

**KALAMAZOO HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
COMMISSION MINUTES**

**August 15, 2006
Second Floor Community Room
241 W. South St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007**

Members Present: Chris Wright; Norman Jung; Erin Seaverson; Derl Oberlin;
Linda Bennett; Josh Willson

Members Absent: Claire Milne-excused

City Staff: Sharon Ferraro, Historic Preservation Coordinator
Karleen Steppenwolf, Records Coordinator

Call To Order

Ms. Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Approval Of Absences

Agenda

There were no corrections/additions to the agenda.

Mr. Oberlin, supported by Mr. Jung, moved to approve the August 15, 2006 agenda. With a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

There were a few corrections to the July 11, 2006 minutes. The corrections were on page 2 under Action Items A and page 3 under Action Items E.

Mr. Oberlin, supported by Ms. Seaverson, moved to approve the July 11, 2006 minutes as amended. With a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

Introduction Of Guests

Pam O'Connor – former commissioner
Curt Aardema – citizen

Citizen Comments

Ms. O'Connor shared information regarding the second meeting with the City Manager, Mayor and Vice Mayor, City Planner and Rodger Parzyck of the Kalamazoo County Preservation Alliance (KCPA). The meeting consisted of discussion about demolition of historic buildings and a moratorium ordinance, local historic districts, revision of Downtown Design Review Committee (DDRC) guidelines, 100 block of E. Michigan, downtown vision plan, the way the DDA operates and current development incentives, like OPRA (Obsolete Property Rehab Act), which is a tax abatement program.

Ms. O'Connor shared a response letter from Bill Johnston of Greenleaf Trust to the KCPA.

Ms. O'Connor stated there are no plans to demolish or sell the Federal Building (old post office) according to Regina Nally at the General Services Administration (GSA) office in Chicago. The city cannot take Federal property by eminent domain as we had heard rumored.

Ms. O'Connor stated the City Commissioners would be distancing themselves from Downtown Kalamazoo Inc. (DKI) and Downtown Tomorrow, Inc (DTI). Ms. O'Connor feels the HPC needs to be present at the DDA and Planning Commission meetings. Ms. O'Connor also advised that the HPC and DDA have a meeting together.

Mr. Willson suggested a partnership with the Planning Commission and DDA. Ms. Bennett would look into future joint meetings with them to discuss the DDRC and the comprehensive plan.

Curt Aardema had some questions regarding the Juvenile Home. Mr. Aardema wondered why the building was never considered historic and why the need to build a new building when the outside appears in good shape. The commission responded stating that the building is in the City of Kalamazoo limits and cannot be adapted to meet the current needs of a juvenile home. Mr. Aardema had also read an article about a new subdivision going into the Edison neighborhood on Bryant Street and that the zoning board of appeals had asked for less density than proposed.. The commission responded that it shouldn't be suburban because of the lot sizes and materials used.

Correspondence

NTHP Michigan Preservation Fund – Ms. O'Connor stated there are some small grants available.

Financial Report

City: Ms. O'Connor suggested the HPC look into the fees budgeted for the co-authors fulfillment portion. Ms. O'Connor feels the HPC could make it less than what it currently is.

O'Connor Fund: The fund is down to \$102,000.00 as of June 30, 2006, due to market fluctuations.

Lost and Found Book Project: Ms. O'Connor will draft a letter to The Heritage Company regarding an overdue amount and Mr. Oberlin will sign it.

Action Items

- A) Proposed changes to DDRC guidelines: Mr. Wright has attended two DDRC meetings. Mr. Wright feels the DDRC review needs to start at the concept level. A subcommittee consisting of Mr. Wright, Ms. Seaverson and Ms. Milne will study the guidelines and have some recommendations to present at the next meeting. Ms. Ferraro suggested they look at where it is failing and working. Ms. Ferraro will look into inviting Keith Hernandez, City Planner, to the meeting for his input on what's legal in Michigan.

- B) Iannelli Fountain: Mr. Jung has heard nothing recently regarding the fountain. Ms. Ferraro stated the survey has been done and the City of Kalamazoo will pay for it.

Ms. O'Connor stated the fountain was a contributing resource for the historic district and the fountain could also qualify for a grant for educational purposes.

Committee Reports

None.

City Reports

Reports from the coordinator were emailed to the board members.

1. Site Watch List – Ms. Ferraro has heard nothing on the 100 block of E. Michigan. The Bryant Mill powerhouse is still standing. The City of Kalamazoo is working on state funding to finish the demolition. There is no information on the Prange building.

Commissioner Comments

Ms. Ferraro suggested the commission start looking for properties to nominate for Preservation Awards.

Mr. Jung made a statement regarding property owners going with vinyl siding because it is too expensive to paint a house every few years.

Ms. Seaverson stated that there would be no Park Place Art Fair because of an illness with the coordinator of the event.

Citizen Comments

None.

Adjournment

Ms. Bennett moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm.

**Mr. Oberlin, supported by Mr. Jung, moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm.
With a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Submitted by (Karleen Steppenwolf)

Reviewed by (Sharon Ferraro)

Approved by (Linda Bennett)