

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Saturday, May 7, 2016

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Saturday, May 7, 2016. Commission members present included Leah Rogers, Sarah Kelly, Susan Hargus, Carine Klein, Janet Budack, Mary Evans and Guy Booth. The Minutes of the April 2, 2016 meeting were approved upon motion by Susan Hargus, seconded by Carine Klein.

Julie Barnes, director of grant programs at Cornell College was present to give a report of the history of the Seth Thomas clock in King Chapel. Julie has identified grants to pay for the restoration of the clock, and Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission supports the college in its efforts to raise funds for the restoration.

Julie gave a fascinating presentation regarding the history of the clock. The clock was ordered in 1881 and was put in place in King Chapel in 1882. It was installed by AS Hotchkiss, then one of the owners of the Seth Thomas Clock Company. The specifics of the clock is that it is a Model 17, 8-day, quarter-strike clock. The clock mechanism has extraordinary decorations painted on it. The clock is the longest-running clock of its type in the United States. The clock has never been electrified. It is in its original location and still has its original paint and decorations.

A company by the name of Essence of Time will be doing the restoration. The company has great credentials and has done historic restoration around the country. The company is excited to do the work, as they feel this is an extremely significant clock. Part of the restoration will include new hands, new dials, new numerals, and new wooden discs as the clock's face. The estimated cost of restoration is \$109,000. The college has already received two grants for the work. Applications are also being made to Linn County Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Commission. Upon motion made by Susan Hargus, seconded by Sarah Kelly, the Commission has ratified a letter of support for the grant from HRDP. The motion carried.

Leah reports that the photo boards taken from City Hall have now been installed for display at the First Street building. The space where these boards were located in City Hall is now the site for the Mickey Woods Mural, which is fully installed. Ken Pospisil is in the process of staining and finishing the wood frame. Dick Thomas and Hugh Lifson are going to arrange a formal dedication ceremony for the mural.

Mary Evans gave a report on the HPC website. Thirteen of fifteen student history projects are now scanned and placed on the website. Mary is working on completing the scanning of a work done by Dick Thomas entitled "A Brief History of Mount Vernon." Mary suggested that we arrange a video interview of Dick Thomas to get much of his historical impressions recorded so it can be part of the digital history of Mount Vernon.

Mary also indicates that Brook Berganza has identified a student to work as the intern for the summer. The student's name is Georgi Orgo. He will be able to recover information from our older computer and make sure that information is put into dropbox so it will be available to be preserved and added to the website. Mary also indicated that

she is about completed with the cleaning and reorganizing of the archive room. Additional archival storage boxes will need to be purchased. Mary also is concerned about getting a hard copy of an inventory of all of the archival material. This can be part of our website, but there should be a hard copy available for people who do not have the website available. She also indicates we need to pull together the information in numerous notebooks and other documents in the archive room.

Concern has been expressed about plans Cornell College may have for demolishing two brick houses on the east end of the campus. Both houses date from the 1860's. The college is going to be constructing a new science center in the area and have tentatively placed the building so it would require the removal of the two houses. No specific information has been provided to HPC. Leah will schedule a meeting with Joel Miller, the Cornell representative to ask specific questions about the proposed destruction of two historic properties within the Cornell historic district.

There is no further business. The next regular meeting of HPC will be June 4, 2016. Leah will notify members of a special meeting to be scheduled with Joel Miller.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary