

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
December 7, 2019

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Saturday, December 7, 2019 at the Mount Vernon Visitors Center. Members present were Mary Evans, Janet Budack, Hugh Liston, Grace Chamgerlain, Machele Pekley, Ed Sauter and Guy Booth. Ed Sauter served as chairperson for the meeting. Upon motion by Janet Budack, seconded by Hugh Lifson, the Minutes of the November 13, 2019 meeting were approved.

There are two design review items on the agenda. First, Cornell College has finalized the plans on window replacements for Old Sem and for College Hall. The plans for the window replacements have been approved by Historic Preservation Commission, and a building permit has now been requested. Upon motion by Hugh Lifson, seconded by Guy Booth, a certificate of appropriateness shall be issued for the Cornell window project.

The second design review item concerns the garage being built at the Les and Katrina Garner residence on 10th Avenue. The final plans that have been submitted for a building permit have changed the dimensions of the garage by reducing it from 26 feet to 24 feet in length. There have been no other adjustments made. The Commission has previously approved a certificate of appropriateness for the project. This change in the dimension of the garage does not need further approval.

Under new business, Mary Evans gave a report on the HPC website. She is working with Scott Cannon to review improvements that can be made. Scott has suggested that the website can be improved by adding color to the headings and to make the newsletter and other documents more accessible. There are various price increments to work that can be done. After a good deal of discussion, the commission feels that the list of improvements are all necessary, and should be approved. The total cost will be \$2,000. These improvements can be made over a period of time, so the costs of the improvement can be made either in this fiscal year budget or in next year's budget, or both. Upon motion made by Machele Pelkey, seconded by Hugh Lifson, the Commission has approved the expenditure of \$2,000 toward improvement of the website. In a related matter, Hugh Lifson moved to approve the budget request for the fiscal year beginning July 2020 in the amount of \$6,250. Grace Chamberlain seconded the motion. The motion was approved. This budget request will be submitted to the City Council.

Machele Pelkey discussed programming possibilities that could become part of the HPC educational program. She suggested highlighting various structures in the community through virtual tours. In addition, these virtual tours would be scheduled so a Power Point presentation can be shown and owners of the property could be present to discuss the history of the property. These programs can be presented on a regular basis with the owners of property being involved in giving a history of the building. These programs could also be used as continuing education seminars that would be available to our commission as well as other historic preservation commissions. It was also discussed that the commission could form a subcommittee that organizes these programs, and that the committee should include people in the community who have an interest, and should not be limited only to commission members. Upon motion made by

Machele Pelkey, seconded by Janet Budack, Machele was authorized to continue to develop this continuing education/outreach program regarding specific HPC topics.

Grace Chamberlain gave a report regarding social media considerations. She indicates that a great deal of historic preservation information is available on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. She feels these are social media platforms that could easily be used by our HPC and would be very effective. Grace has done research that shows the key elements, as well as the pros and cons of each of the three platforms. It was exciting to see how the use of one or more of the programs could generate a good deal of interest in historic preservation for this community. In particular, it would be a good method to update the historic preservation records for more recent changes. This would include the period from the late 1950's to present. Grace indicates this can be done with very little expense, as the social media sites are free. She also mentioned that many people use Facebook and Instagram as a source for searching out and reviewing information about historic preservation. Mary Evans reported that there has been a substantial increase in the number of hits on the web site.

This presentation by Grace was especially compelling, as it moves historic preservation from merely collecting archives in history to having it available to everyone. Her work is greatly appreciated. She will continue to gather information so a proposal as to which platform or platforms would be most effective for our commission.

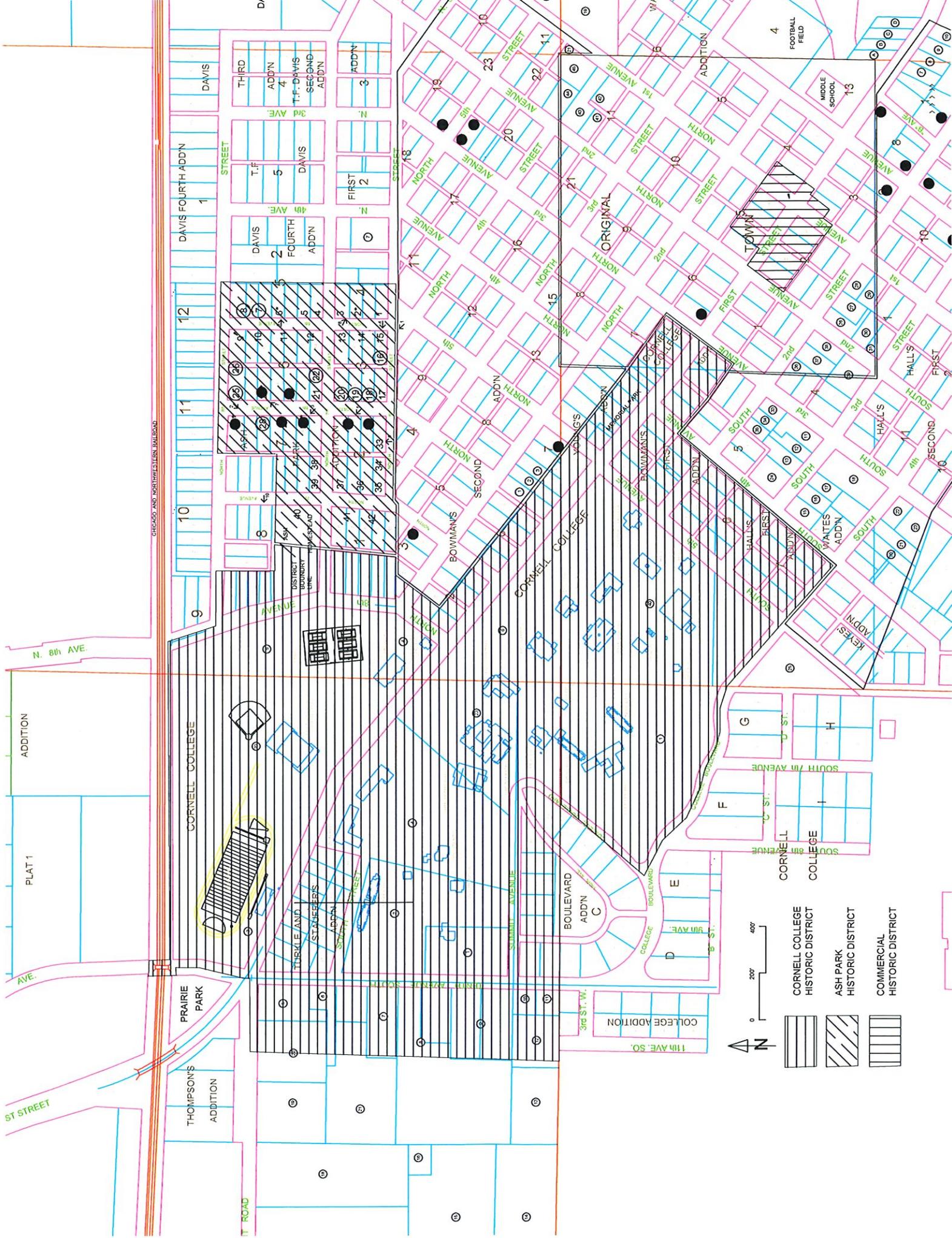
Janet Budack indicates that she has prepared a letter that will go to realtors that will include the brochure of what it means to own property in the historic districts. We will also include a map of the city highlighting the historic districts. Janet will have this information available at City Hall and will see that the pamphlet and this letter will go to realtors who have been active in the Mount Vernon real estate market.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30. The next scheduled meeting is January 4, 2020.

Happy holidays to all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary



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CORNELL COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT
 ASH PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT
 COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission

Social Media Considerations

Facebook

Key Elements:

- Home page: Profile/logo picture, cover photo, posts, and navigation bar
- About: section for sharing information and resources
- Photos: section for various “albums” and general photos
- Reviews: section for reviews and visitor ratings (out of 5 stars) and comments
- Posts: posts created by page owner to share news/information
- Events: section for events hosted by the business/organization
- Community: shows connections between Facebook users

Pros:

- Platform allows for high level of informational sharing directly from page
- Links well with other social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter
- Easy to post a variety of media such as links to other websites, events, videos, photos, etc.
- Used by many other Iowa and national preservation organizations
- Post-scheduling feature built into platform

Cons:

- Not as popular with younger generations
- Not easy to navigate without account
- Difficult to link/search hashtags

Instagram

Key Elements:

- Main page: space for brief description of mission, main website link, contact information (phone number, email), directions to main location, booking for events, etc.
- Posts: pictures with information and hashtags
- Stories: videos and pictures in a slideshow that is only available for 24 hours – allows for text, drawing, and emojis to be added to pictures.

Pros:

- Platform is designed to share photos and has ample photo editing/filtering options
- Popular with wide range of ages
- Easy to link content through hashtags
- Posts provide ample room for text
- Many national and some Iowa preservation organizations use it
- Connects well with other social media platforms

Cons:

- Main page does not allow for significant information sharing
- Cannot link to outside sites through posts – the only way to link to a website is through the link posted on the main page (bio)
- Access limited without account

Twitter

Key Elements:

- Main page: profile picture, banner photo, brief description of mission + basic information
- Tweets: text that can include photos or videos

Pros:

- Popular with a wide range of ages
- Easy to link content through hashtags
- Allows for picture, video, and link sharing through tweets
- Connects well with other social media platforms
- Easy to access without an account

Cons:

- Tweets have character limit – minimal words allowed in each tweet
- Main page does not allow for significant information sharing
- Could not find Iowa preservation organization using Twitter

Next steps for moving forward:

Why are we using social media and what do we want to get out of it?

How much oversight does the Commission as a whole want or need?

What platforms do we use?

What email do we use for account access?

What content do we post and should there be themes?

How often should we post?

Do we use a post-scheduling application?