MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
November 7, 2026

The Historic Preservation Commission met at Mount Vernon City Hall on Saturday, November 7, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners present at City Hall were Sherry Brayton, Mary Evans, Danielle Kumley, Grace Chamberlain, Kim Benesh and Guy Booth. Absent were Donald Moore and Michael Guerber. Guests at the meeting were Chris Nosbisch, Leigh Bradbury and Nathan Countryman.

Upon motion made by Grace Chamberlain, seconded by Danielle Kumley, the Minutes of the October 3, 2026 meeting were approved.

There were no design review applications to be considered at today's meeting.

Chris Nosbisch, the Mount Vernon City Manager, was present to discuss the City/Historic Preservation Commissions interactions during the recent past. Chris wanted to present information from the City's perspective, which will help the Commission operate effectively and within the scope of their authority, both within the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and within the responsibilities it has as a unit of the City government. The Historic Preservation Comision is designated as a is a certified local government, which makes it part of the City of Mount Vernon governing bodies.

In particular, Chris mentioned that the Commission does need to advise the City of contracts that the Commission desires to enter into. In particular, if the Commission desires to hire a person to help in a Commission project, or if the Commission is interested in assisting in obtaining grants for projects that are being undertaken by the Commission, it is necessary to review these proposals with the City before commitments are made to any potential company or person that is being hired to complete an HPC-assisted project. In particular, if there is an application for grants, or if the Commission desires to assist an entity in becoming eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places, this information should be given to the City before the application process gets underway. Chris did mention that it is recommended that if the Commission will be undergoing an expense in excess of $500, that his office should be notified in advance.

Chris also reminded Commission members that Commissioners should remember that they act as a full commission and that inquiries about the necessity of a certificate of appropriateness should be directed to the chairperson as the question may become an agenda item at a later date. Commission members should also encourage persons with questions to consult the new guidelines, as well as look at the HPC website to fully understand the procedures necessary if a repair or renovation project will require a building permit. The Commission appreciates the assistance of Chris in helping clarify the working relationship between his office, the City Council and the Commission. His remarks were very helpful in helping the Commission better understand the working of the Commission within the structure of the City of Mount Vernon government umbrella.

Randy Brown had prepared and presented information about the history of Mount Vernon's HPC and the structure and responsibilities that we have as a certified local government. This draws together the basics from the National Historic Preservation movement, the state

Historic Preservation office and our local HPC. Randy pointed out work that we must do as a Commission, and how, as a Commission, we can see that the community understands and appreciates the necessity of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. It is important that property owners in the historic districts are aware of how historic preservation and our guidelines affect their use and maintenance of properties subject to the guidelines. Randy also suggested that in most instances, he wants to have applications for a certificate of appropriateness submitted at least 72 hours before the meeting where the application would be considered. This allows Commissioners adequate time to be familiar with the application and receive sufficient information that a decision can be made promptly. We can request further information if necessary.

It was asked that Randy have the power point presentation be printed so the members of the Commission, and especially new members who come onto the Commission, will have this very complete summary of the purpose and functioning of the Commission available to them.

As further information, Randy presented a list of Commission goals for the remainder of this fiscal year. Attached to the Minutes is a list of goals to be considered. In particular, we need to update our inventory of historic structures in the City. In addition to his listed goals, Randy suggested that the Commission have a five-year plan so the work of the Commission can identify longer-term objectives.

An issue that is important to the Commission was brought up by Grace, Kim, Danielle and Mary. This concerns the copying of and preserving the Mount Vernon City Council Minutes from 1880 through 1899. The cover of the book that contains these Minutes is in disrepair. Also, the paper is very fragile. It is suggested that the book be scanned for preservation purposes, as the Minutes do provide an irreplaceable history of the City.

Upon motion by Guy Booth, seconded by Mary Evans, the Commission will continue to investigate the appropriate method to have these City Council records be scanned and preserved, and that we attempt to find a company that has the ability to copy the material so it is then accessible to people who are researching the history of Mount Vernon. The motion passed unanimously. Once a company is identified, and we are able to determine what preservation efforts are needed for the original documents, this matter will come before the Commission for final approval.

Mary Evans reported that the Bob Horton photographs have been copied and are now on a flash drive. These will be placed on the Commission website. However, the issue that is unresolved is what should be done with the negatives that have now been copied. Randy points out that we are not a historic society, but instead, an historic preservation commission. We do not have the ability to store numerous historic artifacts. Grace suggests that we have a subcommittee to study the role of HPC in receiving, copying and/or storing donated material. It is agreed that we will proceed to study this issue so a written policy that sets forth our position on accepting or rejecting historic material is in place.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:50.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary