

MINUTES  
OF  
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
April 1, 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall, and also via Zoom on Saturday, April 1, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Sherry Brayton, Mike Guerber, Suzette Astley, Matt Ruff, Duane Eash, and Guy Booth. Attending via Zoom was Janet Budack. There were no guests present for the meeting.

Minutes of the meeting of March 15, 2023 were approved.

There were two design review items on the agenda. However, an application for a certificate of appropriateness was not submitted for either design review request. One request was for 716 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW in the Ash Park District for windows. The other was a request for a Cornell College sign. Because applications for certificate of appropriateness had not been received, a motion was made by Guy Booth, seconded by Mike Guerber that these design review requests be tabled until the next meeting. The motion carried.

Suzette reported that West has requested a leave of absence from the Commission. They have been involved in a new job, and have had Covid so they are trying to catch up on everything. Suzette will talk to them and determine a period of time for the leave of absence.

Duane asked if any of our Commissioners were aware of a bill that is being presented in the state legislature which would restrict cities and/or historic preservation commissions from setting standards. It appears that real estate developers do not want to have historic preservation groups set standards that the developer may disagree with. It does not appear this proposed legislation is going to be completed this year, but all historic preservation groups should be aware of this attack on historic preservation standards that are in existence.

Suzette reported that she has talked with Gordon Lumber to see if they have information on LP Smart Siding. This is a product that has been suggested for repair on damage to the Presbyterian Church. Suzette will attempt to get additional information so the Commission has more familiarity with the product.

The next item of business relates to the adoption of a new application for a certificate of appropriateness. Suzette has worked on the application and has put together requests for additional information that will help both the building owner and the Commission evaluate the request and the type of work that needs to be approved. It was also suggested that a summary of the process for applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness be in printed form so a building owner can obtain that information, either online or at City Hall. Upon motion by Matt Ruff and seconded by Duane Eash, the revised application form for a certificate of appropriateness was approved.

The Commission reviewed several alternatives for the new map for the Ash Park Historic District. After comparing the three submitted designs, it was decided to approve the non-satellite map, as it seemed to be a clearer expression of each of the buildings that needed to be shown on the district map. Upon motion by Mike Guerber and seconded by Duane Eash, the map that was prepared by Jennifer Price will be used for the District.

Guy reported that he has had an additional conversation with Chris Nosbisch regarding the cemetery project. He has also contacted the Mount Vernon City attorney and received a response indicating that the City attorney is working on a review of the request for setting up a non-profit Friends of the Cemetery Corporation.

The Commission discussed the process of updating the design guideline book for our historic districts. We have decided to have professional assistance in putting the book together. There may be a grant available for paying for the cost of the design update. Also, the City may be willing to assist in paying for the update.

There are a number of topics that need to be discussed in the design guideline book. We will need to discuss this with a consultant. Suzette asked us to consider three of the topics. The first would be design for roofs, gutters and downspouts. The Commission felt that roofs needed to be within the guideline design book, but gutters and downspouts do not need to be included. The Commission also indicated that there should be design guidelines for work with masonry structures. Finally, the Commission will want to have design guidelines as it relates to windows and doors. Other topics that need to be in the design guideline book will be discussed at the next meeting.

The historic garden workshop is scheduled for April 15 at the Buresh Community Center. There was discussion as to the best method to record the workshop so it can be placed on our website.

Suzette asked if it would be appropriate to rescind our previously-approved language regarding vinyl windows and other vinyl material. Historic guidelines recommend the use of original material for replacements of windows, and other features on historic buildings. Homeowners do look at vinyl products instead of looking at wood replacement or wood repair. It was decided that the statement regarding the Commission's opinion on vinyl products should be rescinded so that it will be understood that the Commission will review all applications for use of non-original material, and will give a fair hearing. Motion was made by Matt Ruff, seconded by Duane Eash that our previously-accepted materials statement should be rescinded. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary