

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
May 17, 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Duane Eash, Janet Budack, Wade Squiers, Sherry Brayton, Matt Ruff, Donnie Moore, Mike Guerber and Guy Booth. Guests included Mariah Andrews; Mr. Casebolt, Greg Raupp, and Judith Smith were present via Zoom.

Minutes of the meeting of the April 29, 2023 were approved.

There are several design review requests for this meeting. The first request is an application for a new roof at 116 10th Ave SW. The application for a certificate of approval was administered by Sue Astley as Chairperson of the Commission. Guy Booth moved to approve of a motion of no material effect for the roof. It is a standard roof with similar roofing material that was previously on the structure. The motion was seconded by Janet Budack and the motion carried.

A design review request was submitted to the Commission for the gas station located at the corner of 10th Avenue SW and 1st Street SW. The gas station has been in existence at that location for many years. It has recently changed hands and distributor and a new sign advertising Amoco petroleum products is planned for the site. There was a good deal of discussion as to the location of the sign, the size of the sign, and the illumination of the sign. A new standard for support of the sign is to be constructed in the northeast corner of the property, adjacent to 1st Street SW. The concern was whether the size of the sign, the illumination from the sign, and the location of the sign all are compliant with the Mount Vernon Zoning and Sign Ordinances. Motion was made by Matt Ruff, seconded by Wade Squiers to approve a certificate of no material effect, subject to compliance with all aspects of the Mount Vernon sign ordinance. The motion was approved.

The next design review request comes from Jude Smith and Greg Raupp, the new owners of the building at 100 1st Street SE, which is in the historic commercial district. The new owners are requesting to cover the old sign on the front of the building, which advertised the Sing-A-Long Café, and instead to have the simple statement of 1st on 1st. The backing of the sign will be in a dark gray color with the lettering being in white. The owners also request the approval for a new front door to the building. Upon motion by Wade Squiers, seconded by Sherry Brayton, a certificate of appropriateness for the sign and the front door was proposed and the motion carried. The front door is being replaced so it will meet zoning requirements to open to the outside, not the inside, and the door will be a commercial grade door with the same window space as the previous door.

The hanging sign, which is in the front west corner of the building is going to be redone to advertise the new uses for the building. The sign will use the same bracket and will be of the same size. The sign will extend over the sidewalk and will be parallel to 1st Avenue. Upon motion by Matt Ruff, seconded by Wade Squiers, the motion was approved for a certificate of appropriateness.

The final discussion about an exterior change to the building was led by Mariah Andrews, who is a co-owner of the new café that will go in on the first floor of the building. Mariah displayed copies of projected signage for the front of the building. She indicated the design preference of the owners, which shows the name of the café being The Plantiful Pantry in goldish letters, while additional lettering will be in a gray color. Upon motion by Janet Budack, seconded by Wade Squiers, the Commission approved a certificate of no material effect for the signs.

Guy Booth gave a report on the proceedings regarding the application for a certificate of appropriateness submitted by Shane Amundson. This has taken up a good deal of meeting time, both with HPC and with the City Council. A letter of explanation has been prepared to share with the City Council as to issues regarding the procedures followed, and a review of the ordinances that should govern both HPC and the City Council when these departments are dealing with an application for a certificate of appropriateness in an historic district. The letter identifies the meaningful ordinance language that should be followed, and the letter points out where the actions of the City Council may not have been in compliance with the ordinances. The letter also points out that HPC is hopeful of having better communication with applicants, that applicants will better understand the application process, and finally, that the City Council understands its role if it is to be serving as an appeals court for decisions made by HPC. Upon motion made by Matt Ruff, seconded by Wade Squiers, it was agreed a copy of the letter should be sent to Mount Vernon City Council, and that the letter should be part of the Minutes of the Commission. The motion carried.

There was discussion by Commissioners regarding scheduling HPC meetings. The members desire to have a schedule of meetings that allow members to be available. It is recognized that there are occasions when meeting times need to be changed or added, depending on various circumstances. All members felt they needed as much advance notice as possible on meeting dates, or change of meeting dates, so the meetings do not interfere with the activities that are otherwise scheduled by Commissioners.

Janet Budack gave a quick report on what is happening with the Mount Vernon Cemetery Project. Guy Booth explained a response had come from the City Attorney, but there still are issues that need to be cleared up. Guy indicates he will follow up with the City Attorney on the issues of insurance, as well as approval of the concept of a non-profit corporation being formed for purposes of supporting the cemetery.

It was announced that Duane Eash will be doing a seminar on painting old houses. This would include types of paint, colors, and the preparation that should be made when older structures are being painted. The seminar will be at the Buresh Center on May 20 at 10:00 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary