

MINUTES  
OF  
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Saturday, May 10, 2014

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Saturday, May 10, 2014 at 9:15 a.m. Commission members present included Dick Thomas, Andrew Mlynarczyk, Sarah Kelly, Patty Westerkamp, Ashley Anthony, Ed Sauter, and Guy Booth.

Minutes of the April 5, 2014 meeting were presented and were approved upon motion by Sarah Kelly and Ed Sauter.

Design review this morning related to a request by Cornell College for review of the renovation of dormitories. Both Rorem and Pauly dormitories were constructed in the 1960's. The college is going to renovate both dormitories which will include new windows, new doors and entrances, a patio area for the entrances, a redesign of the retaining walls and green space for the buildings, as well as making the buildings ADA accessible and more efficient. The plans presented by Cornell seem to maintain the theme of the buildings and present a well thought-out update of the buildings. Joel Miller, Doug Elsbury, and Steve Kanere represented the presentation by Cornell. They presented printed material to show the current condition of the buildings that need to be updated, as well as the proposed plans. Upon motion made by Ed Sauter, seconded by Dick Thomas, a certificate of no material effect was approved for the project. Cornell will also be doing a similar project for two additional dormitories, and they will make a presentation when the work on the renovation is to begin. It was pointed out that the college has not received final approval by the county building department, and it should be recognized that the approval of the certificate of no material effect is contingent upon the Linn County Building Department approving the plans.

Joel Miller was also questioned about the condition of Platner House. He understands that the commission is concerned about the deterioration of the building. He appreciates the input of the commission, as he has been advocating the renovation of the building. Mr. Miller indicates that there will be maintenance work done on the porch of the building this summer, and it is hoped that financing will be available to complete the exterior and interior renovation of the property within the next year.

Al Recalde, from Cornell College, presented information regarding banners the college intends to have prepared to hang from various lamp posts around the campus. The banners are based upon a theme that is being put together by Cornell, and appear to be both colorful and informative in developing the area of the campus. A vote was not needed regarding the proposed banners to be installed by the college.

Dick Thomas indicated that everything is in place to initiate the restoration of the Micky Woods mural. The conservator from Madison, Wisconsin, Anthony Kartsonas, will be in Mount Vernon during the week of May 26 to pick up the mural so it can be taken to his studio in Madison, WI.

Upon motion made by Ed Sauter, seconded by Ashley Anthony, the contract with Mr. Kartsonas was approved, as well as the approval to pay the first installment of the contract.

In various items of old business, it was indicated that Chalk the Walk was successful. Hugh Lifson's work regarding a recognition of World War I was well-done. The cemetery records project is under way and is being administered by the personnel at City Hall. The demolition ordinance has been submitted to the Planning & Zoning Commission. They have not met as yet. When they do meet, we will have a representative available to discuss the need for the ordinance.

Dick Thomas indicates that we have not identified a summer intern as yet. He is working with the library at Cornell College to identify a student who is going to be interning with the library who could also be working with Historic Preservation in updating the computer work. There is a member of the library staff with good knowledge of the work that needs to be done to transfer our current website into the new website that will be used.

Dick Thomas gave a report on the Preservation Iowa Summit which will be held August 22, 2014. We are scheduled to have 75 minutes of presentation time on August 22. Dick Thomas, Ed Sauter, and Leah Rogers will be involved in doing the presentation. We are hopeful that our website and access to historic records will be up and running for the presentation. Dick indicated that the bus tour of Mount Vernon will be divided into three segments. One will be a self-guided tour of Mount Vernon's historic districts. The second will be a downtown district discussion of the architectural features of downtown, as well as the preservation efforts that have been made. The third part of the tour will be designed for the more specific presentation of recycling historical space. The Mount Vernon/Lisbon CDG will be involved in helping with the bus tour.

Ed Sauter indicates that the porch tour program is scheduled for September 21. The houses selected are mainly in the Ash Park District. Marty Mitchel will be in charge of the art exhibit side of the program. Ashley Anthony will be in charge of food that will be available during the day. Dick Thomas and Ed Sauter are both involved in giving lectures regarding the importance of porches in the turn of the century period of Mount Vernon as well as maintenance and repair issues.

Dick Thomas indicated that Janet Budack will be the lead person on the National Register Properties survey. It is hoped that structures that are eligible for the national register will move in that direction with the proper encouragement of the commission.

Dick Thomas indicated that some of the work to be done on converting our current website into the new website will be assisted by Diane Ozmun. She may be able to get some of the technical work done at times other than at formal board meetings.

Leah Rogers has volunteered to work with the Lisbon Historic Group to put together an article for the Mount Vernon/Lisbon newspaper which will highlight the fact that May is national historic preservation month.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m. The next meeting will be held July 5, 2014.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary