

MINUTES  
OF  
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Saturday, April 28, 2018

The Historic Preservation Commission met on April 28, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at the Mount Vernon City Hall. Members present were Leah Rogers, Ed Sauter, Janet Budack, Robert Murphy, Patty Westerkamp, Sarah Kelly, Susan Hargas, Mary Evans, and Guy Booth.

The first order of business was to correct the Minutes of April 7, 2018 regarding the replacement of the poles for the traffic lights at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street SW and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, which incorrectly indicated that Cornell College would be responsible for replacing the standards. Leah Rogers pointed out that the poles for the traffic lights are the responsibility of the City of Mount Vernon, and they will be purchasing and installing the new poles and bases for the repair and renovation of the poles. Upon motion by Janet Budack, seconded by Patty Westerkamp, the Minutes of the April 7 meeting, as amended, were approved.

A design review request was submitted by Michael and Jill Ripke for their property located at 518 8<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Mount Vernon, IA. This house is in the Ash Park Historic District. The building is of newer construction (1970's?). Mr. and Mrs. Ripke have requested a building permit to put a 14' x 24' addition along a portion of the front of their house. The addition will be compatible with the design of the original house. The sole concern expressed was from Guy Booth, indicating that he thought the Commission should request that the new addition have windows that are similar to the front window of the portion of the house that will be replaced by the new addition. The front elevation sketch submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Ripke does indicate that the front window will be the same as the front window that is currently on the building. Upon motion made by Ed Sauter, seconded by Sarah Kelly, it was moved to approve the addition and to issue a certificate of no material effect. The motion carried unanimously.

Under new business, Leah reminded members of the Commission of the annual conference being held in Des Moines in July. It is an expanded conference as it is taking in people from other states.

Leah gave a report on the projects that will be worked on this summer by the Commission. Our Commission will share a summer intern that will be working with the City of Lisbon for their application to establish a commercial historic district for the downtown area of Lisbon. Connor Smith is the summer intern who will be working for the City of Lisbon, and will also do work for the Mount Vernon HPC. We have budgeted funds for the work that Connor Smith will do on our behalf.

Cornell College has a student who will be completing the audio walking tour for the Ash Park District. Her name is Dora. She will be employed, and compensated by Cornell College. She will be available to assist in projects from the Mount Vernon Commission.

Finally, another Cornell student, Tessa, will be our summer intern. Leah and Mary Evans will supervise her work which will include working on the glass plate negatives. Tessa will also work on tying up loose ends on the renovation of our website. Her compensation will be a sum not to exceed \$1,000.00.

Under additional new business, Leah and Mary discussed concerns about historic material that people desire to bring to the Commission. Often times they need a repository for the items. Both Leah and Mary expressed concern about these items being dropped off. If they come through City Hall, we may not have had a preliminary opportunity to analyze the material. Further, we do not have adequate room in the archival area to store additional items. Leah suggested that we do some research to lead us toward a policy statement regarding acceptance of items that people feel are of a historic nature.

Leah and Mary both talked about the necessity of having a well-written policy so that when people come to the Commission, they should not assume that the commission will accept the material and then keep it in our archival records. Our archival documents need to be placed in storage that is provided for historic preservation. We do not have room to accept large collections of printed material, nor do we have the space to store large items of personal property.

We will have time to work on this project in the very near future. There has already been some material that has been donated, but will need to be returned. Mary Evans brought to the Commission meeting a hand-written booklet regarding Harry Ernest Kensinger. Mr. Kensinger was the superintendent of schools in Mount Vernon approximately between 1916 to 1918. We will have to determine how that book can be preserved and saved, but still have it available for use by the public. Leah suggested that we look at copying the document so it can be part of our digital website. The Commission will take up the process of determining what historic material should be part of the collection and whether it should be added to our collection or to our website.

The Commission meeting ended at 9:30. However, Leah Rogers and Jennifer Price had scheduled a meeting for 9:30 a.m. on April 28 to review the work that needs to be done on the applications to be filed for placement of brick houses on the register of national historic places. Leah had prepared an excellent outline of the time that it will take to complete the project. She also indicated what material needs to be put together by the homeowners of the brick buildings. While this meeting of property owners seeking nomination to the national register was not part of the Historic Preservation meeting for the month, a summary of the additional meeting and the outline of work to be done is attached so this material will be part of the permanent record of the Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary

The Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission was awarded a Certified Local Government Grant from the State Historical Society of Iowa, to complete the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) of 12 historic brick houses in the City of Mount Vernon, Iowa. Here is the list of the 12 houses to be nominated to the NRHP:

316 3rd Ave SW



224 1st St SW



113 2nd Ave NW



210 2nd Ave NW



315 1st Ave S



601 1st Ave S



600 1st Ave S



417 A Ave SE



303 A Ave SE



214 2nd St SE



514 1st St SE



323 3rd St NE



#### KEY DATES:

- First draft of each nomination for the first State staff review is AUGUST 3, 2018
- Final draft of each nomination for the State Nomination Review Committee (SNRC) is DECEMBER 3, 2018
- SNRC review meeting in Des Moines is FEBRUARY 8, 2018
- FINAL NOMINATIONS AND PHOTO END PRODUCTS for submission to the NRHP is JUNE 2019 but will be completed as soon as the minutes from the SNRC meeting are sent out; therefore, an APRIL-MAY 2019 time-frame for completion is more likely.

#### Tasks for Owners:

1. Summary of property abstract or a list of the dates that the property was bought and sold; the names of the grantors and grantees; and any mortgage notations including the date of the mortgage, the person taking out the mortgage, and the amount of the mortgage.
2. Assist with a sketch floor plan (first and second floors) of your house. Needs to be measured but does not have to be blueprint quality, unless you have the blueprints (in that case if we can get a photograph of the blueprints or a scan that would be perfect). Project volunteers will assist with the floor plans, and the project director does have a laser distance device that can be used.
3. Provide any oral history or historical accounts about your property and list any modifications/additions that you know of and when those changes were made (can be approximate).
4. Any historical photographs that you have that can be scanned by the HPC for use in the nomination will be greatly appreciated. If photographs cannot leave your property, we can take photographs of the photos instead. However, the HPC has a scanner in our archive room at City Hall, just contact Mary Evans to scan your photographs.
5. Read through the various draft versions of your nomination and provide comments to the project director about any changes or additions that need to be made.
6. If you can attend the SNRC meeting in February in support of your nomination that would be great, but it is not required. The Consultant, Jennifer Price, and the Project Director, Leah Rogers, will be presenting the nominations to SNRC.
7. Digital photographs will need to be taken of the exterior and selected views of the interior for each house. These need to be taken to NRHP specifications, so will need to be done by the HPC. Cell phone photographs will not be acceptable for these photos.
8. Any time that you spend for any of the above tasks 1-7 and any meetings that you attend for this project, including the kick-off meeting, you will need to fill out a volunteer time sheet each month because your time counts as in-kind match for the grant. The project director needs to submit a monthly report (before the 5th of each month) and will need your time sheets for each month for each report. The project director will email you on the first of each month for your time sheets, which can be dropped off at City Hall or at my house at 217 5th Street NW (just put in the mailbox). I will need the original, signed time sheets for our grant files. If you cannot drop them off, take a photograph with your phone or scan them and email them to me at ldrog215@aol.com or to my cell phone 515-554-4194. HOWEVER, I will still need the original, signed time sheets for our files, so please keep them to give to me before the end of the project. This record keeping is very important to the success of this grant.

**KEY CONTACTS:**

**Project Director - Leah Rogers**, Chair MVHPC; cell phone: 515-554-4194; home phone: 319-895-8330; home address: 217 5th Street NW, Mt. Vernon; email: LDRog215@aol.com. PLEASE SEND YOUR TIME SHEETS EACH MONTH TO THE PROJECT DIRECTOR on the first day of each month.

**Archival assistance/photo scanning - Mary Evans** - email: marye1840@gmail.com

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**Project Consultant - Jennifer Price** - phone: 319-594-9513; email: jenniferprice1311@icloud.com.

The consultant will be responsible for the statements of significance for each nomination and may contact you for more information about your property.