

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
April 3, 2021

The Historic Preservation Commission met via Zoom on Saturday, April 3, 2021 at 9:15 a.m. Members present on Zoom were Leah Rogers, Janet Budack, Suzette Astley, Mary Evans, Grace Chamberlain, Susan Hargus, Donnie Moore, Ed Sauter, Duane Eash, Angie Bauman Power, and Guy Booth. Guests included Scott Ladwig from Cornell College and Jason Bersch from Mortensen Construction. An additional guest was Hugh Lifson.

The Minutes of the meeting of March 17, 2021 have been amended pursuant to request by Mary Evans. The amended Minutes were approved.

Cornell College asked for design review for work being done on College Hall. Scott Ladwig described the initiation of the renovation of the building. It currently consists of work on the interior, which has included the removal of some asbestos that has been discovered. There will be demolition of walls, and repair of stairways. Hugh Lifson asked about the preservation of the main entrances to the building. Scott Ladwig indicates that the historical configuration of the entrances will be maintained. Upon motion by Suzette Astley, seconded by Donnie Moore, a certificate of appropriateness was approved for the exterior work on the building.

Leah indicated that she has had additional contact with John Heider, owner of RIP, Ltd. He has expressed concern regarding the size of the cemetery and the amount of time it will take to do his assessment. Leah indicates it may be more economical to have the cemetery gravesites photographed and located with that information being forwarded to RIP, Ltd. She indicates members of the Commission can help, and she is willing to have staff members from her company be involved. Guy mentioned that he will be scheduling a meeting with Kevin Woods and Mike Woods from the American Legion. It is quite possible that they will be able to contribute toward the expense of the cemetery assessment.

Mary Evans indicates that the archival room for HPC is near completion. The carpeting has been installed. The City is now measuring for shelving which will then be installed.

Mary also reported on the website. An early settlor by the name of Virgil Crofter had been the subject of a program about the early settlement of the area. This had been prepared and presented by Caroline Wellso a number of years ago. This information was on the website which was discovered by some descendants of Virgil Crofter. They have made contact with our website and with Mary Evans and Mary noted a spike in contact with the website, which may be from the Crawford family.

Guy Booth noted under old business that he has had a conference with Joe Jennison, Director of the CDG. Joe Jennison indicates he has been aware of the concerns of the business district business owners, and has been attempting to reach out by having personal contact with each business owner on a regular basis. He feels that this contact has been helpful. Guy asked Susan Hargus if she had any additional feedback from merchants who are still dissatisfied. This information will be helpful to get back to CDG. Joe Jennison also suggested that HPC consider

having a person serve on, or as a liaison to CDG. Guy indicated he would volunteer for that liaison position.

Suzette Astley indicates that Linn County Historical Preservation Commission has a grant program for projects in Linn County. She has prepared an application for a grant of \$5,000 to help cover the expense of restoration of the front window in the Visitor's Center. This would return the window to its original appearance. Suzette has talked with Chris Nosbish, City Administrator, and they have received an estimate for the cost of approximately \$11,800. If we can be successful in obtaining a \$5,000 grant from the Linn County Preservation Commission, the City would be willing to provide the remaining funds for the restoration. Suzette has submitted the grant application and indicates we should hear by June 1.

The Lincoln Highway Association is making an attempt to update and in some cases, relocate the Lincoln Highway interpretive signs. Leah, Ed Sauter and Dick Thomas were instrumental in placement of the signs ten or so years ago. The signs were set up in kiosks that were constructed by boy scouts. It is determined they would be more effective if placed lower to the ground. In Mount Vernon, the interpretive sign is located near the trestle bridge, but is in what is called Water Park. It is not readily observable. After discussion, it was determined that the new sign can be placed on the west end of the trestle bridge. It will be updated so it is providing information to the public. Most of the discussion revolved around the best location for the sign. Some members felt that the sign would be seen by more people if it were placed in Memorial Park. It was finally determined that it would be best to have the sign placed at the trestle bridge which has been preserved and is designated as a historical site. We may attempt to prepare a sign for Memorial Park that recognizes it is on the Lincoln Highway, and that the interpretive sign is now located at the west end of the trestle bridge.

Under other new business, the outreach program to highlight various houses in Mount Vernon will be re-established with the program being presented at the Buresh Center. It is hoped that this program can be rescheduled to start early in the summer. Donnie Moore has volunteered to dress as Elijah Waln, the original owner of the property on which the Wolfe house is located. It is possible that Donnie's residence, which is in Candlestick Addition, may be located on what was the original 40 acres deeded to Waln from the United States. Once it is determined that the program can be scheduled for the public, we will provide more public information.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2021 if needed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary