

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
February 4, 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall, and also via Zoom on Saturday, February 4, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Suzette Astley, Mike Guerber, Duane Eash, Sherry Brayton, Donnie Moore, and Guy Booth. Attending via Zoom were Janet Budack and Matt Ruff. Guests at the meeting were Ed Bjork, Meredith Hoffman, Amy Guetzko and Kendall Hepker.

Minutes of the meeting of January 7, 2023 were approved.

There are several design review issues before the Commission. The first review is for a building in the downtown commercial historic district located at 100 1st St SW. The owners, Meredith Hoffman and Amy Guetzko were present with their window contractor, Kendall Hepker. Meredith gave a detailed review of the building and the need for window replacements. There are approximately 14 windows that will be affected, including windows that had previously been boarded over which will be reopened and returned to their original use. The proposed replacement windows will be vinyl windows. Because of the Commission's design standards, it was important to have the owners explain why vinyl has been selected. There is a difference in cost for vinyl, as opposed to other materials that are used for windows. Kendall Hepker reviewed why the vinyl window was being used in this window replacement project. The work that will be done will restore the original appearance of the windows. The frames, and the outside framing of the window will be preserved. The contractor will be using double hung windows. The major issues relates to the selection of window being vinyl vs. other historic materials which are substantially more expensive than the proposed vinyl windows. The front display windows are not being replaced. After a full discussion of this issue, Guy Booth moved, and Mike Guerber seconded a motion to approve a certificate of appropriateness for the project. The motion passed.

Ed Bjork was present for a pre-review of repairs that need to be done at the Presbyterian Church. Some of the siding that is on the addition to the church was damaged in the derecho. After a lot of investigation, the church has been advised that a composite wood siding with a diamond kote painting would seem to be best suited for the repair. This siding would replace the previous concrete-based siding that is on the upper gables of the building. Ed is going to get additional information about the cost of the replacement material. It appears to be the material that is now preferred as opposed to the previous material that was difficult to attach and also had certain health hazards in the application process. The Commission asked Ed to determine what the cost would be for doing all of the gables in this similar material to have a consistency in the structure. Ed is going to research the matter further and will come back when the church is ready to apply for a building permit.

The third design review issue is an application from the Amundson residence located at 724 5th Ave. NW, in the Ash Park District. No one appeared on behalf of the Amundson's application. The application indicates that they desire to replace old windows. It does not indicate how many windows or where they are located. There is a request that the material to be used is "vinyl replacement windows like everyone else." It would be helpful for the Commission to have information regarding the specifications of the window, how many there will be, the type

and size of the window, and whether they will replicate the original windows of the house. The Commission earlier reviewed the application for the building at 100 1st St SW, and did have sufficient information to approve the application. Because of the questions that were raised during the meeting, a motion was made by Guy Booth, seconded by Duane Eash to defer a decision on this application until there is additional information provided by the owner. Suzette will send a letter requesting more specific information. The motion passed.

Suzette reported that she has searched the Auditor's website and has found three additional houses that should be listed on the inventory of historic buildings that are not necessarily in historic districts. Upon motion by Janet Budack, seconded by Duane Eash, the three additional buildings will be added to the inventory list.

Suzette led a discussion regarding long-term planning projects for the Commission. Because of limited resources, as well as limited time to work on projects, Suzette wanted to discuss priorities for issues that should be pursued. It appears the grant process for assistance on the Visitor's Center is moving along well. Suzette will continue to work on the grant proposal, as well as working with the City to determine the City's contribution, both financially and with any in kind of work. This is a project that will be a priority project. We also discussed the cemetery project. Because this will not be a good candidate for the National Register of Historic Places, the Commission, as well as the City, will need to determine how funding for cemetery repair and maintenance can be funded. Guy Booth suggested that we defer any request from the City for a stated dollar contribution until we resolve the setting up of a Friends of the Cemetery Non-Profit Corporation. Setting up this corporation will allow further negotiations with the American Legion for a portion of funding for maintenance and repair. Guy will see if the City is ready to approve the proposed Friends of the Mount Vernon Cemetery Corporation that has been prepared.

Suzette also indicates that the annual report is due to be sent to the state by the end of February and she is working on it. She also passed around a sheet so Commissioners could list all continuing education events or seminars that have been attended during 2022. This includes seminars that have been attended, the preservation summit, as well as the seminars that have been conducted by our HPC. Duane Eash also stated that he is working on a seminar for painting of historic properties and this may be presented in May. Suzette has identified a master gardener who can give a presentation on historic gardens. It is hoped that this seminar could be presented in April just prior to the spring planting season.

There was also discussion regarding the Commission having a list of contractors and craft people so any owners of historic properties may have an easier time in finding contractors who can help with projects. Guy and Suzette talked about how to prepare the list, how people can get on the list, and what statements should be made by HPC to indicate this is informational, but does not amount to certification of qualifications. Guy will work on a disclaimer statement to this regard.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary