

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
April 16, 2025

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall on Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present were Mary Evans, Duane Eash, Randy Brown, Sue Astley, Sherry Brayton, Mike Guerber, Wade Squiers, and Guy Booth. Guests present included Nathan Countryman from the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Sun, Scott Allen of OPN Architects, and Kelly Flege - Vice President for finance at Cornell College. Present via Zoom were Julie Barnes of Cornell College, Jason Berch of OPN architects, and Lori Cole of JMT.

Minutes of the April 5, 2025 meeting were approved.

The first item of business was a report from Lori Cole, Vice President at JMT. She indicates there has been a shift in personnel at JMT so she wanted to keep our commission advised as to the personnel at JMT that we are working with. Carolyn Gimbal will be joining the team that is working with our commission along with Angela Jimenez. Lori mentioned how much the team that visited Mount Vernon in March was impressed with the community. JMT is a large company that has a presence throughout the United States. Consequently, there is a change of personnel and staffing from time to time, but JMT has a solid focus on the design review guideline work they are doing for us. Lori appeared via Zoom to give her introduction and report.

Scott Allen of OPN Architects and Kelly Flege, Vice President of finance at Cornell, were present to give a report on the progress of the work to be done on King Chapel at Cornell College. They were scheduled for design review before the Commission.

Joining Scott and Kelly were Julie Barnes of Cornell and Jason Bersch of OPN, both on zoom. Julie has been instrumental in working on the application with FEMA for repair funding that was a result of the derecho.

Scott Allen gave a slide presentation showing the nature of phases of the work to be done to restore King Chapel. The undertaking is massive. The initial phase of the project (Phase 1A) will prepare the working platforms that will stabilize the building. This would include injecting grout into portions of the building to stabilize and strengthen supports. He also discussed the use of steel trusses to hold the building together. This is basically the part of the project that ensures the stability of the structure.

Phase 1B will work on stabilization of the shell of the building. This includes steel trusses, a new roof, new ceilings and insulation. New windows have been designed for installation where rotted wood needs to be replaced. The framing of the new windows will be aluminum. The original stained glass windows, which have been removed for the construction project will be replaced in the building. Phase 1B also will work on recreating original cast-iron metal work and other architectural features that are original to the building.

Phase 2 will deal with a new canopy roof and entrance to the building, as well as working on new doors and windows. Further, Phase 2 will deal with the interior of the building on the first floor, the auditorium, and the upper level of the chapel. Construction work should begin in

the very near future. Scott Allen indicates that the reconstruction and repair will take approximately two years.

Of interest to the Commission was how all of this work will be organized and how construction, as well as identifying companies that can work on historical features, will be managed. Scott has had experience in finding craftsmen for this work.

Scott also gave an indication of the cost of the project. The current estimates would be that Phase 1A will have a budget of \$4,823,605. Phase 1B has a budget of \$8,029,857. Phase 2 has a budget of \$12,902,510. The funding is in place. It comes from the College's insurance company, from FEMA, and from the generosity of patrons of Cornell College. Scott also indicates there will be tax credits available for funding the project.

The most critical start-up phase of the project relates to stabilizing the structure with a new support system. As this is completed, work can progress in the other areas. The Project Manual that was presented to the commission includes the detail as to what will be done during the reconstruction phase. The work will require a building permit to be approved by Linn County Building Dept. and Mount Vernon Building Dept. A motion to approve a certificate of appropriateness for Phase 1A, Phase 1B and Phase 2 was made by Guy Booth. The motion was seconded by Wade Squiers. The motion passed unanimously. Sue will issue the certificate of appropriateness.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary