

ROSSON HOUSE RESTORATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

WESTERN SAVINGS BOARD ROOM

February 23, 1978

Chairman John Driggs, Presiding

ATTENDANCE

John Driggs
Benita Fennemore
Fred Sweitzer
Mary Hudak
Gordon Barr
Chet Goldberg

Bob Frankeberger
Edwa Osborn
Ed Moonjohn
Fred Karr
Harry Montgomery
Lettie Parra

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called to order this special meeting of the Rosson House Restoration Committee.

A Discussion of Block 14 - Stabilization and Restoration.

The Chairman initiated a discussion of Block - 14 and the possible use of Community Development Block Grant Funds to stabilize and restore the houses on the southern half of the block.

The Committee was asked to make recommendations to Council for CDBG funds to stabilize and restore the houses on the south half of Block 14 and two carriage houses.

It was noted that the City was committed through the NDP Plan to maintain the Block for historical, cultural purposes and visitor orientation. On the other hand NDP has said that it has the responsibility to insure that the Block has revenue producing potential. Mary Hudak was of the opinion that revenue potential would be determined to a great degree by the Block's aesthetic appeal focusing attention within the Block itself and on neighboring areas.

The major concern, was first of all, if the houses were salvageable. Fred Karr of Western Savings made some determinations. He said the duplex on 6th Avenue is in the best condition, followed by the Silva House, with the remaining three "in diaster" or near "disaster condition" and these descriptions assume solid studding. This also assumes leaving all room dimensions essentially the same.

Mary Hudak and Edwa Osborn expressed concern not over the issue of stabilization but over the degree interpreted by Karr's statements. The Chairman said that we are not discussing restoration to the "ridiculous extreme" - or restoration in the critical sense but rather functional restoration for adaptive usage, acceptable to the State Historic Preservation Office.

The Chairman asked Ed Moonjohn and Fred Karr to make the group aware of cursory appraisals. Ed Moonjohn is a contractor. These are as follows:

Silva House - 628 W. Adams	\$36,000
622 W. Adams	50,000
614 W. Adams	48,000
604 W. Adams (Corner house)	45,000
115 E. 6th Street	35,000
Carriage house	22,000
Carriage house	22,000

It was explained that all roofs, wiring, plumbing, and air conditions need to be replaced. The lean-to's must be rebuilt and interior plastering is a necessity.

Two opposing opinions became apparent. John Driggs and Bob Frankeberger's points of view are summed up below:

1. The funds sought are Federal and are not City contingency funds.
2. If Phoenix doesn't use the funds some other City will; if they aren't used for Block 14 they will be used some place else.
3. The City is committed to restoring the entire Block and this includes the houses.
4. The houses are either on or are candidates for the National and State Registry of Historic Places.
5. The houses can generate income and help defray the cost of stabilization and restoration by providing office area for civic groups such as AIA.
6. Civic groups such as AIA may contract to do much of the repairs, this cost serving in lieu of rent.
7. Assuming that civic organizations traditionally are destitute, their value in creating traffic and activity would make up for a direct loss of rent revenues.

Harry Montgomery and Chet Goldberg had other views. They were as follows:

1. \$260,000 is an awful lot of money to spend for such purposes.
2. If the houses were in such condition as described it might be better to raise them.
3. Federal money is still people's money and should be used judiciously.
4. The area devoid of houses might be better served as a park.

5. It would be virtually impossible to collect rent of any size when tenant repairs serve in lieu of rent.
6. It is doubtful that the houses would attract renters with the ability to pay their way.
7. Rosson House is not analogous with Block 14, for the former represent citizen's money while Block 14 represents taxpayers dollars.
8. Chet Goldberg questioned whether any money should be spent on these houses in such condition.
9. Goldberg questioned the City's prerogative in becoming a benevolent landlord.
10. Both felt that the matter should be reviewed carefully, with a determination of what money, how much, the relationship with tenants and a pay back period. Both felt that community groups would not be the best renters insofar as a return on investment of funds for stabilization and restoration is concerned.

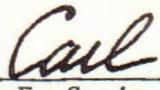
General discussion raised the issue of whether the City might wish to or even have the right to raise buildings on the National Registry. The Chairman noted that a range of options are possible and asked that these be reserved for further discussion. Since Council needed to know the Committee's position he asked for a motion to preserve the Block "as it now is."

MOTION

It was moved by Mary Hudak, seconded by Gordon Barr and carried, the following motion:

I move that we apply for Community Development Block Grant Funds in the sum of \$260,000 for the purpose of preserving the historic nature of the block as long as the option exists that the use of the buildings and the potential razing of unwanted structures be available within the confines of that application.

The meeting was then adjourned by general consent.



Carl E. Craig
Staff Assistant

CEC:ps
3/14/78