

MINUTES  
OF  
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
March 18, 2020

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at the Mount Vernon City Hall at 5:30 p.m. Members present were Mary Evans, Janet Budack, Leah Rogers, Suzette Astley, Susan Hargus, Peter Ault and Guy Booth.

The Minutes of the March 7, 2020 meeting were presented. Two corrections were requested. Hugh Lifson indicated by email that the correct name for the style of architecture at the Visitor's Center is neo etruscon. Secondly, Machele Pelkey, by email, requested that Mary Evans be credited with preparing the powerpoint presentation for the Hahn/Wolfe house presentation. Also, she wanted to note that Grace Chamberlain, Mary Evans, Janet Budack and Machele Pelkey were serving on a committee to organize the presentation.

Upon motion to amend the Minutes, and approval of the Minutes, the motion carried.

There are two design review items on the agenda. Jason Pierce has requested to be on the agenda regarding the front porch on his house at 605 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW. This home is located in the Ash Park Historic District. Jason has previously presented information to the Commission regarding the deterioration of his front porch. It is not an original porch, and had been rebuilt with brick as part of the structure. The structure has deteriorated and needs to be removed in order to build a new porch. Consequently, under the Mount Vernon Demolition Ordinance, the Commission needs to review the request for demolishing that portion of the house. The plans submitted by Mr. Pierce and the information from Jim Engelbrecht, the contractor, indicates that before final construction plans can be completed, the porch needs to be demolished so that proper footings and structure of the porch can be finalized. The columns from the porch and other features of the porch will be saved in the demolition process and will be used on the porch that is being planned. The porch will not be historically accurate as of the building of the house, but it will be historically accurate for the age of the house. Upon motion made by Guy Booth, seconded by Peter Ault, the Commission approves the application for a demolition permit for the portion of the porch that needs to be removed. The motion passed.

A second motion was made to issue a certificate of appropriateness for the planned porch. It is understood by the Commission that final plans for the porch will be submitted to the Commission, but based upon the initial plan for the porch, a certificate of appropriateness is recommended. Upon motion by Suzette Astley, seconded by Susan Hargus, the motion to approve a certificate of appropriateness passed.

The second design review request came from Mike Smith, owner of the Bauman Clothing store building at 124 1<sup>st</sup> St., Mount Vernon, IA. This is in the commercial district. Mike has previously submitted his request for a renovation of the front windows of the store. After earlier consultation, a plan was adopted whereby the windows were to be modified before being replaced. Mike had submitted an application for a Main Street Challenge Grant and he was successful. He has been given a grant of \$25,000 toward the cost of the new windows. Through further research, Mike has determined that he can retain the appearance of the building, and replacement windows can be used that closely match the older windows that need to be replaced.

There will be very little change in the appearance of the front windows, except the west window may be in two panels, rather than one. Mike has previously done significant work on the building and has previously received a Main Street Challenge Grant for work that he has done. Upon motion made by Guy Booth, seconded by Susan Hargus, a certificate of appropriateness for the window renovation was approved.

Under new business, Leah attended the last City Council meeting to give the Annual Report from HPC. During her presentation, she asked the City to consider setting aside space for the artifacts and records of HPC in the new building that is housing the police department. Leah showed pictures of the current archive room and pointed out the defects and the possible dangerous conditions that exist in the room. The counsel had a favorable impression of the request, and it will be considered and acted upon in the future.

Mary Evans reported that the Mount Vernon Lions Club has turned over the 98 years of history of the club to the Commission. Mary has had a chance to go through a good portion of the documents and finds that it has an abundance of relevant historical material. A portion of the documents will be placed on the website. Mary Evans and Grace Chamberlain gave a presentation on our website and our social media effort at the last Lions Club meeting. This prompted the offer from the club to turn over their records to HPC. Mary also indicated she has had a chance to review and organize the material that has been given to HPC that relates to the Bracket family and Bracket house that is owned by Cornell College.

It should be noted that this is the first meeting of HPC since emergency regulations have been put in place regarding the Covid-19 emergency. Because of the requirement for social distancing, the Commission met in the City Council chambers in City Hall and limited the participants to 7 persons.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2020 at 9:15 a.m. The meeting will be held subject to any other changes regarding the Covid-19 emergency.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary