

COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL

12800 RAVINE PARKWAY SOUTH

COTTAGE GROVE, MN 55016

TRAINING ROOM - 6:00 P.M

June 18, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City Council of the City of Cottage Grove, Washington County, Minnesota, held a Special Meeting on June 18, 2025, at Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway. Mayor Bailey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. WORKSHOP - OPEN TO PUBLIC

A. Cordenio Severance House (Cedarhurst) Proposed Event Center

Staff Recommendation: Receive an overview of the proposed rehabilitation of the building and site located at 6940 Keats Avenue (Cedarhurst) for use as an Event Center.

Mayor Bailey stated welcome, we're glad to have you guys here. I'll kick it over to Emily Schmitz, our Community Development Director, who will get us going here.

Director Schmitz stated Mayor and Council, we've got a great team here today, who is working on a project to restore the Cedarhurst Mansion. They have a lot of details to share with you and they are looking forward to understand what it takes to restore the mansion, the historic amenity of the building, and so they will outline that for you today and that will also help you understand what their goal of this project is, right? So, I will turn it over; we've got folks from Bellagala and AWH as well as T & I Construction Services for the workshop.

Mayor Bailey said fantastic. Well, welcome.

Thank you, Mayor Bailey and Council. I'm Ben Wickstrom, I'm here representing Bellagala. I'm a consultant, but I've been involved with their projects and the founder and owner, Tim George, for about eight years now. Tim founded the company in 2004, I believe, and they have six venues around the Twin Cities, a couple in downtown St. Paul, more urban and rooftop-type venues and things like that. They purchased the Van Dusen Mansion in Minneapolis, which was weeks or months from demolition, and stepped in and restored that historic building. It's a little trickier site, it's on half of a city block, but there's a terrace, a courtyard, and everything, so it's a little different from the more urban St. Paul location. The three other venues are part of Bavaria Downs, out in Chaska, which is sort of the opposite, it's on 260 some acres. The city was very excited to have Tim come in and I will say restore it, as it was a historic building, but it was an older mansion that was getting a little worn out. It had been on the market on and off for about 12 or 14 years, and they restored that mansion, that's one venue there. They took the outbuilding and some horse stables and made them into a beautiful thing called Equestria, a little different choice out there. Then the third venue there is the Woodland Glasshaus, which is an atrium, an all-glass structure, so that's a third option. The Van Dusen Mansion and some components of Bavaria Downs we think have some parallels here.

When Cedarhurst became available, it was sort of a dream addition to his portfolio, I think, and Tim and his business partner, Jane, are really excited about this one. So, I think we had a good meeting with the Historic Preservation Committee last week. I will touch on just a couple of things that I'm sure you have questions about regarding the operation and the use, which will probably come into play for the Conditional Use Permit. I'll turn it over to Lawrence and Jacob or Mike and Ryan here. So, the plan is for one-to-two weddings a week, consistently, at Cedarhurst if we get our approval. We're hoping to finish up construction and start hosting, I believe Tim said in

August, 2026. One-to-two weddings consistently, I say that because the peak season, which is actually September, October, is probably up to four weddings per weekend.

We have some plans for renovations of the site but of course the renovation of the building and the restoration of the building are two of the most important parts, the largest part. There will be some site improvements, too, which we can all sort of take our turn to touch on, but we're planning on having a parking area on the south part of the site. The average, I won't say average because we have some smaller weddings, but a typical larger wedding is between 150 and 175 people. So, the plan is for a parking area to hold about 100 cars, and 12 or 15 maybe for staffing the wedding, and then the rest for guests. So, most people that come to the wedding will come as a couple or a pair, so there's two per car. Often there will be some families, you know four-or-five people, and then we do have a lot that come via Uber or Lyft. So, I worked for cities, too, and I know that ratio was tough to determine for a venue, for a building like this, it's often based on capacity or square footage. We have some historical data that we think parking about 100 cars on site would be great, we don't want to make impervious areas if we can help it. So, we'll work with staff on that to get that right number and to get that stuff all figured out with the impervious. I will say we found that with those urban venues, Uber and Lyft of course are very popular, so we don't need much parking at all; it's going to be a little different out here, but we've been surprised at various events the number of people who do show up in those. We do have a contract with a valet company if we know we have a larger event or we're getting more people showing up in single-driver car traffic. They know when our weddings are, we work ahead with them as the date is getting closer, it's getting tight, they're sort of on call. So, we'll get some efficiency out of the parking area. And there's also the opportunity, because people like to see it because it shows improved parking, if you determine or we determine that we need to do more spaces on the site, but we have the historical data and there's a pretty cool method we use to determine.

We recognize noise is an issue for neighbors. Often these venues that are booked out a little further are quieter than you might think; we have some outdoor speakers and it's muted, quiet music for the social hour, between the ceremony and the dance, but there's no outdoor bands, nothing like that. We've got the speakers to make a quick announcement, dinner is being started. Mostly, you just want a peaceful, serene event, and we have the rose garden of course on this site. So, depending on a couple venue options inside, a couple lawn areas in the rose garden, the main activity portion will take part in the atrium, these guys have done a great job of that.

Parking and Traffic: I should say all of our traffic we anticipate coming from the south and directing people to the south portion of the building, from 70th, and there will be a turn lane from 80th. So, that parking area will be convenient. So it's traffic and attendees, I guess, and then indoor and outdoor times and hours, and then anything else that might come up. We plan to have a Neighborhood Meeting, as suggested, at the Planning Commission meeting. I'm happy to get any feedback from you or questions from you tonight before any upcoming meetings.

For now, the architecture team is here from AWH, it's Lawrence and Jacob. They'll talk to give more specifics of the renovation, and I'll be back to answer any questions that you might bring.

I'm Jacob and I'm Eric and we work with AWH Architects. It might be worth at least introducing the rest of the team: I'm Lawrence Black, I'm the Director of Operations for AWH.

I'm Mike with T & I Construction Services. We've been working with Bellagala on a previous renovation, which also was a historic building in downtown St. Paul, and we're helping them prepare this one with AWH and develop the design and work with them on the renovation of this building, restoring it and so forth. This is also my daughter, who works with me now for the last couple weeks, trying to help keep me organized. It's working out good, and so she's a big part of this project, too, working with the designers and so forth and the historic part of it.

The historic part of it is a big deal for us because as a builder, there's challenges, and we'll eventually be moving forth and we're working closely with the AWH team on that and we'll get more into that. But we're here just to support any questions on the actual construction of the project and the site itself and what we're going to be doing. We've already been in communication with the City and County quite a bit regarding that, and we can explain in more detail if you have specific questions related to the building itself and/or the site. So, AWH will take it away as far as the design and what we're trying to do from the operation of the building and the restoration. One team member we should mention and point out because he's creative and has a lot to offer, and he's valuable

because he not only had extended experience, he needs to know more about this than any other member on the team. He's about improvement and what part is real and what is replacement, so he's at every meeting.

Well, I have the fun part of the construction and development picture. So, as you all know, Cedarhurst Mansion is really nationally recognized as a historic property. It's recognized for historic significance related to Cordenio Severance, a prominent attorney that was out of St. Paul with some political ties. The property is made up of an 1860s farmhouse and two additions, one of which was designed by Cass Gilbert in 1917, who also designed our capitol building in Minnesota; he really also designed what we recognize as the Cedarhurst Mansion with its classical design.

So, I will try to keep all of this brief as there's a lot to talk about, but some of the notable exterior features is starting with that historic façade, we have a historic lawn and two sets of historic columns. Almost all of the windows are original, and it's sort of semicircular: We have windows on the north, and we also have, perhaps you can't see it, but there's another porch that belongs to the farmhouse on the south, along with the historic rose garden.

As you have all heard, really as part of these rehabilitation efforts, we'll be transforming this property to a year-round wedding and event center or event venue and really just trying to bring this property back to life. As architects and historic preservationists, it's really our job to balance the need for sort of accessibility and Code upgrades, but also making sure that we're preserving the legacy of these historic and/or old buildings. We can touch on this maybe in the questions part of this, but we are working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service (NPS) to ensure any changes to the building align with the Department of Interior Standards of Rehabilitation. This allows us to tap into some of these Historic Tax Credits, which in our line of work, are really essential in making these rehabilitation projects feasible; and they also make sure that we minimize impact to any alterations that are done are distinguishable from what's historic and what's new, along with the changes also being reversible as part of their standards.

So, looking from Google Earth, it's convenient for the view we have, this is kind of like the full scope of the work, and I'll kind of walk through these three different pillars of the Scope of Work: Site Work: You can largely see here, the preservation efforts, the exterior and interior, along with this addition. You can kind of see that certain placeholder in the back and any alterations that will help us meet these safety and Code requirements. So, looking from the northwest corner of the site, we'll start by talking about widening the existing drive aisle to allow for emergency vehicle access to the site. This parking lot that has been discussed earlier, our goal is 100 parking spots; it would be nestled within this sort of existing grove of trees. This is really kind of a critical location on the site for us because we want to minimize really as much of site disturbance as possible. It also ties into what I'll talk about later, but it is sort of, naturally it has this direct access to 70th Street, but also ties into our accessibility grounds that we'll be adding to the site. On the back side here, the west part of the property, we're talking about putting in some infiltration and retention ponds to meet the stormwater management needs of the site. Really, this yellow, highlighted extension line will be just the general areas of this addition that I'll talk about a little bit later. So, I guess one last thing to note really about this site, there are a bunch of outbuildings scattered throughout this site. Some are collapsing, some are still standing; really, our goal is to try to keep as many of those buildings where they stand now. You know, the primary purpose of this first phase is the mansion, but we will be removing any buildings, like this collapsed barn here, just for the safety of our guests, really. Anything that is an immediate need of let's say human concerns, we want to take that away; but you know the goal is maybe at a later phase to then incorporate some of these structures into the event experience, but it's not the primary purpose of this, it's really just saving this mansion. I'll just touch on this quick: The rose garden, this is kind of where it lays now, our goal is to really rehabilitate the rose garden and make it a focal piece and almost one of the first things you'd experience from the parking lot coming to the mansion. And I'll show it better in floorplans, but you know, the addition and the mansion we'll kind of parade over this rose garden really, you know, kind of bring it back to life and give it the attention it deserves. Preservation: The building, like a lot of the older historic buildings that we've worked on, its really been the victim of deferred maintenance for decades, but its actually in pretty okay shape. Considering all of that, it's rare that we get to work on a building as old as this and not every window has to be replaced, which I'm really happy to see. There is some water infiltration on the east porch, the historic porch, which we're hoping to take up those units, regrade that; and then replace them in kind, kind of following the process of rehabilitation and

matching the historic pattern of the brick, similar to what you're seeing but without the diamond pattern in the middle, based on photos from the historic data that we have. Other than that, there's wood rot and cracking and some replacing that has to happen, but more or less, the exterior of the mansion will remain pretty much kind of as it is. A lot of the wood siding is original, at least on the north, the east, and the south on that farmhouse. What do you know, the oldest piece of the building has the newest siding, so that will be staying, but most of the character of that mansion will remain.

Now looking at the inside, generally our approach is to take as much of a gentle approach as possible. We want to refinish and repair as much of what's historic and original as possible. There's some non-historic lighting, non-historic wallpaper that will deserve to be replaced. We'll be refinishing a lot of the wood floors, a lot of it, especially in that ballroom, but generally speaking, we just want to preserve what's still there and to try to make it functional. Now looking at the guts of the building, some of that water infiltration that's come in from that east porch has created some foundation issues, so we're going to repair as needed. We'll be putting some new fill insulation in the attic to kind of meet energy code. We'll have to put in a new boiler, ducts, all of that fun stuff, but really just again the main purpose is to upgrade everything to meet code, but also minimize the visual impact on the historic character of these spaces on the inside. So, we're kind of balancing, that is the plan. Now we're looking at a rendering from the rose garden, I'll just kind of point around: This is the historic building, this is the addition, and this is the south side of the property, but the historic side is over here, and you're kind of looking north. So, again, like what I've talked about is our goal's been to kind of reactivate this rose garden to make it kind of a centerpiece in an outdoor aspect or amenity. To the event venue, we'll be adding accessibility ramps, one being right here leading up to a landing that will add equitable access to both the south porch but also wrap around to the historic porch. A one-story addition, which I'll get into with floorplans, will kind of be on the west side of this rose garden and touch on this sort of secondary, what we call a secondary façade; the primary façade is something that's considered not a historic façade in line with kind of a rehabilitation kind of space, tying into the kitchen. But really throughout all of this is our goal backs the addition as kind of being a deference to the historic property and really be compatible in scale, proportion, and details; but also there's this importance of being compatible but distinguishable, which is kind of a fine line. Again, all of this is still up in the air, we're figuring this out now, but this is kind of, just to kind of share some of this for the rules that go with it. From the historic façade, so on the top left, what really matters most is having the SHPO and preserving this sort of historic from that historic lawn; we think it's really important to keep the addition kind of out of sight, and you kind of see it on the left there, but really trying to keep as much of the existing trees and vegetation in place to help bring back the historic look and preserve it the way it is. You can kind of see in the bottom left that newer accessibility route that will be added, and on the top right you can kind of see how that addition works together with the mansion to create this sort of outdoor space. Alterations and Additions: We'll look at our demo plan, highlighted in red is everything that is planned to be demolished. The historic porch on the east is planned north, I guess it looks scary, but it's not actually going anywhere, as again, we're just replacing the units. There's a non-historic ramp on the left there to the north that comes out of the building, but it's also worn and kind of falling apart. There is a non-historic deck that's also starting to sag, and that will actually be where we tie in this addition to the mansion. Overall, again, the goal is really to just keep as much of the original features as possible, and you know restore what we can and replace what needs beyond repair with something that's in kind. So, this is kind of the proposed floorplan. You can see now again where we kind of are tying into the existing building. Here you have a better look at how this landing wraps around. So this ramp comes up, but then it allows accessibility, which now the building doesn't have really at all besides this reception hall from the historic front door, from the original 1860s farmhouse, and then also tying into the atrium. What this addition really allows, too, is back of the house storage space and just allowing the building to accommodate a larger group without really compromising the historic spaces; we're really trying to keep as much of that as it is, but added the kitchen and storage to other spaces. So, really that historic space will be the big center of joy, really. Looking at the second floor, really the primary purpose of a lot of the alterations on the second floor are improving the circulation route and accessibility. Kind of by nature having these multiple additions throughout time creates weird spaces. So, like here, this is your original farmhouse and you have an addition and another addition. You can kind of see where that's been added, the disjointed hallways, and it's really just not accessible; I think it's like 2'3" or something, it's kind of crazy. So, what we're going to try to do is take out some of those doors, really, like what's highlighted in red, and create maybe like an extra route of

circulation, and you'll see this on the next map, but again balance that needs to preserve what it is with accommodating the need for multiple people to be safe. So, now looking at the proposed plans as they are right now, the north side of the second floor will be the sort of Bride's Suite, and the south side of the building will be the Groom's Suite; and then kind of everywhere in between will kind of function as back of house spaces, storage. Generally speaking, just pointing out we are keeping really the general way out of the building pretty close to what it is, and that's pretty important. So, this is a look at the Site Plan, and this will really just wrap everything up. Overall, the alterations, the accessibility routes, the wide surface road, the new addition, everything that you do to this site will be in line; it's planned to be in line with the standards of rehabilitation in a way that they will accommodate the needs of this space as a wedding venue but also really preserve the legacy of the historic space and the general character of the property. And I guess one thing, as you guys are all familiar with and that we've come to learn about, we just want to acknowledge that we understand what this historic property is up against. It's important that we do everything we can to protect this property from kind of being gobbled up by something like this and potentially erasing its history. It's really our mission at AWH and Bellagala to build off of this sort of historic fabric that's there and to really champion it. We're really hoping to work with you and the community to preserve this property as a destination wedding venue, really a community asset, but also a traditional sort of touch point for this site in your history.

Mayor Bailey said all right, maybe I'll kick this off with some questions. And by the way, I am excited on what I'm seeing with what you guys want to do with this building. I mean, what the previous people thought is maybe the thing that's one of my questions, do you guys own this now outright, or are you in the process, or what's?

Mike replied it's in the process.

Mayor Bailey said as you've shown in the picture, I don't think any of us really were keen on it, but we were kind of told, well, in order to make this work, you need all this housing or something to fund it, right? So, and I think when you eventually get to the point of a Neighborhood Meeting, I think you're going to find where neighbors are going to be excited, two of them have asked me every month for an update. I sent them an update saying we're meeting this evening, to give a little feedback, and I didn't show them a picture or anything; but the two most vocal ones were absolutely ecstatic because they really wanted to try to keep the culture or the feel of what's going on in the neighborhood.

The other question I had is with regards to the parking lot and the access point from County Road 19, or Keats Avenue, is the intent that you guys do that as asphalt?

Mike asked I'm sorry, the parking lot itself? Mayor Bailey replied yes, the parking lot for one. Mike replied yes, the drive lanes are, as we mentioned, being widened by a foot, and that will be all asphalt. The parking lot there, if we were to put that parking lot out front, which we won't be able to do, that would cause it to be asphalt. We're trying to maintain the historic, I mean, a lot of developers would automatically asphalt that parking lot and curb it, and we can easily do that; but in working on the historic part of it, the developer is actually open to not asphaltting but still having the curbing that we need for parking and so forth, but giving it a little more subtle appearance is the way it's been over the years and the way people have parked. We need more parking there than the previous venue that was there, and so, Ben mentioned how we can control the traffic and so forth, so we need that, but we are entertaining the option of doing something other than the asphalt. I mean, the less concrete and asphalt covering the site helps with the history of it. So, he's open to doing something different, whether it's grass or gravel or something, and we're researching that right now. We're researching that option and, obviously, it's a cost savings, too, for it, but it might give a little more pleasing appearance for the guests, too, if we can park people in something other than just a big asphalt slab. We still need the space, obviously, but we could do it in a different manner that may be a little more pleasing. You know, if you've ever been to some weddings out in the country, big barns, working in a grass field or a gravel lot, there's just some character about that in the big old barn and so forth that people seem to enjoy. And with MWH and their mission, as far as preserving history, they've been involved with sites that have done similar things, and so we're entertaining that unless the County or City would require it. Because of what we're doing with the property, and if you look at the verbiage, I don't know if it's County or City, but if we put it in the front of the building, then we're going to be required to curb it and do asphalt. So, if it's behind or off to the side or somewhere hidden, and not apparent to Keats, I think we have some options to do it or

consider it, so. And, again, we're open to suggestions from the Council and so forth, but it is an option that we're looking at.

Mayor Bailey said and I, personally, would just say from my standpoint, I wouldn't want you to put it in front of the building or the mansion. We've always, as long as I've, I grew up here in Cottage Grove, and there's always been the grass on the front, there's been ice cream socials with Strawberry Fest, and it's all been out front. So, I think leaving that natural, if you will, with a nice sight line coming in I think is the right thing to do. So, I think where we're putting it, I just was curious; there's another venue in Cottage Grove that has been talking to us about, they're currently gravel, and they're debating or making comments about maybe going to asphalt because of the dust and that. So, I was just curious as to what your thoughts were, and I know you've got to work with our staff on that, but.

Mike replied yeah, when we first saw this property, or at least when I first saw it, I automatically was thinking nothing can be done in front, you know? We're not changing the drive through or anything, you know. And as far as the parking, we don't; it is an arrangement for which we don't have a lot of options for parking, but the natural treeline that's there right now, we can enhance that a little bit, but it works really well for kind of hiding that parking. Coming in off of 70th I think is going to be more advantageous for traffic control. I mean, when people come to these weddings, you have 150, 200 people coming in, and both streets are going to be busy, but if we can control it on 70th as far as the entrance goes, I think that's going to be more advantageous to traffic control. So, that's what we're kind of gearing up for the parking lot on that side of the building, but from a natural grade standpoint, without having to really modify grades and so forth, that works really well. Now, we'll probably need something called a retention pond, whether its gravel or asphalt, and that we'd probably put more further back behind the buildings, and that's pretty good sized; and then we'll use the soil from that to create some natural berms, probably more to the north, so we're trying to maintain what's there right now. I'm not sure how the previous venue parked cars, but where we're putting it is more of a natural setting for a parking area, so that's why you see it where it is right now.

Mayor Bailey said okay. The next question I have for you real quick is that house that's off of 70th, that's down a hill, the caretaker's house, do you have a plan for that? I know you're working the mansion first, I get that, but what's your thoughts on that other house?

Mike replied yeah, we're going to preserve it, and I think it's where we could have offices or employee spaces, but we haven't done a lot of that design yet. We just want to get this one done first.

Mayor Bailey replied okay, perfect. And then since you guys obviously know the history of this building, one interesting thing is and I don't know if it's still up there, I guess I'd have to check, but there's what appears to be a guardhouse on the front, and believe it or not, that used to be on the roof.

Mike said yeah, we have pictures of that on the top.

Mayor Bailey asked are you thinking that's going to happen again, or are you thinking it's not going to work up there, or can you use it?

Mike replied we can't put it on the top, structurally, it's just not going to work, but we want to keep it where it is, as like a guardhouse for people coming and going. It's just kind of a neat feature, and we do not want to take that down. It's in pretty good shape, but to get it back up on the roof would be a real challenge, and probably the reason it was taken off was because of construction work, things were sagging

Mayor Bailey replied it wouldn't surprise me if it was because I have been up into the rafter, up into the attic, so. And then one last question I had for you is I know there was a history of that building where the ballroom is, too, there used to be a pipe organ in there, and there are pieces of that pipe organ down in the basement. Are you guys thinking of doing something with that, or are you just going to?

Mike replied that it's still up in the air. I mean, we've been told that it would be very, very marginal to make it work again. The organs that are upstairs, we'll say those pipes are kind of, like I'm not sure what they could be used for, but ultimately the components in the basement are still kind of up in the air. Like how do we, what do we do with this? I mean, put it somewhere on site where a lot of people will see it, or do we kind of just leave it there? The basement is a scary place.

Mayor Bailey replied it is, I was down there, too.

Mike said and, so, but with that said it's treated the same. We're definitely considering keeping it because at some point it is feasible there's storage, not just a huge basement, and I think if nothing else, it'd be a good piece

of history just for people to look at; assuming we can make that basement a place where people will actually want to go down there because right now, nobody wants to go down there.

Council Member Olsen said I was going to suggest you could consider donating to the Minnesota Historical Society.

Mike replied it could be, yes, and even outside of the restoration, just getting it out of there and trying to keep it so that it could be restored is another project. So, we're, there's some people out there, a rare group, that could potentially do that, so we haven't really investigated it yet, but we're not going to just rip it out and throw it in the dumpster, so.

Ben replied as I said, we are very aware of these parts and there's a lot of stories down there about that organ and about how its supported and the ballroom, and it's on our radar list now. At the very least we will leave it there and make sure that its, and part of that is the water damage and we will be correcting that.

Mayor Bailey said just one more quick comment, I'm sorry, and then I'll turn it over to Council. You were commenting earlier about noise and so on. I think the way you're designing that new ballroom or that atrium, or whatever you're calling it there on the back side, then its basically blocking the homes a little ways to the back, plus the inside of that will be what will be the rose garden. I think that will help immensely with any concern of noise, so, the way you laid it out, I think makes total sense. I'm glad you're doing something with that rose garden idea, too, because that was something that used to be very beautiful out there at one point.

Mike replied yes, we have pictures of the whole thing.

Council Member Clausen said I have one thing about that alternative parking surface, that's a great idea, I'd love it if you'd do something like that rather than asphalt. Some sort of packed rock or something else would be really good, I would love to see that. I have a question about the house if you can answer that, are you going to be catering in, or will you be preparing food on site for the events?

Mike replied well, we're putting in a new kitchen, and it's kind of a combination of things that go on there for these events. It really kind of depends on the particular venue, but they're set up to, as previous to the other homes, they're set up to handle all those meals. The kitchen that's there now is basically getting refurbished.

Council Member Clausen replied thank you, I'm done.

Council Member Olsen said so, several of the things I was going to comment on have already been talked about. Just to reiterate, the landscaping, historically that has been a really nice feature of that property, and anything you can do to maintain it, enhance the landscaping is just going to add to the beauty of the site itself. We've all been at events at the mansion in our lifetimes, and you know, we've always had to park behind and it's always been on the grass and what have you, so I don't know that that's problematic in any way as long as it's designed correctly. But having that shield of the nice trees and then having the rose garden and some of the other features, there used to be a big lilac area there and stuff, I think people will really appreciate that. The kitchen I was going to talk about, it sounds like you already have a plan for that because there's the old kitchen and then there's the new-ish kitchen, neither one of them are very good. So, you're going to just do away with both and put in?

Mike replied yeah, it's going to be one kitchen, but I don't know if they developed the plan there where it shows the location, but it's where the, it's the most proper period for where we're putting the addition on. It's part of the building that's not historic, and so we're trying not to touch the original historic part with the addition, and this ended up working out great. So, where the kitchen is shown there now in that area, which ties into what we're calling a storage area, that's the new part of the building, and that's the part that needs the most help, too. So, we have to remove some of it and we're going to renovate it because of the sagging ceiling and so forth, so that's going to work out. And it worked great with the venue as far as the traffic flow goes, everything kind of came together with this. And your point about the rose garden and the new addition as far as sound, exactly kind of part of the design where the noise itself with that glass wall, if you go facing the rose garden, the back side really has no windows or anything and no speakers or anything like that. That's the area that's facing northwest where there are some homes, so it will kind of contain the noise to the rose garden area, which could be where they'll have a smaller wedding venue. And we're going to redo that whole area, that's a big part of this project is that rose garden.

Council Member Olsen asked so, if you're putting in, for lack of a better phrase, a commercial kitchen, is that what you're going to do?

Mike replied yes.

Council Member Olsen asked are you anticipating that there could be other uses over time for the facility, beyond just weddings? Maybe some special dinners and things like that?

Mike replied, well, they do that now, and so, I mean, the wedding is the big business, but they do have events. Emily added they could hold a prom and other events. Mike said and sometimes, you know, office staff from a big business or something will have their Christmas party. You know, you could have your City Christmas party there.

Council Member Olsen replied it could happen, yep. So, one last question, what's your situation with HVAC in this place? Because it's got to be a mess.

Mike replied oh, it is, yeah.

Ben said there's no cooling currently and it's warm, I mean, ideally, we'll need somebody to fix it, whether it's new radiators, which seem like they're in pretty good shape. So, yeah, we're taking that into consideration, and obviously, we want to get this done.

Council Member Olsen asked are you going to try to implement some sort of cooling features in the building? Mark replied yep. Council Member Olsen said and nothing worse than a bride with melting makeup, I've seen it. Mark said that could be an issue.

Council Member Olsen replied okay, all right, perfect. Love the ideas, guys, this is, I'm telling you right now, the neighbors are going to jump for joy when they hear that this is what you want to do. A massive difference from what we've been hearing the last few years, in a good way.

Mark replied yep, maintaining the landscaping will be something that aligns really and sometimes it can be over landscaped, but I think you're going to like what you see when we get that put together.

Council Member Thiede said yes, it looks very good.

Mayor Bailey said I am very impressed, so, it'll be nice to get this mansion back to where it should be for our community.

Council Member Olsen asked and for staff, is there anything we need to do in terms of trying to help make sure that this all comes together?

Emily replied, nope, we don't think we need any help yet.

Mayor Bailey said the only thing I would say, though, from a staff standpoint or for you guys together, when I would ask about asphalt or no asphalt, part of my purpose of asking that was, you know, I think we require it. But my question is if you guys can come up with something that, I'll just say it, that can define it as a parking lot but keep the character of the building and such.

Council Member Clausen said it's historic preservation, though, so maybe we can try to.

Mayor Bailey replied well, that's what I'm saying. You might have some ideas out there and work with staff on some ideas that might not say that it has to be concrete or asphalt, maybe it is something different; but again, you don't want cars driving over the lawn and all that kind of stuff either. So, that's what I'm saying, I'm just interested to see what you can come up with.

Mark replied there's some really good gravel products out there that other cities have used, that number one, can keep the dust down, which everybody wants. And the curbing can be done in a way that, I was just by a church the other day that had that, and they used these concrete curbs that you stake in the ground, and it was very well organized and actually very appealing. It gave the same sense that we're trying to do, and that's what caught my eye, and, I mean, the whole concrete jungle thing, we're trying not to do that here if we can avoid it. And, you know, some people will like the gravel, some people might not, but I think overall there's just, you know, kind of a country feel is what we're trying to get here, and it's the way the mansion was. So, if we can make that happen with the parking, I think everybody likes that concept, at least from the development side, and if the City can work with us on that, that would be great.

Mike said yeah, and to that point, I think that if what we're working on was less complicated, we could hire some engineers, specifically for their experience, just because whether you know it or not, the site is pretty complicated.

The requirements it has have to protect the environment, and the Watershed is in play here and there's the drinking water, that's another requirement, as well as the stormwater. And so these things are at a higher level of complexity than a normal site would have. So, I just wanted to go through that, the other civil items that are going to have some possible costs related to this include the utilities and septic as well. So, as we work through these, we have to look at those markers and figure out how we navigate through that. So, it's not really at the top of your mind, but these are the things shown on that map.

Council Member Olsen replied but we do have some pretty amazing engineers on our staff, so, I think you'll be all right. Thanks, guys.

Mayor Bailey said thank you, guys, and good luck, to which they replied thank you.

Council Member Clausen said we've got to stream to our next meeting, but thank you very much.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 6:51 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Judy Graf and reviewed by Tamara Anderson.