

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Saturday, May 18, 2013

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Saturday, May 18, 2013 at 9:16 a.m. The meeting was called to order by Dick Thomas. Present were Dick Thomas, Pat Westerkamp, Ed Sauter, Mary Iber, Hugh Lifson, Sue Hargus, Janet Budack, Sarah Kelly, Leah Rogers and Guy Booth. Also present was Jennifer Price. Visitors for the meeting included Matt and Chelsea Nelson.

A pre-review consultation was provided for Hal Dendurant, who is interested in putting new steps at the rear of his house at 708 8th Ave. NW. Mr. Dendurant displayed the area of the house where the steps will be and gave a brief description of his ideas for the new steps. He was interested in getting recommendations from the Commission. It was suggested that his contractor look at the existing porch for the main entrance to the house to see what can be replicated for the steps at the rear of the house. Mr. Dendurant will put together final plans and will be applying for a building permit.

Guy Booth reported that the demolition ordinance is moving forward. The City Attorney has reviewed the proposed ordinance and has done some revision on it. There are several questions regarding what standards are used to determine economic hardship, as well as the guideline standards for historic preservation. A copy of the ordinance was distributed to the commission members for review at the next meeting.

A report on the website indicates that Luke has 95% of our photographs and artifacts on the website. There are still some items that need to be scanned in. We will continue to work on getting the website as complete as possible.

Hugh Lifson indicated that he has made contact with Peggy Van Witt of Kansas City, who may be available to serve as a conservator for the project. She is fairly busy this summer, so we will move forward in the fall when she may have more time to consider what needs to be completed.

Mary Iber discussed the newspaper digitization project. She indicates the digitization has been completed and all the newspapers beginning in 1868 to present are now available. There are also some papers that date back to 1860. It was discussed what is the best way to access the site and to get information from the papers. Mary has suggestions for the company that has done the work to make it more user-friendly and more accurate, and they are willing to continue to work on the project.

Dick Thomas brought up the issue of the composition of the commission, as well as making a decision to appoint a new chairperson. A number of commissioners suggested names of people who may be interested in applying to be a commissioner. We have one opening at this time and may have another one in the near future. Members of the commission were encouraged to visit with people they know who may have an

interest and encourage them to fill out an application and submit it to City Hall. Additional good news is that Leah has indicated she will consider being chairperson starting later in the year.

Jennifer Price, who has been hired to update the downtown historic district gave her report. It has been concluded that we are not able to expand the number of buildings in the district. Jennifer has been able to put together a good deal of information to update the record since the district was completed. She indicates there has been a lot of change, and it has been quite positive. There are no other buildings of significance that could be added to the district, however. She will complete her report and submit it to the commission. It is possible that we can put portions of the report onto the website.

Leah Rogers indicated that Abbe Creek School is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The school has been known by many names over the years but is identified on its signage as Abbe Creek School. Leah also indicated that the Linn County Survey and Evaluation of selected historic archaeological and architectural properties has included the Highway 1 corridor through Mount Vernon. She distributed copies of the evaluation and has requested that the commission members read it. She also distributed a form which will allow each of the commissioners to report the amount of time they have contributed toward review of the project. These should be turned in as this will be necessary to have matching funds be paid for the work that has been done.

Under old business, Hugh Lifson gave a report on the Chalk the Walk picture. He also suggested that next year, he should do a picture of President Obama kissing Gusti Kollman when Obama visited the campus last fall. There is plenty of time between now and Chalk the Walk to finalize these plans. Mary indicated that she and Janet Budack spent time handing out information and answering questions on behalf of Historic Preservation. She felt there was a good deal of interest in the community and in the historical nature of the community from people who were visiting. Finally, Hugh Lifson indicated that we will not be finalizing plans for a trip to LeClaire at this time. He hopes to be able to get back to this in the future.

A question came up regarding design review that had not been requested for replacement windows in the old IE building. These were replacement windows that have a frame slightly larger than the original. There is nothing that needs to be done regarding the change, as a building permit was not requested or issued. Leah expressed concerns generally about replacement windows and the push by commercial manufacturers to have windows replaced, rather than restored. Leah and Ed both suggested it would be a good idea to present a window seminar in the near future.

Ed Sauter indicated that CDG has decided to schedule a historic porch tour in early September. This would re-create the tours that were held 10 years ago. The archives contain material that was used for those events.

Janet Budack gave a report on the cemetery project. Carl Thorson, who has done work on preserving records on the Oak Hill-Jackson Cemetery has reviewed our

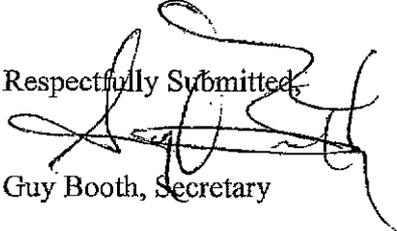
cemetery records and has presented a two-phase proposal. The first would be to photograph all of the books and records. The cost is estimated to be \$5,085.00. The second proposal would be to get hard copies of all of the records and put them into a book. This may cost an additional \$3,610.00. The proposal has been forwarded to the city so they can review it to see if it can be fit within a budget. This is an important project, and the commission may need to help push it toward a method of getting the cemetery records preserved.

Dick Thomas indicated that he has received questions occasionally from the internet about historic issues in Mount Vernon. He also has received three boxes of Mount Vernon and Cornell memorabilia from a family that had been in Mount Vernon and had attended Cornell many years ago.

Dick also reported on work that needs to be done this summer. This would include continue work on the website. Attention can be paid to tagging a number of the pictures. Mary Iber reported that she is aware of a student who may be available this summer to work on the archives. Dick Thomas agreed that he and Mary can work out an agreement with the intern, whose name is Claire Solak to work for the commission this summer.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2013 at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Guy Booth, Secretary