriateness on these grants is because the Preserves board is unhappy that garage doors and ship lap siding, which were funded, weren't on the plans that were submitted versus what the final project looked like. She said nobody knew there was going to be wood siding ship lap on the brewery, and nobody it was going to have aluminum garage doors. Ash asks for guidelines to take back to the builder. Ehmen asks if The District does design assistance, saying it should be the role of The District if it still follows the Main Street approach. She says historic store fronts in that area would have a bottom plate underneath the windows. It can come in multiple sections with a little bit of framing, then a window, transoms, possibly a signboard above the window and transoms above that.

Parrott says the City Council has already approved a recent fix-or-flatten list and is coming to the Preservation Commission to allow for the waiving of the 45 days to allow for demolition. He says most of the homes have been vacant, have not been used or have not been inhabited in some time. Ehmen says it's sad that money is invested in the community to take away historic structures when they are needed for housing, but at this point, the process can't be reversed. She asks the commission to consider how to reinvest in historic structures instead of demolition. She says many communities have an abandoned property code to prevent demolition of historic structures. Parrott says the Strong Communities Grant has been used for demolition, and the City Council would have to switch directions to spend money on renovation instead of demolition if a new round of funding came up. Ehmen makes a motion to waive the 45 days. It is seconded. Motion carries unanimously.

Irwin-Wells brings up the idea of talking with Muddy River News again to help people better understand preservation. Parrott asks Prost to sign a letter acknowledging that homes at 517 Chestnut and 301 Elm, which would be funded through the IHDA Strong Communities Grant, were approved by the Preservation Commission. Ehmen makes a motion. It is seconded. Motion carries unanimously.

Geers asks the commission why Willard Keys, one of the city founders who helped John Wood plat the city, has never been recognized. Ehmen says she could ask the mayor to do a proclamation. Prost calls for a motion to adjourn. Geers makes the motion, and Ehmen seconds. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourns at 5:32 p.m.

David Adam, Commission Secretary
Community Planner and Developer, City of Quincy