

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
February 5, 2022

The Historic Preservation Commission met via Zoom on Saturday, February 5, 2022. Commissioners present were Suzette Astley, Grace Chamberlain, Janet Budack, Leah Rogers, Ed Sauter, Wade Squiers, Dwayne Eash, and Guy Booth. Edith Dawson was also in attendance.

The Minutes of the January 6, 2022 meeting were approved.

There were no design review requests on the agenda.

Grace Chamberlain and Ed Sauter gave an update on the development and redevelopment of the audio tour of historic buildings in Mount Vernon. There have been some concerns that the cost of the annual fees for the tour were not justified by the amount of usage. Grace and Ed have been able to find a more economical and more efficient way to make the audio tour available. Grace indicates that she has identified an app development account through Google. There is a \$25.00 set up fee, and a \$99.00 annual fee for the app. The Mount Vernon Lisbon CDG will pay one half of the annual fee. Upon motion made by Ed, seconded by Leah, the Commission has approved the payment of fees for the audio tour not to exceed \$180.00. Grace indicates that we need to have better identification for the audio tour at each stop on the tour. It is suggested that we have signs which are more visible in identifying the number of each building on the tour. Grace also indicates that she has good ideas to help launch a program to advertise the existence of the audio tour.

Suzette, who has been our liaison with Cornell, indicates that Cornell is looking at additional or new residence halls. This may impact the existing residence halls and other buildings on campus. Suzette has prepared a draft of a letter to be sent to Cornell which brings the college up to date on regulations of the Historic Preservation ordinance and the ordinance related to demolition of property. She is trying to be both proactive and cooperative with the college so, as they begin their planning, they will be aware of the current city ordinances, as well as requirements for changes in the designated historic district. It was also discussed that we encourage Cornell to have a designated liaison with HPC so there is active communication between the college and historic preservation. There has been good cooperation in recent years and the Commission feels it is helpful to be proactive in our approach so disputes do not unnecessarily arise.

Suzette also has led a discussion on the venue for future HPC meetings. We are concerned that formal meetings need to comply with safety precautions regarding Covid. If we are to have in-person meetings, it is suggested that we use the City Hall Council Chambers where there is adequate room for social distancing. Suzette indicates she has acquired K-95 masks for people who attend. We have decided that we will continue to have meetings via Zoom, but may be able to have hybrid meetings where some people will be able to appear in person. This will help non-commission members to be more involved in the meeting, and especially to present documents that may need to be reviewed.

A Cornell student who is interested in a career in architecture has expressed interest in having an internship with Historic Preservation. Our budget will not allow the hiring of an intern for this summer. However, Wade Squiers indicates he may be in need of an intern in his architectural practice during the summer. Wade will visit with the Cornell student to see how his interests and skills may intersect with Wade's needs for summer help.

Suzette asked Commission members to think about educational forum topics that could be developed and presented to the community. There have been good programs in the past, which have included the historic brick house tours, programs on individual houses in the community and programs that have dealt with specific preservation topics. There have also been attempts at tours, but neither tour that was scheduled in 2021 were held because of inclement weather. This would be a good time to make plans for specific education programs.

There was discussion regarding the work of Jennifer Price as she moves ahead on the project to have a new map for the Cornell Historic District. The map needs to be amended to show the changes that have taken place since the district was placed on the historic register. In particular, more photographs of the existing buildings are needed.

Suzette announced that the next meeting for HPC may be held on February 16 if there is a design review request. Otherwise, the next meeting will be March 6, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary