

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
February 1, 2025

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall on Saturday, February 1, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.. Commissioners present at City Hall were Mary Evans, Donnie Moore, Duane Eash, Randy Brown, Sue Astley, Wade Squiers, Guy Booth and Edith Dawson.

Minutes of the December 7, 2024 meeting were approved.

The first topic of discussion at this meeting concerns what is happening with the audio tour that has been in effect for a number of years. The audio tour has been available on a telephone communication platform. Buildings that are included on the tour have a sign on the front of the building that indicates how to dial in to the audio tour and to get information regarding the building. The annual cost of having this feature in effect is \$1,500. The cost has been shared by HPC, Cornell College, and CDG. Both Cornell and CDG have decided to discontinue funding the program. There were 22 callers that used the system in 2024. The use of this program is discontinued as of this date.

Sue indicates there may be alternatives that are substantially less expensive. Cornell students have reworked the tour and have updated it for the buildings. The reworked program may be available on the internet, and we will continue to determine how we can keep the information from the audio tour available to visitors to the community. This may require a change to the signs that are on each building to give directions for access to the information. Sue will continue to work with CDG and Cornell to determine what will be an effective, but more economical program that identifies the historic buildings in the tour. A motion was made by Mary Evans, seconded by Randy Brown, to cancel our financial contract with On-Call for the existing audio tour. The motion carried.

There was continued discussion to determine what would be a good way to make sure the information that had been on the audio tour could be digitized so that it can be printed and various buildings could have a printed copy of the audio information.

Sue reports that Cornell College is close to finalizing plans for the work to repair King Chapel. Evidently, there has been approval by FEMA for some of the funding. Also, it is assumed the insurance on the building will be available. Scott Ladwig, from Cornell College, will organize a meeting with Historic Preservation to give more information on the plans that are now in effect.

Sue indicates that we will be trying to clean and preserve the 1910 glass negatives. Christine Flavin will be providing instruction as to the proper method for cleaning and preserving the negatives.

The City has now signed the contract for the new design guideline book that will be prepared by JMT. JMT will be wanting to schedule a site visit, which would include a meeting with the Commission. Sue will keep us informed as to when this site visit will be scheduled. We discussed how the Commission will review and have input into the project. Our subcommittee will continue to be available for review of any draft proposal. It was suggested that when a draft proposal is ready, that it be sent to all Commission members so there is

additional input and help from the full Commission. It was also decided that we should determine if there will be additional costs if JMT adds sign guidelines. If we have guidelines for signage, we will need to coordinate these guidelines with the current city ordinance for signage.

Mary Evans gave an update on the Preservation Commission's archives. She has prepared a comprehensive list of archival material that is in the possession of the Commission at City Hall. She will have the inventory list added to our website so people are able to discover what background material and archives are available.

Mary also reported on the activities of the cemetery committee. John Hider, from Illinois, will be in town to work on 11 grave sites of deceased veterans. This will happen in warmer weather. The costs of these markers is being paid for by the American Legion Post. There have been two graves of veterans from the war of 1812 that will get new markers. These are for veterans by the name of Holman and Mitchell. Plans are also being made for replacement markers for other veterans graves that have deteriorated. Finally, the cemetery committee has determined what trees and bushes need to be removed that have otherwise been encroaching onto grave sites and what portions of the fencing needs removal/replacement.

Randy Brown and Mary Evans indicate that the digitization of all editions of the Mount Vernon newspaper is nearing completion. There are very few editions that have not been found.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary