

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Saturday, February 3, 2018

The Historic Preservation Commission met on February 3, 2018. Members present were Leah Rogers, Mary Evans, Robert Murphy, Suzette Astley, Caroline Kelly and Guy Booth. Guests included Chris Nosbisch and Steve Maurice. Minutes of the meeting of January 17, 2018 were approved.

Chris Nosbisch, the City Administrator, was present for the meeting. He was able to give the Commission an understanding of the City's use of TIF funds. He gave a summary of how the funds are currently used and what, if any funds may be available if the Historic Preservation Commission puts together a proposal for using these funds to enhance the historic preservation of the community, and to help with tourism as economic development. The TIF funds are used for many projects in the City, but a substantial amount of the funds will be made available for the construction of the proposed Community Center. The City is careful in retaining funds for other projects, and if HPC develops a project that could be partially funded by the TIF income, the commission would need to prepare the proposal and get it to the City Council for usage of funds within the fiscal year. Leah Rogers feels there could be worthwhile projects that would benefit from the use of these funds to encourage further private contributions on projects.

Chris Nosbisch also indicated his appreciation for the historic nature of the community, and the importance it plays in economic development, tourism, and overall stability in the City. Of immediate importance is to determine how the development of the areas surrounding the bypass can be developed so it connects with the community, rather than being developed so it is separated from the community. The Commission appreciates the thoughtfulness of Chris in looking at total community planning.

Steve Maurice asked whether the City had designated any historic landmarks or locations, or whether the original historic districts have done so. The response was that the Commission can designate locations or streetscapes as historic, but this has not been the practice in the past. There has not been a request for this type of designation as yet.

Under new business, Leah indicates that we currently have not designated a commission member to serve as vice chairman of the Commission. We will have this on the agenda for the next meeting.

Leah also announced that there will be a workshop for Mount Vernon/Lisbon businesses regarding the Smithsonian exhibit and how it may help in business traffic while the exhibit is up.

Under old business, Mary Evans indicated that the Traver tapes have now been digitized and will be available on the website. She has interspersed photos of the commercial district into the website. She also indicates that some photos have been added to the digitized interview with attorney R. B. Wolfe.

It was reported that Catherine Stewart at Cornell has completed the audio tour recording for the Cornell Historic District Tour. She will be working on the Ash Park audio tour this summer. Cornell may have an intern that will be able to help in this project. Mary Evans also indicated that the website is getting emails from people who have questions about Mount Vernon

history. An interesting email came regarding the Yiesly Bakery and the tokens that were used by the bakery for advertising. The emails are an indication that there are visitors to the website who have questions about Mount Vernon.

Leah gave a report on the CLG grant. There will be meetings for the property owners to help identify work that needs to be done as the property owners complete the application for NRHP nomination. The property owners will need to fill out the timesheets so the grant will receive credit for donated labor which can be billed at the rate of \$22.95 per hour. Leah also indicates that the City of Lisbon received a CLG grant and they may be having a summer intern who can also assist our commission in projects that need to be completed.

Leah also discussed that the new federal tax law did retain the tax credit program for historic preservation. She also gave out a copy of the winter, 2018 newsletter from Preservation Iowa. There are a number of grants and programs that are available, so we can look to see what might be beneficial for our community.

Caroline Kelly talked about the proposed brick house tour for this fall. She has identified September 30, 2018 as the date. She would like to have two separate sessions that afternoon; one starting at noon and the other later in the afternoon. She is already getting the homes lined up and is putting in place the planning that made the first brick house tour so successful.

Leah Rogers reported for Sue Hargus that she has looked at plans for producing and printing the bags with the HPC logo on it. It appears the most economical production of bags has the printing on one side, rather than two sides. A motion was made by Sue Astley, seconded by Caroline Kelly to approve purchase of the bags with printing on one side. Leah indicated that post cards and Christmas cards are still available, and we continue to sell them at the Visitor's Center. Proceeds from the bags, as well as the cards, will go into the account that has been set up for Friends of Historic Preservation.

The next scheduled meeting will be March 3, 2018. It is anticipated that Cornell College will make an additional presentation on the development of the Ash Park stadium.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary