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Kendallville, Indiana

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Preservation commission OKs build

12 projects get nod for historic appropriateness

BY STEVE GARBACZ

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KENDALLVILLE — With a meeting agenda longer than they're likely to ever have again, the Kendallville Historic Preservation Commission gave the OK for 12 different owners to move forward with planned upgrades to their buildings.

The list was stuffed with 10 buildings included as part of the \$2 million PreservINg Main Street grant, which made the commission's first-ever historic review session much longer than it may ever be again.

Preservation commission members Keith Ballard, Terry Housholder, Stephane Langelier and Jerry Spaw worked through the list one-by-one on Monday afternoon.

The commission is tasked

with reviewing any conspicuous structural changes to building located within its historic district — roughly bounded by Rush Street to Sargent Street in the north and bounded by the alleys behind the east and west Main Street buildings — to ensure that the changes will preserve the historic characteristics of the buildings and the downtown as best as possible.

Since the commission just formed earlier this year and the historic district was only recently approved, Monday represented the first time the board sat down to complete such reviews.

Buildings on the docket included 10 of those that are being included in the city's \$2 million PreservINg Main Street



All four of the building's pictured on South Main Street — Jerry's Tacos, Designs & Graphics and the Strand Theatre — had their plans reviewed by the Kendallville Historic Preservation Commission Monday.

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STEVE GARBACZ

et - Jeny's Tacos, Kropp Insurance, Betty Lou
ir upcoming building changes OK'd by the
ay as part of 12 projects the four-member board

PRESERVATION: 10 buildings in \$2 million grant

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facade program, which is set to go out to bid with contractors later this month. Those 10 buildings include:

- Jeny's Tacos — 215 S. Main St.
- Kropp Insurance — 217 S. Main St.
- 100 Main — 100 S. Main St.
- The Strand Theatre — 221 S. Main St.
- Rudy's/Love Me Two Times on Main — 105-109 N. Main St.
- Hosler Realty — 106 S. Main St.
- Treehouse Realty — 129 S. Main St.
- Kendallville Auto Parts — 101 S. Main St.
- Relaxation Station — 101 N. Main St.
- Former post office — 119 W. Mitchell St.

Since those buildings are all included as part of the state grant through the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, commission members had their load lightened since the projects had all been reviewed by the state before even making it back to the local board.

"It's really handy that the state has reviewed these massive projects so we don't have to spend as much time going through them," said Deb Parcell of Indiana Landmarks, who serves as a staff adviser to the commission.

"If the state approves it, who are we to argue with the state?" commission president Keith Ballard said.

That being said, commission members did make a few notes and changes of their own during their review process.



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— Deb Parcell, Indiana Landmarks

On the old post office building at 119 W. Mitchell Street, Housholder added a stipulation that workers should, as much as possible, try to maintain a large tree on the west end of the property that dates back to Civil War-era Kendallville.

On review for the Strand Theatre, Ballard noted that some metal panels off of a building he co-owns next door at 219 S. Main St. will be removed as part of restoration on the historic theater.

On the Auto Value Auto Parts at 101 S. Main St., commission members gushed about how impactful the overhaul to the once-downtown hotel could be.

"I think this is going to be the show piece," Mayor Suzanne Handshoe stated.

"Without this grant, this, in a million years, would never be happening," Ballard agreed.

On the Iddings-Gilbert-Leader-Anderson block on North Main Street, board members chatted about the possibility of adding "Anderson" to the decorative cornice above the Scott Frick CPA office in recognition of Alonzo Anderson, the Black builder who constructed it but, as far as Housholder could tell, was never recognized on

the facade. That's not part of the project for 105-109 N. Main St., but something the board might consider talking to Frick about in an effort to complete the five-storefront block.

All 10 of the PreservINg Main Street project buildings were unanimously approved, with Langelier abstaining from the approval on the Jeny's Tacos facade, since he owns that building.

Afterward, the board also had two other projects to consider — 234 S. Main St., Kendallville City Hall; and 219 S. Main St., Betty Lou Graphics & Design.

At City Hall, the city is hoping to add two new awnings on Rush Street and replace the awning on Main Street. Those awnings will be black with silver lettering.

Betty Lou's is seeking to replace its first-floor window after a vandal broke glass with a BB gun during a shooting spree months ago. That was approved, with Ballard abstaining as he's a co-owner of that location.

In other business Monday, the commission:

- Agreed to do outreach to building owners during a planned community session on the downtown projects set for May 19 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall.