

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
April 2, 2022

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall, and via Zoom on Saturday, April 2, 2022. Commissioners present at City Hall were Ed Sauter, Mary Evans, Duane Eash, Donnie Moore, Suzette Astley and Guy Booth. Attending via Zoom were Janet Budack, Leah Rogers and Grace Chamberlain. Also present in person was Edith Dawson. Guests at the meeting were Jim Evans and Tom Reding.

The Minutes of the March 5, 2022 meeting were approved.

There were no design review items on the agenda. However, Tom Reding was present to discuss a pre-review matter on signs he is designing for his business known as Vintage 1891.

Mr. Reding indicates that he is going to be installing a hanging sign in the front of his building, which is located at 113 1st St. NW, Mount Vernon. This is an antique business operated by Mr. and Mrs. Reding. Mr. Reding is proposing the installation of a hanging sign in the front of the building, as well as two vertical signs that would be on the side of his building, one at the southeast corner and one at the northeast corner. The two vertical signs will have the word “antique” on them. One sign would be 120” tall, the other less tall. The purpose of the signs is to give greater notice to the antique business that he owns.

Before the Commission can act on the approval of these signs, Mr. Reding will need to have his proposal be reviewed by the City Zoning officer for compliance with the location and size of the signs. A good discussion was held regarding the signs and the Commission generally approves of the concept, but will not make any formal decision until the matter is on the agenda after review by the City Zoning Administrator.

Mary Evans suggested that the Commission participate in the Heritage Days parade in July. She suggested that we could have one or more vintage vehicles in the parade which will identify the historic preservation commission. Mary will continue to look into the development of this idea, which sounds like a good idea to the commissioners in attendance.

Duane Eash has made a suggestion that the Commission begin having educational workshops on historic preservation. These have been done in the past, but not in recent years. Duane is suggesting a workshop on preservation of windows and a second workshop on preservation of porch columns. Duane has expertise in these areas, and is willing to share with the community. He also has other people who can be involved to explain the process of restoring and saving windows and wood porch columns.

It is proposed that the first workshop be presented on May 21 and the second workshop on June 18. Both of the workshops can be held at the Buresh Community Center. There was discussion regarding how to best publicize the workshops. Grace will help with the design of the publication. It is intended to send this information to other historic preservation commissions. It was suggested to see if the workshops can be approved for preservation commission education credits for members who attend. The Commission unanimously supports Duane’s effort to present these two workshops.

Suzette discussed the project to replace and relocate the Lincoln Hwy kiosk. There has been the amount of \$2,500 allocated for this kiosk. Also, Linn County Historic Preservation Commission has granted \$400 to Mount Vernon toward the project. The Lisbon HPC is also working on their own Lincoln Hwy kiosk. They have suggested that we join efforts in applying for a state historic preservation commission grant to cover the remaining expenses for each of the commissions. Suzette will be meeting with the chairperson of the Lisbon HPC to work on these details.

The annual report of HPC will be presented at the Mount Vernon City Council meeting by Suzette on April 4, 2022. The meeting is at 6:30 p.m. She will present a copy of the report that we provided to the State Historic Preservation Commission and will be able to bring the council up to date on our activities.

Suzette also announced that there is a meeting to discuss planning for disaster preparedness and recovery in the event of destructive weather. This will be held in Van Horn, Iowa, but will also be available virtually. Suzette plans on attending the meeting, which is scheduled for April 30, 2022. This is a workshop that is certified for credit toward the annual education requirements.

Donnie Moore asked about the possibility of looking into fundraising activities. He is wondering if our commission can be doing things to raise money that would expand our budget. Because any money that we receive needs to go into the City's account, it goes into the general fund, and does not go into the money that is allotted for the Commission. If we have a fundraising project, we would want to make sure the City will keep the proceeds available for HPC in addition to our budgeted funds. We also would want to make sure it would not be used as a deduction from the amount that is budgeted annually to the Commission.

Under old business, Suzette announced that the letter regarding the preservation of residences on state parks has been sent out. She also announced that there is still one vacancy on the Commission. If anyone has a person they would like to recommend, we can forward the name to Suzette. There is one person who is interested, but her schedule will prevent her from applying until later in the year. She has a very good background in art and would fit in well with the needs of the Commission.

The Commission is funding the development of a play to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the community. Joe Jennison and Amy White have a first draft of the play completed, and are wondering about having a read-through of the script so they can get feedback from the Commission. Suzette will determine what would be a good time to have this reading. The Commission has contributed \$1,500 to the project through the Maurice donation, and \$500 out of our budget. We will need to raise another \$500 to complete the work on the play.

Edith and Mary have been working together on an index of the archives. This should help locate items from the archives, as well as give a complete list of what is available. Mary indicates there were two requests for information that she responded to during the past month. She also had questions about a form that might be used to evaluate proposed donated items. The Commission agrees it is important to know what is an item that can be accepted, depending on the nature of the item, as well as the size and whether we have appropriate storage room.

Grace gave an update on the audio tour. It has been transferred to a new app that she hopes to launch within the next month. As soon as it is ready to go, it was suggested that the Commission take the audio tour so they are familiar with how it is used and the information that is presented.

The Commission took time to congratulate Edith on being a contestant in the national spelling bee contest. She will be going to Washington, DC for the national finals at the end of May. We wish her well.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary