

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
June 14, 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall on Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Suzette Astley, Janet Budack, Michael Guerber, Duane Eash, Wade Squiers, Matt Ruff, and Guy Booth. A friend of the Commission, Edith Dawn attended via Zoom. Guests present were Mike Smith, Jordan Smith, Mindy Lingel and Nathan Countryman from the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Sun.

Minutes of the meeting of May 31, 2023 were approved.

The main agenda item for the meeting is the application for demolition of a structure filed by Jordan Smith. The Jordan Smith residence was severely damaged by a fire and appears to be a total loss. Jordan indicates that all of the structure will be demolished, but there is still an unresolved question as to whether this will include the foundation.

Pursuant to the Mount Vernon Demolition Ordinance, because this residence is in the Cornell College Historic District, the Commission needs to determine whether the house is a contributing structure to the District. A review of the records establishing the Cornell College District, it was determined that the house was built in 1959 and in the nomination of the district, is labeled as an intrusion in the District and has not been identified as an historic structure. There is no question that the structure is totally damaged and needs to be demolished. Therefore, upon motion made by Matt Ruff and seconded by Duane Eash, the application for demolition is approved. The approved motion determines that the demolition permit may be issued immediately and does not require any further waiting.

Discussion continued regarding the future of this property. Jordan intends to build a new house on the site, and has requested input from the Commission as to what he needs to do in developing plans for his new house. The Commission encourages Jordan to visit with the Commission as he is developing plans for the new house. He and Mindy, who is a resident in the house, desire to have the structure be an acceptable addition to the Historic District. The Commission is willing to offer suggestions, but let Jordan know that because it will be a new structure, the Commission can not dictate the design concept. A question also arose regarding the placement of a sidewalk as a new home is built. The sidewalk decision will be dictated by the Mount Vernon Building Code, and not necessarily by the Historic Preservation guidelines.

Duane Eash reported that he had a good experience attending the summer historic preservation meeting in Sioux City. He thought it was very worthwhile. Next summer's annual meeting will be held in Mount Pleasant, so it will be more available to our Commission members. Duane also indicated that work was being done on the signage for Lincoln Highway. The actual sign has not as yet been ordered.

There being no other business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Commission is tentatively scheduled for July 1, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary