

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Minutes**  
**June 9, 2009**  
***DRAFT***

City Commission Chambers  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
241 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Members Present: Chris Wright, Vice Chair (Acting Chair); Peter Carroll; Tony Holewinski; Katie Jacobs; Josh Willson

Members Excused: Clair Milne, Chair; Michael Dunn

City Staff: Sharon Ferraro, Historic Preservation Coordinator; Amy Thomas, Recording Secretary

Guests: Norman Jung; Curt Aardema

Guests Absent: Pam O'Connor; Linda Bennett

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Wright called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF ABSENCES**

Ms. Milne and Mr. Dunn advised that they would not be at the June HPC meeting.

**Ms. Jacobs, supported by Mr. Wright, moved approval of the absences of Ms. Milne and Mr. Dunn from the June HPC meeting.**

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (June 9, 2009)**

Ms. Jacobs requested the addition of an agenda item under Old/New Business regarding appointment of a Treasurer for the HPC. She also requested a discussion regarding the July HPC meeting to determine if it would be cancelled this year. Under Action/Discussion Item, add Designation of Nomination Sub-Committee. Ms. Jacobs stated that she had more information to discuss under Commissioner comments.

**Ms. Jacobs, supported by Mr. Holewinski, moved approval of the June 9, 2009 HPC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (May 12, 2009) (Item B)**

There were no changes to the minutes.

**Mr. Carroll, supported by Ms. Jacobs, moved approval of the May 12, 2009 HPC minutes as submitted. With a voice, the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Curt Aardema and Norman Jung were present at the June 9<sup>th</sup> HPC meeting.

#### **VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Jung commented that the map of the proposed arena between West Kalamazoo and West Michigan and North Park and North Westnedge appears to still include most of the old post office. Ms. Ferraro stated that the last she heard from the Federal office in Chicago indicated that they had not been approached by any developers. Mr. Aardema mentioned that there is one house on the property on Cooley Street, and Ms. Ferraro advised that the house will likely be moved this summer.

Mr. Aardema requested an update regarding the Park Trades building. Ms. Ferraro stated that she hadn't heard anything to indicate that the Park Trades building or the Otto Kihm building were in danger of being eliminated in conjunction with the proposed arena project. Mr. Aardema advised that those properties have been designated in the map as being part of the overall plan. Mr. Carroll stated that Park Street is supposed to be the boundary where the arena project would stop. Mr. Aardema referred to the "mental health building" (Kalamazoo County Community Mental Health on the northwest corner of North Park and West Kalamazoo), which will also be available; Ms. Ferraro advised that it might not be available to build on a new site, but Kalamazoo County Community Mental Health has an option on the new site. She stated that she has no information other than what has already been stated in a Gazette article. There appears to be no cause for concern at this point, but information will be provided as updates become available. Mr. Aardema inquired if there were any designations in that area, and Ms. Ferraro advised that there are not. She stated that the maps she has seen indicate that the area behind Saint Augustine Cathedral in the Stuart Neighborhood is part of the proposed arena project. However, that area is part of the historic district and could not be included in the project area.

Mr. Carroll stated that he spoke with John Thingstad about designating the Park Trades Center building. Mr. Thingstad did not appear to be enthused about proceeding with a historic designation for the building; a nomination would require certain resources. Ms. Ferraro suggested inquiring if any of the historic preservation students at Eastern Michigan University historic preservation program Michigan University would be interested in doing an independent study project, which would be less expensive than hiring a consultant to do the study. Mr. Aardema commented that something should be done with regard to a historic designation for that site to protect it from possible development in the future. Ms. Ferraro stated that a National Register designation would not protect the building if the owner decides to sell it to a developer. Mr. Aardema inquired if the Park Trades building could be added to an existing local historic district.

Ms. Ferraro stated that adding that site to a local historic district cannot be required, but it can be encouraged. There would not be a to designate the site as a single-resource district. There would be a bigger tax credit associated with the National Register designation if rehabilitation is done on the building. However, the local district designation would provide more protection for the building.

## **VII. CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Ferraro advised that the only correspondence she had was already included in the packets provided to the commissioners.

Mr. Carroll stated that he had a proclamation from the Mayor of Kalamazoo designating National Preservation Month, May 2009.

## **VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT**

### **a. City (Item C)**

Ms. Ferraro advised that several items related to preservation month have been posted. The donations from and FOHEC (Friends of Historic East Campus) have not shown up on the financial report yet. Ms. Jacobs stated that Matt Bastos should be forwarding the AIA donation shortly.

In response to Ms. Ferraro's inquiry, the HPC members indicated that their expenses had been reimbursed. Ms. Jacobs stated that she has one more expense to submit from the Mike Jackson event. Ms. Ferraro advised that Dave Dakin the architect for WMU was among those touring East Campus with FOHEC members the day after his speech.

### **b. O'Connor Fund (O'Connor) (Item D)**

Ms. Ferraro stated that there have been no changes to the O'Connor Fund (per Ms. O'Connor).

### **c. Kalamazoo Lost and Found book project (O'Connor) (Item D)**

Ms. Ferraro stated that there have been no changes regarding the Kalamazoo Lost and Found book project (per Ms. O'Connor).

## **XI. Action and Discussion Items**

### **a. Work Plan Reports from Team Leaders**

#### **i. Designation (D) – Jacobs**

Ms. Jacobs indicated that there had been some discussion with regard to creating a designation pipeline to help keep the Park Trades building and other sites on the radar as Ms. Ferraro's watch list grows. Toward the end of the year, the subcommittee can meet and discuss which items on the watch list have potential for nominations next year. When discussion proceeds with the work plan in 2010, there should be a list of items on the watch to be designated for the following year.

Ms. Ferraro suggested sending out an invitation from the HPC to properties that have potential for historic designation. The letter could contain information on how a historic district designation would be of benefit, including preservation of heritage and financial benefits to property owners. The letter could be on HPC letterhead, and could include an invitation to an HPC meeting for property owners to have an opportunity to ask questions about historic district designation. Ms. Ferraro also suggested that Mr. Willson could be present to answer questions about the tax credits, since he has been through that process. The HPC members were in favor of this concept.

Mr. Willson and Mr. Jung referred to a segment on the Channel 3 News regarding the 100 block of E. Michigan Ave. Mr. Jung advised that the story on the Channel 3 News discussed the 100 block of E. Michigan Ave. as though they had just recently been discovered. There was also an article in the Gazette on Monday (6-9-09) regarding the same block of buildings. The Gazette article stated that there would be stores, offices, and moderately priced housing for workers in the renovated buildings.

Ms. Ferraro advised that she spoke with George Larimore at the MHPN Conference. Mr. Larimore has been retained by the developers of the 100 block to advise them regarding the low-income housing tax credit and historic preservation tax credit. Mr. Larimore wrote the introduction to *Where Place Prospers*. Ms. Ferraro stated that she is working on the historic designation and hopes to have it done in the near future.

Mr. Wright inquired if the building in which A-1 Printing is located could be included in the designation. Ms. Ferraro indicated that the owner could pursue the historic designation if she chose to do so. Mr. Wright inquired if there are any other buildings being considered for possible inclusion in the historic district, and Ms. Ferraro advised that there are not. She suggested that the 100 block of E. Michigan should be a separate district and not part of the adjacent Haymarket Historic District.

Mr. Jung inquired if the Dewing building was eligible for historic designation. Ms. Ferraro advised that it may not be eligible because of the addition and other work that has been done on the building. The hope is that nominating the 100 block of E. Michigan as a separate district, may allow the process to proceed more rapidly and effectively. She hopes to have the nomination done in time for the fall Preservation Review Board meeting. Accordingly, the HPC may be reviewing this process at next month's meeting. The hope is to have the nomination ready for review by the Planning Commission and the State of Michigan at the same time. Planning Commission approval is required prior to approval at the state level. If the target dates are met, the designation could be ready by the end of 2009.

Discussion followed with regard to the current tenants in the 100 block. Ms. Ferraro stated that Subway, the Fraternal Order of Police Club House, and A-1 Printing all occupy space in that block. The FOP is the only occupant on the upper floors. Mr. Wright advised that the FOP and the Subway are both in the project area. He recalled that the Subway lease expires in 2011 and includes an option to buy.

Ms. Jacobs suggested there should be three HPC members on the Designation Subcommittee. Ms. Ferraro suggested sending an invitation to owners of properties with potential for historic designation. The invitations could be sent every May during preservation month.

Ms. Jacobs, Ms. Ferraro, Mr. Wright and Mr. Holewinski volunteered to be on the Designation Subcommittee. Ms. Jacobs suggested that the first meeting of the subcommittee should be later in the summer. Ms. Ferraro advised that there is not enough time in her schedule to designate another large historic district at this point. She advised designating individual structures that need to be protected.

Mr. Wright inquired as the number of staff in the Grand Rapids Historic Preservation office. Ms. Ferraro advised that there is one, full time Historic Preservation Coordinator and a field inspector.

Ms. Ferraro suggested having a name of the designation subcommittee, such as Kalamazoo Local Landmark or Distinguished Landmark.

#### **ii. Communication (C) – Milne**

Ms. Milne was unable to attend the meeting to provide an update.

#### **iii. Partnership Development (PD) – Willson**

Mr. Willson had no updates regarding partnership development.

**iv. Preservation Month (PM) - Holewinski**

**DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION (Item E)**

Mr. Holewinski had no updates regarding Preservation Month.

Ms. Ferraro referred to the notes she provided to the HPC regarding Preservation Month. The notes provide information on what was accomplished, approximate attendance at each event, public suggestions, comments regarding programs that were very successful, and some that were not as successful as hoped. She suggested doing another neighborhood program next year in cooperation with the library. The program regarding the Vine Neighborhood, and Lynn Houghton's downtown walking tour were well-attended this year.

Ms. Jacobs advised that the June Art Hop was also a success. Photographs by John Lacko were featured during Art Hop. Ms. Jacobs distributed magnets to the HPC and city staff that Mr. Lacko provided to her. The magnets were imprinted with a picture of the Haymarket Building photographed by the photographer in 1972.

Mr. Willson mentioned that Mr. Lacko is considering publishing a postcard-sized book of his photographs. A suggestion was made that the HPC could partner with Mr. Lacko to have the book published, since it might be cost prohibitive for the artist to publish the book on his own. Mr. Jung commented that if the books were small and relatively inexpensive they might sell rapidly. Mr. Willson suggested a price range of \$12.00 to \$15.00.

Mr. Wright mentioned the need for better organization at certain programs. He provided a cup of water for one of the speakers, who had to set the cup on the floor during his presentation. It would also be helpful if someone could familiarize the presenters with the Kalamazoo area when they are visiting.

Ms. Jacobs inquired if there was publicity in the Gazette regarding Preservation Month. Ms. Ferraro stated that the Gazette provided information about Preservation Month events on the day before the events were scheduled to occur.

She suggested budgeting for an ad next year in the Sunday paper or City Life, which would contain information regarding upcoming events, and a link to a website with more information. A city staff member has been assigned to update the city's website. Ms. Jacobs mentioned that the city's website was helpful.

Mr. Willson advised that he has lined up some good resources to advertise for Preservation Month. One of the reporters at the Gazette would be willing to provide the stories. Details regarding the cost of advertising can be provided if requested. Ms. Ferraro stated that the Gazette is more likely to provide articles about events if the articles are accompanied with paid advertising.

Mr. Wright suggested that the HPC send thank you letters to people and organizations who contributed to Preservation Month. It was suggested that letters be sent to John Donaldson, the Kalamazoo Public Library (downtown branch), First Methodist Church, the KIA, Lynn Houghton, Julie DeLuca, Gazelle Sports, Eckert Wordell, and John Lacko. Ms. Ferraro suggested that Mr. Wright provide a draft of the proposed letter to her so she can review the letter and print it on HPC letterhead.

Ms. Ferraro advised that 19 people attended the Great Unveiling at 706 Minor. Removing the siding took five hours. One of the city's housing inspectors reported that a neighbor five houses from the subject property is interested in removing the siding from his house after seeing the Great Unveiling.

#### **v. Iannelli Fountain**

Mr. Carroll advised that he wants to pursue more grant funds for the fountain restoration. He distributed a list of potential donors who might receive the proposed brochures regarding the fountain restoration. More pictures were obtained from the archives, and an old image of Alfonso Iannelli's signature was also added to the brochure. The background of the brochure is the blueprint for the fountain. Mr. Carroll suggested printing about 4,000 of the smaller brochures and 100 of the larger ones. Printing the brochures will cost approximately \$1,000. The wording in the brochures will be further refined before the information is distributed. The grants to be pursued will be identified by the next HPC meeting. Ms. O'Connor will be available later in the summer to assist with the grant writing process. There will be due dates on the grants the HPC wants to pursue, so as the years progress the HPC can continually apply for grants.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the HPC may need City Commission permission to set up a fund to receive money for this project. Someone in the finance department will be looking into that possibility. It may be possible for the HPC and city staff to make a presentation to the City Commission to ask for approval, or this matter might be placed on the consent agenda.

Mr. Carroll requested that Ms. Ferraro bring the assessment report to the subcommittee meeting. She stated that she would e-mail the report to him. Mr. Carroll advised that it will be necessary to define what the costs are and where the money will go.

Mr. Carroll stated that there has been a setback with the KIA. Initially, they were supportive about hosting an exhibit of the artist's work, but recently they decided not to support the exhibit. The fountain is a very controversial topic and the KIA is hesitant about getting involved. Some of the KIA board members feel that the fountain is not a piece of art that should be recognizing; some people think it's ugly, and shouldn't be considered as art. This information has been conveyed to

Ms. O'Connor. It appears that some members of the KIA board swayed the opinion of other board members. The exhibit is not about the fountain, it's about the artist. Vicki Wright and Jim Bridenstine of the KIA spoke about the possibility of the KIA hosting an exhibit of Iannelli's works. Mr. Bridenstine inquired if Ms. Wright would have considered supporting an exhibit of Iannelli's works if someone hadn't approached her about it, and she indicated that she probably would not. Mr. Carroll advised that the fund raising process can continue without an exhibit, and an exhibit could be held at another location.

Mr. Aardema advised exercising caution when sending out the flyers to initiate the fund raising process. The brochures should not be directed toward people who may be offended by the fountain. The fountain was a controversial topic at the City Commission level a couple of years ago. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that some of the people associated with the KIA are also connected to non-profit organizations in the community. For some people, the image of the Iannelli Fountain is considered negative because they think it represents the white man as being superior to Native Americans.

Mr. Wright suggested that an interpretive sign by the fountain might be helpful. Mr. Jung advised that an interpretive sign would be part of the exhibit. He cautioned that a sign might inhibit the fund raising process. Ms. Ferraro suggested that efforts to obtain a plaque should occur concurrently with the fund raising process. Therefore, when the fountain is restored, it will be accompanied by interpretive material. A cover for the fountain should be pursued at this point so that it will be protected when it is restored.

Mr. Carroll suggested contacting a company called Cincinnati Fountain. They provided consulting services for the fountain in Marshall, MI. They didn't do the restoration work, but they provided information on how best to proceed with the restoration process. The report they provided included information on what type of pump, filtration system and LED lighting would be preferable, etc. Local contractors provided the labor. The City of Marshall had a budget of \$250,000 for restoration of the fountain, and the consulting services were within that budget. Building Restoration did the concrete work. The LED lighting cost \$11,000; it is computerized and will provide any color in the spectrum of light. The LED lighting uses three percent of the electricity that the old lights used. When the fountain isn't running in the winter, the LED lights can be turned on to help illuminate the park. The fountain in Marshall is not considered to be controversial. Ms. Ferraro advised that she would look into getting more information from the Cincinnati Fountain Company.

Mr. Carroll suggested beginning the public fund raising process by defining what the fountain is. Many people know it as, "the fountain in Bronson Park" rather than the Iannelli Fountain. It is also known as the Fountain of the Pioneers.

Ms. Ferraro advised that during a recent trip to Lansing, she noticed the fountain in that city's park. The fountain in Lansing may have been ordered from a catalog. Many cities have fountains similar to the one in Lansing. The Iannelli Fountain is a unique piece that was designed for the City of Kalamazoo, and that needs to be stressed during the fund raising process.

Discussion followed with regard to the water feature of the Iannelli fountain. Ms. Ferraro advised that it is not generally filled with water when events are being held in the park, such as the Art Fair that was held in the park during the past weekend. The reflecting pool is part of the design of the fountain, but the pool may not have been filled due to liability issues; people tend to sit on the fountain and climb on it. Mr. Carroll mentioned that there is more cost involved with maintenance of pools in the parks than there is with all of the pools in the city.

Ms. Ferraro advised that restoration of the fountain is not a priority for the City of Kalamazoo. It may not be possible to get city funding in addition to the \$40,000 that has already been allotted for the restoration. There is a possibility that the City Commission may decide that further fund raising efforts for restoration of the fountain are not appropriate at this time. Once the funds have been earmarked for restoration of the fountain, it would be unlikely that the money would be redirected for another project.

#### **vi. Operations (O) – Wright**

Mr. Wright advised that he had nothing to report regarding operations.

Ms. Jacobs requested a lunch meeting next week to discuss the content and design of the e-newsletter, and how it will work with the software. Ms. Ferraro advised compiling a list of people who will receive the newsletter prior to the subcommittee meeting. According to the city's I.T. dept., the HPC e-newsletter should not be difficult to implement. Mr. Wright suggested making a template for the newsletter.

### **X. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

#### **a. Appointment of Treasurer for HPC**

The decision regarding appointment of a Treasurer for the HPC was postponed from last month. Mr. Willson had volunteered to serve as Treasurer on a prior occasion, but he voiced concerns about the time constraints he will be dealing with. Ms. Jacobs offered to serve as Treasurer.

**Mr. Willson, supported by Mr. Wright, moved to nominate Katie Jacobs as Treasurer of the HPC. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**b. Discussion regarding possible Cancellation of July HPC meeting.**

Mr. Wright advised against cancelling the July HPC due to issues that may develop with the 100 block of E. Michigan. The general consensus was that cancellation of the August meeting would be more appropriate. Ms. Ferraro suggested proceeding with the July HPC meeting, and having a pre-meeting (6 p.m.) to discuss the study committee reports. The next meeting is scheduled for July 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Willson, moved to cancel the August 2009 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**XI. COORDINATOR'S REPORTS**

**a. Site Watch & Issues (Item F)**

Ms. Ferraro advised that some of the federal stimulus funds will be utilized to improve energy efficiency at city hall. The intention is to rejuvenate the existing windows and install different storm windows. Also, under discussion is the possibility of a "green" roof for city hall. Funding for these projects would be provided through an energy efficiency grant via the stimulus package.

Ms. Ferraro attended a meeting of the Vine Neighborhood Association. During the meeting, Don Jones from Habitat for Humanity advised that he spoke with several different neighborhood organizations (primarily the Vine and Northside Neighborhoods) with regard to refocusing Habitat for Humanity from new construction to rehabilitation projects. This may come to fruition within the next year, with a focus on finding the right houses to rehab. The new concept may entail saving the façade of the house, but not the interior, but many of the houses in these neighborhoods have few historic details remaining. The rehab projects may be done in focus areas, rather than scattered sites. Habitat may partner with the city and other local groups to accomplish this goal.

Working on multiple houses in a block will help foster a feeling of community, rather than rehabbing one house and leaving other houses on the block vacant or in disrepair. Habitat has a program which utilizes groups of high school students and other young people to paint an entire block of houses. This allows the neighborhood to be transformed over the summer, while teaching work skills to the students. This would be on a larger scale than the Building Blocks program, which focuses on smaller projects such as steps, lamps, sidewalks, and porch rails, etc. There is no specific plan at this point, but dialogue continues with various city officials and individuals from local organizations. Other local communities such as Grand Rapids and Battle Creek are also concentrating on rehab projects.

Mr. Holewinski suggested that the students from the upcoming window rehab seminar could gain experience working with Habitat on this project. Also, the master gardener program requires community service for their members, who may be able to assist with landscaping for this program. The Smart Shop may be able to provide metal rails and other local entities may provide stained glass windows for the subject properties. This would also be an opportunity to teach skills to the Habitat workers. Ms. Ferraro will provide further updates as information becomes available. She suggested that people from the Vine Neighborhood volunteer to help with rehab projects in the Northside Neighborhood and vice versa. The average house that Habitat builds costs around \$90,000; the average rehab is around \$60,000.

Mr. Aardema advised that there is a group of people in Grand Rapids doing a project called LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and Currently, this project is for new neighborhoods that want to be LEED certified. However, there has been discussion about having such a program for rehabbed homes. Ms. Ferraro advised that there is already a trend in that direction. Habitat's construction guidelines require their buildings to score 80 or below in terms of energy efficiency. Mr. Jones advised that Habitat hasn't built any homes above a score of 65 during the past couple of years.

Ms. Ferraro advised that an article in the Kalamazoo Gazette listed the HPC as a partner for the 100 block (W. Michigan Ave.) project. The HPC will be doing the designation for those buildings.

**XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

None

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Jacobs, supported by Mr. Wright, moved to adjourn the June 9, 2009 meeting of the Historic District Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 8: 30 p.m.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Recording Secretary)

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Staff Liaison)

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(HPC Chair)

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_