

MINUTES
OF
MOUNT VERNON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
June 30, 2018

The Historic Preservation Commission met on June 30, 2018. Members present were Leah Rogers, Ed Sauter, Sara Kelly, Robert Murphy, Mary Evans, Susan Hargus, Caroline Kelly, Suzette Astley, and Guy Booth. Guests at the meeting included Joe Jennison and Kim Benesh from Sing-A-Long, LLC and Jason Lohmstead and Cari Morgan from Cornell College.

The Minutes of the June 9, 2018 meeting were approved.

The first design review request comes from the Sing-A-Long, which is located at 100 1st St SE. This is a new business that will feature a player piano/sing-a-long atmosphere with food and beverages. Their first request is to have signage that is in the form of musical notes across the front of the building above the first floor windows. This denotes the nature of the music that will be performed in the building. Questions arose regarding the color scheme and how the sign will appear on the building. Ed Sauter suggested that there be a border on the sign to have it stand out better from the front of the building. This suggestion was agreed to by the owners. Upon motion made by Sarah Kelly, seconded by Robert Murphy, a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved. It was further agreed that there will be a 1.5" border around the sign.

The second design review request from Sing-A-Long, LLC concerns a proposed mural for the side of the building facing 1st Avenue. Two separate concepts were presented. The first would be a painted mural that is 24'x8' which depicts a person playing an upright piano. The piano is located in the street between the downtown buildings. The second concept is a mural taken from a photograph that features a player piano in the middle, with a number of people around the piano in the background.

Comments on the two concepts tended to favor the first concept of a person playing the piano. There was some concern about the color and busy-ness of a large mural with numerous people being shown. The second concept tended to be more of an advertisement for the business, rather than a mural of historic Mount Vernon. The owners will need to apply for a permit to have the mural on the building. The Commission, by consensus, suggested that the first concept is preferred. The Commission also agreed that some modification of the first concept could be made, but it should not have the mural become an advertisement for the business, but should be a depiction of historic Mount Vernon. The mural will be a painted picture and will be applied to the building. Kim Benesh indicated that there will be a permanent exterior finish that will protect the mural from fading or from being damaged by weather. The Commission will look at the project for final approval after the City has received the building permit application.

The third design review request comes from Cornell College. They have presented plans for building a new concession stand/restroom facility adjacent to Ash Park Football Field and Baseball Field. The proposed plans show a structure that has a façade similar to the red brick buildings on campus. The building will be located near the main parking lot so there will be access, both from the football facility and the baseball facility. Cornell hopes to begin construction immediately and have the building available by early September. This will be a

great addition to the athletic complex. Upon motion made by Ed Sauter and seconded by Suzette Astley, a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

Under old business, Leah reminded everyone of the historic preservation forum in Des Moines in July. She also indicated there were no scholarships that are available.

Leah indicates that we are moving along on the brick house nominations. People need to file their updated timesheets for the month of June. Photos have been completed of all of the exterior of all of the houses. Work is still being done on examination of the abstracts to document the ownership history of the properties. Mary Evans was able to relate a story about one of the houses, and rumored para-normal sightings and activities. This will be part of the information in the nomination application for the house.

Leah also indicated that the Commission should put together a request for funds from the City TIF money to assist in Historic Preservation Projects. We have a deadline of getting this put together by August. It was suggested that we complete our brick nomination program before we have a specific meeting that can look at the concept of what types of rules and limitations should be put together for distributing funds for preservation projects. It was decided to not try to get this done prior to August, and this can be put on our agenda for the next year.

Mary Evans indicates that the summer interns are doing a great job. She is impressed with the work they have accomplished and their diligence in working on the various projects.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-July, depending upon the request for design review.

Respectfully Submitted,

Guy Booth, Secretary