

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

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Members present were Leah Rogers, Mary Evans, Pat Westercamp, Robert Murphy, Susan Hargus, Hugh Lifson, Caroline Kelly, and Sue Astley. Guests who were in attendance included Brenda Broulik, Chris Nosbisch, Jeff Streitz, Cari Morgan and Jim Engelbrecht. Upon motion by Mary Evans, seconded by Caroline Kelly, the minutes of the Jan. 17, 2018 meeting were approved.

Design review of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was forwarded to the Commission by the Mount Vernon Zoning Administrator. Dale and Brenda Broulik are requesting a Certificate for modifications they wish to make on their building at 103 1st Street NW in the Downtown Historic District. A new function to be incorporated on the lower level of the building is a wine cellar and tasting room. Contractor on the project is Dale Broulik Construction. The Certificate of Appropriateness application included architectural renderings of the South elevation (the street side of the building) and the North elevation (the alley side of the building). The application also included plans for a new patio and deck to be installed on the South elevation (and also plans for the interior of the building). Brenda Broulik indicated they wish to put new aluminum-clad windows and doors into all openings of the building. The windows and doors are to span the full length and breadth of the openings in the brickwork, so many of them will need to be custom-made. Leah asked what manufacturers were being considered for the windows and doors and Brenda indicated Pella and Jeld Wen. Leah suggested that window and door choices be shared with Ed Sauter of the Commission to ensure historical appropriateness. (He is architect on this project.) Brenda said she would do so and that she would return to the Commission when the final determination is made. Hugh questioned whether the current front façade of the building would be retained. Brenda indicated that materials [non-historic] would be removed from the front façade of the building and original brickwork and trim repaired and replaced. A Certificate of Appropriateness was granted by voice vote of Commission members with the provision that the Brouliks seek guidance from Ed Sauter of the HPC on choice of windows and doors.

Prior to the meeting, for information purposes only, Chris Nosbich forwarded to the Commission an Accessibility Exceptions Certificate for a sidewalk at the intersection of 5th Ave & 1st St. Chris noted that he would return to the Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness when decisions are made about replacement of the traffic signal. Signal replacement is funded by a Department of Transportation grant. Chris noted that parts are no longer available for the existing signal. In response to a question from Leah, Chris also indicated that because it is a pedestrian signal it would not be required to hang over the intersection. In other matters, Chris noted that the city plans to submit grants to the Hall Perrine Foundation and to Enhance Iowa that would partially fund a Wellness Center. Chris gave a brief overview of progress on other city business including proposed quiet zone and demolition ordinances,

anticipated work on walking trails and the railroad bridge. He noted that the city is experiencing substantial expense repairing asphalt that is in place over brick streets. He suggested that at some point a decision will need to be made on whether or not to remove the bricks.

A building permit application for renovations on 100 1st Street S.E. was forwarded to Commission members by Leah prior to the meeting. Sam Jennison of Burlington is the building's owner. In driving by the site, Leah noticed an exterior door installed on the Hwy 1 side of the building for which a Certificate of Appropriateness had not been sought nor granted. Jim Engelbrecht, contractor on the project, said that he was never advised that he needed a Certificate of Appropriateness for any aspect of the project, and was frustrated that it fell through the cracks despite payment to the city of a \$1200 fee for the review. Jim noted that in addition to the door, that he will need to cut in a step so that the upstairs tenant can access the door. Leah noted the long-standing problem with access to the 2nd floor on this building and suggested that it might have contributed to long periods in which the building has stood empty. She suggested that street access to the 2nd floor might alleviate the long vacancy problem in the future. Leah asked why the door did not include a window, and Jim said it was for security reasons. Jim said that a door with a window could be installed if we ask for it to be. Leah also suggested that another option might be painting the door a darker color (it is now white), which would make the door's appearance less visually jarring. Sue A moved and Mary and Hugh seconded a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition of consultation with Commission member Ed Sauter on the door's appearance.

The first item in New Business was an update from Jeff Streit and Cari Morgan on the bleacher and press box plans for Ash Field in the Cornell Historic District. Jeff gave Commission members a preview of images representing the planned bleachers and press box and answered questions of Commission members. (Final images will be a part of the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness.) Jeff noted that the College is ready to submit a building permit to the city and asked about the next step with regard to Commission approval and whether that might be accomplished relatively quickly after permit approval. Leah noted that design review sessions with the Commission are generally set relatively soon after a permit is approved. With regard to the Science Center project, Hugh asked about the College's plans for artifacts to be displayed honoring the Civil War era houses that were demolished. Cari said that stone and bricks from the houses were kept, and that plans are proceeding for a retaining wall and seating near the Science Building to be constructed of materials from the demolished houses.

Mary reported that there might be as many as 3 interns working in the Mt. Vernon archives this summer. Danny is a Cornell student working with History Professor Catherine Stewart with funding from the College. Tessa is a Mt. Vernon student who will be working, with hope for completion, on 7 unfinished-to-date projects. Connor will primarily be working with Lisbon's History Center, but they do not think they will have sufficient work for him and asked Mary if he might be able to help in the Mt. Vernon archives.

In New Business, Mary noted that there were only 200 of the glass negatives left to house. One setback is that a mouse has left refuse on some of the negatives. The City is providing mouse traps to take care of the problem. Mary announced that videos of all conferences are now uploaded to the web site and being viewed.

Leah announced that the CLG annual report was submitted before the deadline.

Leah also announced that the Request for Proposals for the Brick House Historic District has been sent to 3 consultant firms, with a due date for proposals of March 25th. The commission will be reviewing those proposals at the next regular meeting and will select a consultant at that time.

Leah noted that the design review packets are being prepared for all homeowners in three historic districts for distribution. Sue H noted that the Historic Preservation Commission tote bags have been order and could perhaps be used in the distribution of the packets.

Leah expressed frustration with the continuing problem of the Commission receiving design review applications after-the-fact for reasons including the city not recognizing a design review is needed and property owners failing to submit some projects, such as signs, for the required building and sign permits. Leah noted that, going forward, it has been recommended to the city to forward all permits requests to Leah and Ed Sauter so they can preview the projects and determine if there is need for design review. This, coupled with our distributing the design review packets to all property owners will hopefully reduce or eliminate this problem.

Carolyn announced that the next Brick House Tour is on the afternoon of Sept. 30, with two tour times.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Astley, temporary Secretary