

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
December 14, 2022

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall, and also via Zoom on Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Suzette Astley, Wade Squiers, Donnie Moore, Mike Guerber, Duane Eash, Matt Ruff, Sherry Brayton, Edith Dawson and Guy Booth. Attending via Zoom were Janet Budack and J. West. Guests at the meeting were Scott Ladwig, Construction Project Manager at Cornell, and Randy Clarahan from Mortenson Construction. Also present was Roch Player, who attended via Zoom.

Minutes of the December 3, 2022 meeting were approved.

The design review issue on the agenda is further discussion of the certificate of appropriateness application from Roch and Sherene Player. Their home is at 711 6th Ave. NW in the Ash Park Historic District. There has been confusion regarding the application for a certificate of appropriateness and there had been several discussions with the Commission to identify the nature of the rehabilitation of the porch and the materials that will be used. Suzette Astley had prepared a summary of the project and the discussions that have previously been held. The discussion mainly centered on the appearance of the proposed vinyl railing and balusters. The concern relates to the bright white nature of the product, and how shiny it appears. Its appearance does not match the material of railings and balusters of houses in the historic district.

The Commission discussed with Mr. Player if painting the material could result in an appearance that was appropriate and fit within the appearance of these items on other historic houses. Wade Squiers and Duane Eash both had information that makes it appear that painting can be done to minimize the vinyl effect of the product. Mr. Player indicated that was a satisfactory solution from his perspective. Upon motion by Mike Guerber and seconded by Janet Budack, the certificate of appropriateness shall be approved with the requirement that the railings, balusters and column be painted with a flat or eggshell finish, and that the painting of the new portions of the porch be completed by August 31, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

Scott Ladwig and Randy Clarahan discussed the proposed new residence hall on the Cornell campus. The college has appreciated the response from residents of the neighborhood regarding the initial rough draft of the proposed residence hall. To meet with the neighborhood concerns, there has been a very positive revision in the plan for the residence hall. First, the building is being moved farther from the street and into the campus. This will give more lawn space between the building and the street. The retention basin will be set up so it will blend in with the landscaping of the lawn. The existing parking lot will remain, as well as the mature plantings along the street. The building, instead of having a flat roof, will have a pitched roof so it matches the older dormitories on campus. The building will be of a reddish brick to match other campus buildings. Finally, the heating/cooling system of the dorm will be a VRF System, which will have minimal noise associated with it. This is in response to the complaints about the HVAC System that was installed with Russell Hall.

The contractor will be submitting a final site plan for the building in January. They hope to present an application for certificate of appropriateness by mid or late January. The

Commission is very impressed with the suggested changes and how the building will blend in with the historic nature of the campus.

Suzette reported that she and the Commission should be working on the preparation of a statement that discusses synthetic materials and their use in renovation/rehabilitation of historic properties. This will be guidance available to property owners. She also indicates it would be a good idea to review what is acceptable for placement of solar panels on properties in the historic district. These issues all will be important to have included in our documents regarding design standards for historic preservation. As these standards become developed, they will be part of the HPC website, and property owners will be directed to the website so they know the steps to take when they have plans for renovation or rehabilitation of historic properties.

Suzette reported that our proposed budget for the next fiscal year needs to be submitted to the City Council. We will request the same funding that we have had in past years. We have had line items listed on our budget in the past, and we will do so again. However, the City indicates that we do not have to adhere to those line items that we have indicated, so long as we are not incurring expenses over the approved budget. Upon motion made by Matt Ruff, seconded by Wade Squiers, the proposed budget was approved for submission to the City Council.

Suzette also has reported that we need to do some long-term planning in identifying grants for projects we desire to undertake. One project that needs to be resolved in the near future is the repair of the kiosk that is currently near the historic Parker Trust Bridge. It was severely damaged in the derecho. There is a grant available through Linn County Historic Preservation to pay for a portion of the estimated costs which are in the area of \$8,000. We have budgeted \$2,500 toward the project and hope to receive additional funds from the City Budget, as well as from CDG. Suzette will also discuss this issue with the City of Lisbon, as their kiosk was also damaged.

Duane Eash had with him a number of old plat maps of the City of Mount Vernon that he received from heirs of the Davis estate. These maps will be placed in our archives and will also appear on our website. We are fortunate that Duane was able to recover these documents shortly before they would have been destroyed.

Future HPC Meetings will continue to be held in the City Hall conference room. The Council meeting room in the basement is currently under renovation. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary