

MINUTES  
OF  
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
July 20, 2022

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall, and via Zoom on Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Janet Budack, Mary Evans, Duane Eash, Suzette Astley, and Guy Booth. Leah Rogers was present via Zoom.

The Minutes of the July 2, 2022 meeting were approved.

The first design review request comes from Aaron Thurn for new siding on his residence at 610 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW. This residence is in the Cornell College Historic District. The exterior of the home was damaged during the derecho, and the insurance company indicated that the siding on the structure had been damaged to the extent it needs replacement. The house had white vinyl siding. It has been replaced with a dark gray vinyl siding. The City of Mount Vernon has issued a building permit for the new siding. However, before HPC has been able to review the matter, the siding contractor came to the site and completed their work. Upon motion by Guy Booth, seconded by Duane Eash, a certificate of no material effect was issued.

The second design review request comes from the City of Mount Vernon through the Mount Vernon Lisbon Community Theater. In 2021, the City requested that there be changes made to the gazebo in Memorial Park. Memorial Park is also in the Cornell Historic District. This year's request is asking that the thrust stage that was built and removed last year can be reattached for this year's production of the Shakespeare play. There is no change to the structure. Because it is intended to be an annual production with the stage modifications being temporary for the production, the Commission discussed whether or not the City needs to make an annual request for approval. The Commission feels that so long as there are no other changes being made, our initial approval of the construction will continue in effect on an annual basis. The Commission would like to have the City indicate when the play will be produced and the temporary stage will be involved.

Upon motion by Duane Eash, seconded by Janet Budack, the Commission has again approved a certificate of no material effect.

Suzette brought up a topic regarding new construction on a vacant lot on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW. The lot has not been sold, but one potential buyer has asked informally if there are any guidelines for a new structure to be built in the Ash Park Historic District. The Commission is bound by the building code that is in effect for Mount Vernon. However, the Commissioners agreed that it would be appropriate for any potential builder to discuss how a new structure can fit into the historic nature of the district. Because of the size of the lot, this will be a smaller residential structure. We hope we can find a source for designs of smaller homes.

The Commission had a discussion regarding the process of revising our design guidelines. Everyone agrees that this needs to be done. The question came to whether we should hire a professional to review and propose additions to the guidelines, or if the Commission itself should review guidelines from other cities and compare them to our own before a person is hired to do the revision. There seems to be a consensus that before we hire a person to help with the project, that the Commissioners themselves become familiar with our

guidelines and compare them to one or two other cities. It is also important that we be looking for a grant, not only to help pay for the professional help, but also to digitize the guidelines once we have them revised. Suzette has done an excellent job in determining what grants may be available and who could be hired to help us to the completion of this project.

Duane and Mary and others have been looking at projects that have been completed within the past year or two that may be candidates for historic preservation awards. A list of finalists for the awards will be presented at the next meeting and award winners will be selected.

Suzette has followed up on the Commissions concerns about the construction of the Hilltop Pocket Park. It has been determined that the metal structure of the renovation has been attached directly into the bricks. This is counter to any approved methods of attaching any elements to brick buildings as set forth in the secretary of interior directives. Suzette will contact the Mount Vernon Arts Council so they are aware of our concern. It will also be necessary to make sure the City is aware that a certificate of appropriateness must be obtained from the Commission before construction begins on the Pocket Park, which will be in the alley on the north side of 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

Janet Budack indicates that the people on the Commission who are working with the Mount Vernon Cemetery will get together and visit with Jay Kacina. Mr. Kacina is involved in a statewide association regarding cemeteries, and especially cemeteries that are owned by individual cities.

Mary Evans reported that a number of photographs have been given to the Commission regarding the Burge/Wilcox properties.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary