

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
August 30, 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall on Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Sherry Brayton, Mike Guerber, Matt Ruff, Suzette Astley, Wade Squiers, Duane Eash and Guy Booth. There were no guests present at the meeting.

Minutes of the meeting of the August 16, 2023 meeting were approved.

A design review request was made by Matthew and Marisha Fenner for a wooden picket fence on a portion of their property located at 620 6th Ave. NW, Mount Vernon, Iowa. This property is in the Ash Park Historic District. The proposed fence will be parallel with 7th St. and will connect between the residence and garage. The proposed construction is wood pickets. The application did not indicate if the fence was going to be painted. The building permit request indicates that the fence meets the provisions of the Mount Vernon Zoning Ordinance.

Upon motion by Duane Eash, seconded by Wade Squiers, a certificate of appropriateness was approved.

The next agenda item consists of continuing review of the proposed change to the Commission's application for a certificate of appropriateness. The revision of the application has been suggested by Mount Vernon City Council, and is deemed necessary by the Commission so an applicant will be required to give specific information about the proposed work on a structure in the historic district. Sue has put together a proposal for the revised application. The proposed application request specific information about the work to be done, the material to be used, the conformance with the Historic Preservation standards, and an estimate of the time to complete the project. Sue indicates that Chris Nobsch has requested that we advise of the length of time that a building permit is effective. He also indicates the application should indicate that all projects are subject to the Mount Vernon Zoning Code. Sue will add language that has been suggested so the application form can be reviewed a final time before adoption by the Commission. It is felt that the specific information requested will give the Commission a more complete understanding of the proposed project and how the project complies with the design standards of the City, as well as the design standards of the Secretary of Interior standards.

Sue reported on the progress toward hiring a consultant to prepare a new design review booklet for the Commission. She has had conversations with several potential consultants who have done work for cities of similar size. An initial estimate from one of the consultants would be a price in the area of \$12,000. Before a request for proposal is officially sent out, the Commission will continue to determine what needs to be included in the design guideline booklet and also will need to present to the City a request for funding of the work. A presentation of the need for a new design guideline booklet, and the estimated cost will be presented to the City Council for approval.

It was announced that the Lester Buresh Center will be having two presentations regarding Mount Vernon history. The first will be presented by Bob Meeker and is entitled Photographic History of Mount Vernon. Bob is a former HPC member, and as a teacher, had a

unit each year encouraging students to do an in-depth history study about Mount Vernon and prepare a project for display. The second lecture will be presented by Amy White and Joe Jennison. They will be talking about the production of the play that was underwritten by HPC and the Maurice Trust. These lectures are held at LBC on Thursday afternoons. These two lectures will be in September. Guy Booth reported that there has been no progress on the cemetery project. The City attorney has not responded to a letter requesting information to determine if the City has set up a perpetual cemetery trust, which is authorized by the state code. If this trust is established, it can serve the same purpose of a non-profit corporation, which has previously been proposed, and may be less expensive to undertake, as the City would have authority to oversee the trust and to accept donations and make expenditures from the trust.

There was a brief discussion regarding the historic preservation brochure that has been published previously. This document should be made available to people who live in the historic districts, or are anticipating buying property in the historic districts. It is an excellent informational statement. We will determine how we can make this brochure more available to the public.

The next meeting of HPC will be held September 13, 2023 if a meeting is necessary.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary