CALL TO ORDER

OATH OF OFFICE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A. January 25, 2022

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
A. City Council HPC Discussion
   i. International Property Maintenance Code
   ii. Interior Window Signage

NEW BUSINESS
A. Hotel 221 - (221 Park Row) - Decking / Stairway
B. Eric Harriman (101 S. Minnesota Ave.) – Structural Evaluation
C. Allelier (202 S. Minnesota Ave.) – Signage Review

REPORTS
A. Historic Preservation Easements
B. 213 Nassau – Marc Bachman

ADJOURNMENT

Russ Wille
Community Development Director
The meeting was called to order by Community Development Russ Wille at 5:34 pm. Commissioners Larry Potts, Remo Alexandri, Joe Metzen, and Brian Oviatt were in attendance. Absent were members Dustin Sharstrom and Sharon Lytinski. City staff present were Russ Wille and Administrative Secretary Cindy Moulton.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Potts, seconded by Oviatt to approve the agenda as presented. All voting in favor, the agenda was approved.

Election of Officers

A motion was made by Alexandri, seconded by Oviatt to nominate Potts as Chairperson. With a lack of additional nominations, all members voting aye, Potts was elected as Chair.

A motion was made by Alexandri, seconded by Metzen to nominate Oviatt as Vice Chairperson. With a lack of additional nominations, all members voting aye, Oviatt was elected Vice Chair.

Approval of Minutes

Oviatt amended the minutes by striking the word “on” and replacing it with “between” in the sentence, “Oviatt stated that the brick between the columns is not the original brick”. A motion was made by Oviatt, seconded by Metzen to approve the minutes of the November 23, 2021 regular meeting as amended. All members voting aye, the motion carried.

Sandwich Board Regulations

At the November 23, 2021 HPC meeting, the Commission discussed and suggested changes to the sandwich board sign regulations. Wille prepared a draft of the suggested changes and presented them to the Commission.

In reviewing the draft, the Commission felt that the text on the sandwich board sign should not be limited to particular fonts. They also felt that number ten (10) “Sandwich boards shall not utilize movable or scrolling text.” and number 11) “The text upon the sandwich board sign shall contain no more than three (3) colors” be eliminated from the regulations.

A motion was made by Oviatt, seconded by Metzen recommending approval of the proposed sign regulations with the deletion of number ten (10) and eleven (11) as well as amending the City Ordinance to include the new sandwich board sign regulations. All members voting aye, the motion carried.
International Property Maintenance Code

At a previous HPC meeting the Commission asked that the City Council consider an ordinance that would allow the City to order certain repairs or maintenance efforts to buildings within the Heritage Preservation district as well as regulations pertaining to inside signage.

Wille stated that in 2015 the City Council declined to adopt the International Property Maintenance Code. However, the City Council did establish an additional revolving loan product with favorable terms in an attempt to incent the maintenance and repair of historic structures.

Potts indicated that he would have a hard time defending the International Property Maintenance Code as well as the regulation of interior signage.

Wille stated that the City Council will be discussing the matter at their workshop on Monday, January 31, 2022 at 5:30 pm in the Governors Room at the Community Center. Members were invited to attend.

Reports

Wille reported that the owners of 101 South Minnesota, which suffered severe damage from a fire, are waiting for a final report from their engineer to determine whether the building is salvageable.

Wille said there has been an inquiry by an interested party regarding the development of the property located between 108 and 120 South Minnesota Avenue.

Adjourn

A motion was made Metzen, seconded by Alexandri to adjourn. With all members voting aye, the meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.
Memorandum

To: HPC Members

From: Russ Wille, Community Development Director

Date: March 23, 2022

RE: International Property Maintenance Code (Minimum Maintenance of Effort) Interior Signage

The City Council once again discussed the merits of adopting the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). The first conversation on the matter was held by a previous Council in 2015. At that time the Council chose not to adopt the code and alternatively adopted the policies for a loan program with partial loan forgiveness.

The City Council also had a discussion regarding the faux neon signs that businesses employ to denote that their operation is open for business.

The Council has asked that I have further discussions with the City of Faribault and to also consult with Building Official Kevin Murphy. The Council intends to continue their dialogue about the two matters at an April workshop session. They also asked that we attempt to determine the cost of administering the IPMC inspections and enforcement.

Brian Oviatt was at the City Council workshop on January 31 where the Council discussed the IPMC.
TO: Todd Prafeke  
City Administrator

FROM: Russ Wille  
Community Development Director

RE: HPC – International Property Maintenance Code

ACTION/RECOMMENDATION

No action requested or necessary. For your information and discussion purposes.

BACKGROUND

The current City Council originally discussed this matter the January 31, 2022 workshop. A previous City Council considered this issue in 2015.

As the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) discussed loosening the sandwich board regulations at their November, 2021 meeting, the Commission asked that the City Council consider an ordinance that would allow the City to order certain repairs or maintenance efforts to buildings within the Heritage Preservation district (see map).

HPC members have particularly expressed concerns regarding the condition of the 4 Seasons Mall property at 208 South Minnesota Avenue. The exterior brick on the south wall has peeled away from the façade exposing the interior “tile” material which was never intended to be exposed to the elements (see photo).

The HPC’s concern is that the building will continue to deteriorate and that deterioration will accelerate until such time as it would not be structurally sound due to a lack of maintenance and timely repairs. Situation such as that are referred to as “demolition by neglect”. Demolition by neglect is defined as:

“A situation in which a property owner intentionally allows a historic property to suffer severe deterioration, potentially beyond a point of repair. Property owners may use this kind of long-term neglect to circumvent historic preservation regulations”.

- National Trust for Historic Preservation (1999)

As a possible solution to demolition by neglect, the HPC has asked that the City Council consider the adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office representative Michael Koop suggests that the IPMC provides the exact authority sought by the Saint Peter Heritage Preservation Commission to order affirmative maintenance of structures.
In 2005 and again in 2016, the Saint Peter Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Council. The plan establishes the goals and policies of the City as they apply to residential, commercial, industrial and recreational interests. It is the goal of the City that:

"Efforts should be made to promote and protect the architectural and structural integrity and vitality of the historic commercial district."

The Comprehensive Plan also establishes the City policy that:

"Historic structures within the Central Commercial District should be preserved in a manner consistent with the standards adopted by the Department of Interior. Public/private investment opportunities should exist to encourage the appropriate renovation, rehabilitation or repair of historic commercial properties within Saint Peter."

The language of the Comprehensive Plan is important in that it allows for the development of rules and regulations necessary to carry out the goals and policies identified in the plan. That is; the goal and policy related to historic preservation creates the logical nexus between the contents of the Comprehensive Plan and the regulations proposed. The adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code would be supported by the contents of the Comprehensive Plan.

In the preface of the IPMC, it states that:

"The IPMC is a maintenance document intended to establish minimum maintenance standards for basic equipment, light, ventilation, heating, sanitation and fire safety. Responsibility is fixed among owners, operators and occupants for code compliance. The IPMC provides for the regulation and safe use of existing structures in the interest of the social and economic welfare of the community."

The intent of the IPMC is also clearly noted as:

"This code shall be construed to secure its expressed intent, which is to ensure public health, safety and welfare insofar as they are affected by the continued occupancy and maintenance of structures and premises. Existing structures and premises that do not comply with these provisions shall be altered or repaired to provide a minimum level of health and safety as required herein."

The City of Faribault is similar in age to the City of Saint Peter. Both communities have a well-established and defined historic district which has been place on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Faribault adopted and enforces the regulations contained in the IPMC. In addition to the historic properties, Faribault also applies the ICPM to residential rental properties.
In January of 2015, former Building Official Dean Busse and I traveled to meet with Al Ernste the Building Official for the City of Faribault. Given that Mr. Busse had previously worked for the City of Faribault, Mr. Ernste was very forthcoming and frank in his assessment of the ordinance and its impact.

Mr. Ernste noted that the IPMC helps protect property values and doesn’t allow a poorly maintained property to bring down the values of adjoining structures or properties within the immediate area. This is especially true in traditional central business districts where buildings often share party walls or are otherwise structurally interconnected.

Mr. Ernste noted one Faribault structure where the façade was pulling away from the front of the building and subject to potential collapse upon the sidewalk and street. If the City was not able to order the repair of the structure, the neighboring buildings would be compromised and also subject to collapse. One poorly maintained structure diminished the value and even the survivability of the adjoining properties.

Mr. Ernste indicated that the Faribault City Council had the political will to adopt the ordinance which would require maintenance as determined by the Building Official. While the ordinance was originally unpopular, the attitudes of building owner are changing given the uniform enforcement, consistent standards and the impact of the maintenance efforts of the property owners.

The IPMC allows for the periodic inspection of structures by the Building Official. In Faribault the City advertises that they will undertake inspections in advance to allow property owners the opportunity to address their deferred maintenance issues voluntarily. In Faribault, the inspections are conducted at no cost and are restricted to the exterior of the property.

If a violation of the ordinance is noted, the building owner is given an order to repair the noted deficiency. The order allows a sufficient period of time to complete the noted repairs. The majority of property owners undertake the repair at this point and no further enforcement action is necessary.

If the first order is ignored, the Building Official provides for a second and final notice of repair. At this point the building owners are also given the opportunity to request an extension due to financial constraints or weather conditions unfavorable to complete the required maintenance.

The second notice also states that if no action is taken to address the ordered repair, the City of Faribault will review the non-compliant properties. If no progress to conform to the ordinance is evident or if the property owner indicates an unwillingness to comply with the order the matter is referred to the City Attorney for prosecution as a misdemeanor.
In Faribault, 79 out of the 126 properties subject to the inspection were ordered to undertake some level of maintenance or repair. Of the 79 notices, only 4 were expected to result in legal action via District Court.

In a phone conversation with Marty Smith who has subsequently replaced Mr. Ernst as the Building Official in Faribault, Mr. Smith suggested that of the 26 cases that proceeded to trial during his tenure, he has never been required to offer any testimony during the legal proceedings. He noted that it is vital that any written reports or project notes are thorough and complete.

As the Council discussed the matter in January, staff was directed to gather a bit more information regarding the possible implementation of the IPMC in Saint Peter.

The Council inquired as to the cost and effort necessary for the Building Official to undertake the inspection and creation of the necessary written reports regarding the condition of buildings in the historic district. Building Official Murphy noted that he would expect that each structure would require approximately 20 – 30 minutes for an inspection. The time to create any written documentation would be dependent upon the condition of the structure.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns on this agenda item.

RJW
To: HPC Members  
Date: March 23, 2022

From: Russ Wille, Community Development Director

RE: Hotel 221 (John Mayer) Rear Decking and Stairway

John Mayer and Tim Bartelt own the 221 Park Row property. The building is being repurposed as a small boutique hotel.

The two owners would like to install a second floor deck on the rear of the building overlooking the Patrick's on 3rd back patio. The owners would like to install a stairway from the deck to the ground. The fence would be intended to wrap around the building with a landing near the Park Row sidewalk to the east of the building.

Mike Volk of Volk Construction would intend to appear before the HPC at the meeting to discuss decking / stairway materials and colors.
Memorandum

To: HPC Members

From: Russ Wille, Community Development Director

RE: 101 S. Minnesota Avenue (Fire Damage)

The 101 South Minnesota Avenue building was damaged by a fire on December 18, 2021. Since that time the building has been appropriately secured to prevent ingress or other access.

The building is owned by Eric Harriman. The previous tenants have all be released from any rental agreement and the building has otherwise remained vacant since the fire event.

Subsequent to the fire damage, Mr. Harriman has contracted with GP Engineering to undertake an analysis of the structural integrity of the building. I have included the text of the engineering report for your review.

In short, the evaluation suggests that the building can be repaired and salvaged. As such, Mr. Harriman is soliciting price quotes from licensed contractors to undertake the substantial restoration project.

Mr. Harriman would intend to restore the structure to pre-fire condition. He may consider a possible expansion or enlargement of the structure. Mr. Harriman is aware that any alterations to the exterior or expansion of the size of the building would need to be reviewed and approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission.
February 8th, 2022

Eric Harriman
CBC Fisher Group
201 N Riverfont Dr. #201
Mankato, MN 56001

RE: Fire Damage
101 Minnesota Ave
St. Peter MN 56082

Mr. Harriman

Thank you for the opportunity to conduct an engineering evaluation of the fire damage at the above referenced address. In accordance with your request, on January 27th, 2022, GP Engineering inspected the building for damage resulting from a fire that occurred on December 18th, 2022.

Background Information:

The subject structure is mixed use building with a leased commercial space on the ground level and an apartment on the upper level. The building construction consists of brick masonry walls with conventional wood framed roof and floors. The foundation consists of a full basement with grouted stone masonry at the perimeter and timber posts on concrete footings at the interior bearing locations.

Purpose and Scope:

The structural systems of the building were damaged during a recent fire. The purpose of our evaluation was to determine the extent of structural repairs required and provide general recommendations for repair.

1. A detailed inspection of fire related damage to the affected structure.
2. Engineering assessment to determine the limits of areas requiring structural repair.
3. Preparation of a written report of our findings.

Results of Inspection:

The following observations were made during our inspection that took place on January 31st, 2022. See attached drawing for reference areas.

Observations:

1. The upper level roof consists of 2 primary areas, the original portion of the building (west) and an addition (east). The roof in the original portion of the building has severe fire damage over 100% of the area. (image 1,2,3)
2. The roof in the addition portion has minor charring and soot deposits but no structural damage. (image 4,5)
3. A portion of the parapet wall approximately 24’ in length has damage resulting from fire damaged roof joists and ceiling joists collapsing into the building. (image 6,7)
4. No fire related structural damage was found in the floor framing at the upper level.
5. No fire related structural damage was found in the floor framing at the ground level.
6. No fire related structural damage was found at the ground level roof (east).
7. No fire related structural damage was found in the exterior brick walls

Discussion of Results:

Based on our observations of the exterior and interior of the subject structure, fire damage is limited to the original portion of the upper level roof. Structural repair of this portion of the building will require 100% replacement of the roof decking and framing. Repair of the brick masonry parapet will be needed in isolated areas, primarily the Eastern 24’ of the South parapet wall.

Floor framing at the upper level and ground level did not show indications of fire related structural damage. Isolated areas of damage may be concealed from observation by finishes and debris. Minor repair in isolated locations should be expected.

Conclusions:

Based on the available evidence, my education, training and experience, the following conclusions are found to be true to a reasonable degree of engineering certainty.

1. The building has experienced damage to the upper level roof in the original portion of the structure, this area will require 100% removal and replacement with a new structural system.
2. Fire related structural damage to other parts of the building is minimal. The structural systems in other parts of the building are intact and able to function as originally intended.
3. During repairs, isolated areas of structural damage related to the fire or firefighting activities may be found necessitating localized repairs.

We have included drawings of repair concepts for the damaged areas, this info is for estimating purposes and does not constitute a final repair plan for construction.

Our opinions are based on information made available to us at the time of our investigation. Should additional information be uncovered or made available, we retain the right to revise or supplement our report accordingly.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this project. Please contact us at 507-246-6778 if you have any further questions regarding this letter.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

2-8-2022
Gregory A. Prunty PE
Lic. # MN 49847

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Memorandum

To: HPC Members  Date: March 24, 2022

From: Russ Wille, Community Development Director

RE: Altelier (202 South Minnesota Avenue) – Signage Review

Cheryl Klages and her daughter have made plans to relocate their alterations / boutique shop to the former Govenair’s Thrift Shop at 202 South Minnesota Avenue. They had previously operated in the back of the Inspire Bridal Boutique.

Ms. Klages would like to install signage above the Minnesota Avenue doorway to denote their new location and expansion of services.

She has repainted the green sign backing to a flat black color. She would wish to re-use the lettering that was crafted with the Govenairs first occupied the building. Utilizing the lettering that was in place, she would only need to add another “T” and two “L” letters.

Cheryl will intend to attend Tuesday’s HPC meeting to further discuss the coloring or other sign matters that may be raised by the Commission.