

Date: May 9, 2022, 6:00 pm

Place: First Financial Innovation Center, 4th & Vine Streets

Members absent: Teri Boland, Mary Heimert, Tricia Lynn, Joan Meyer, Andrew Naab, Christian Rahe



Guests: **Paul Muller**, former Executive Director, Cincinnati Preservation Association; **Douglas Moorman**, Vice President, Development Strategies Group

President **Alan Bunker** called the meeting to order at 6:02.

Items for Presentation, Discussion or Action:

1. Guest speakers – Both gentlemen had requested the opportunity to address the Board on the topic of landmark status for the Terrace Plaza Hotel. Each presented his views. Salient points included the following:

- The building is badly deteriorated already. The current owner has declared bankruptcy and has neither carried out maintenance nor paid taxes on the building. If not purchased by a developer, a sheriff's sale is the next step.
- Landmark designation would recognize the building's status as a milestone of post-WWII International Style and its listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Landmark designation carries with it potential access to federal and state historic tax credits.
- Landmark designation would impose strictures on development, such as preservation of the windowless brick façade, which has been a barrier to occupancy to date.
- The Birkla Investment Group (represented by Development Strategies) has engaged the original architectural firm (Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill) to serve as the architects for adaptive reuse of the building and to assist in crafting guidelines that recognize both historical significance and economic viability.

The Cincinnati Historic Conservation Board recommended landmark designation. The City Planning Commission voted 6-1 against such designation. Now a decision is up to City Council, most likely the week of May 23.

2. Review/approval of previous meeting's minutes – **Esther Wing** made a motion to approve, seconded by **Heidi Shenk**, and all voted in favor.

3. Review/approval of Treasurer's report – **Lisa Sprague** moved approval, **Seth Harmon** seconded, and all voted in favor.

4. Reports of Committees:

- A. Information & Technology – Victoria Pershick** reported that the DRC Facebook page is live. Esther said that the page had 157 followers and that she had made two posts. **Jackie Bryson** agreed to announce the page's availability in the weekly newsletter.
- B. Social – In Mary Heimert's** absence, Alan reminded the group that we are set for a social at Corkopolis on May 24. Invitations will be sent on May 14.
- C. Clean, Green & Safe** - Alan had previously emailed his report on this topic.
- D. Speakers – Jackie** continues to act as the speaker coordinator, but hopes that a Board member will step forward to take this role. Speakers at the May 10 membership meeting represent the Taft Museum of Art and the Model Group (Mercantile Building renovation).
- E. Young Downtowners – Seth** has talked to **Christian Rahe**, and is mulling ideas beyond the standard happy hour. **Chase Mosijowsky** agreed to help. Jackie suggested working through apartment buildings with a high concentration of young people.

5. Old Business

- A. Terrace Plaza Hotel –** There was general agreement that we do not have time to figure out a way to present the issue to DRC membership in time to have an impact on City Council's decision. At most, we may be able to offer contact information for city officials if members wish to communicate their own thoughts on the subject.
- B. Board Retreat – Andrew Naab** was prevented by illness from sharing his plans for this event. We will agree on a date via email.

6. New Business

Kurt Grossman asked whether it would be possible to get data on where people moving into new downtown apartments were moving from and whether the tax credits granted to developers were justified. Esther suggested that, since Mayor Pureval will be looking at the whole development process, we might want to wait to see what changes may come. Alan said that the Department of Community and Economic Development may have some numbers.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56.

Next Meeting: Monday, June 13, 2022, 6:00 pm at First Financial Innovation Center, 4th & Vine.