

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Saturday, August 6, 2016

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Saturday, August 6, 2016. Commission members present included Leah Rogers, Mary Evans, Hugh Lifson, Janet Budack, Sarah Kelly, Dick Thomas and Guy Booth. Minutes of the meeting from June, 2016 were approved.

Leah gave an update on discussions regarding the new science building on the Cornell campus. She has contacted Cornell to encourage a meeting to discuss Cornell's plan that would result in the demolition of two historic structures. It is important to have a dialogue with Cornell to see if the structures can be saved, and the alternatives available to keep the building from being demolished. As part of the discussions that have been ongoing, Leah has met with Chris Nosbisch, the City Administrator, who has also had conversations with Cornell. Leah has also encouraged Cornell to meet with our commission to discuss this issue. President Brand indicates he would like to meet with the Commission, and a meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, August 27. Prior to the meeting, we will attempt to get more information regarding the feasibility of moving the two houses that are in question. It is also of interest to see if the location of the new science building can be altered sufficiently to save the two structures. Leah will have an additional meeting with Chris Nosbisch to find out what he has learned from his recent discussions with Cornell. We will try to get an update on information regarding the costs of moving the two structures, and whether they can be removed to another location on the Cornell campus.

Leah indicates that the frame for the Micki Woods Mural has now been completed. Ken Pospisil has worked to get the wood stained and varnished, and it is reported to have a very nice appearance in the council chambers.

Hugh Lifson indicated that he has been thinking about the contents of a dedication ceremony for the mural. It has been decided to have the dedication on September 24 in conjunction with the Lincoln Highway Art Festival. You indicated there are several people that he would like to contact to be involved in the ceremony. Upon motion made by Mary Evans, seconded by Janet Budack, the Commission has appointed Hugh Lifson to complete planning for the dedication ceremony. Hugh will be able to determine which people should be involved in the presentation and the information that each of the presenters will give. He will also see if Micki Woods would like to speak at the dedication ceremony.

Leah announced that the preservation summit will be held in Davenport from September 15 through September 17. Any commission members attending will have their fees for attendance reimbursed by the commission. There will be sessions on a number of preservation issues over the three days, as well as tours of historic sites in the Davenport area. Each member of the commission will need to register separately for the summit. We can determine who will be attending at our next meeting.

Dick Thomas gave a report on the continuing development of our web site. Summer interns have put together a directory for the website, which will help people not only in searching the website for information, but also help in determining how new information can be added to the website. The two interns for the summer have been Belou Quimby and Marin Dettweiler. Dick indicates they have done a terrific job in working on the website. Both interns are going to be sophomores, so it is hopeful that we can continue to use their expertise over the next several years. Upon motion made by Dick Thomas and seconded by Hugh Lifson, the billing for the work of the interns has been approved, and the invoices will be sent to the City Hall.

Under new business, Janet Budack discussed the topic of the commission being involved in preserving oral histories regarding Mount Vernon. A number of names were mentioned regarding long-term residents who should be interviewed about their recollections of historic events. Janet indicated that we should set up a procedure for interviews so there is consistency in questions being asked. Sarah Kelly volunteered to check with Dean Borg to see if he would be available. We will need to spend some time setting up the procedure for contacting people and conducting the interviews and recording the interviews.

Dick Thomas also brought up concerns about continuing to identify properties that should be on the historic register. Janet Budack had prepared a list of properties and identified the owners of the properties. It now needs to move forward by contacting people to see if they are interested in getting their properties registered, and also to determine if there are grants available to defray the expenses. Janet Budack and Mary Evans volunteered to head this project.

Leah announced that there will be two vacancies on the commission. Dick Thomas will be stepping down in September. Paul Waelchli has now moved and is no longer a member of the community. Dick Thomas indicated there is a new staff librarian with good background and experience as an archivist. He suggested she would be an excellent addition to the commission. Guy Booth mentioned that Jason Cave, a resident who has good experience in construction has expressed interest in the commission. He will contact Mr. Cave and encourage him to file an application if he is still interested. Anybody else who identifies a person who will be a good addition to the commission should encourage the person to apply.

The next meeting of the commission will be August 27, 2016 at 9:15 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary