

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes
December 8, 2009
DRAFT

Third Floor Conference Room
City Hall
241 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: Chris Wright, Chair; Peter Carroll, Vice Chair; Michael Dunn;
Claire Milne

Members Excused: Tony Holewinski; Katie Jacobs, Josh Willson

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

Guests: Pam O'Connor, David Brose, Curt Aardema

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Wright called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

The absences of Mr. Holewinski, Ms. Jacobs and Mr. Willson were approved by unanimous voice vote.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (Item A)

Ms. Ferraro requested that a discussion regarding the Hillcrest Neighborhood be added to the end of the agenda.

Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Dunn, moved approval of the December 8, 2009 HPC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Pam O'Connor, David Brose and Curt Aardema were guests at the meeting.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. O'Connor advised that after a conversation with Mr. Aardema she learned that FOHEC (Friends of Historic East Campus) changed their mission. The focus is now on East Hall. The mission statement indicates that FOHEC should focus on the entire East Campus district not just one building in the district. The land could be utilized for parking or other uses. It is important to not jeopardize the effort for redevelopment. If the other buildings are taken down, we could lose the context, the National Register historic designation and the tax credit which would make it more difficult to find a developer for buildings on East Campus. Ms. Ferraro advised that East Hall is a separate district. Ms. O'Connor stated that East Hall is listed individually, but it is also part of the East Campus district. Ms. Ferraro stated that Spindler Hall and the recital hall need to be added to the National Register district. Those buildings were constructed in 1941 and 1942 so they are now old enough to qualify for the historic designation. Mr. Brose advised that he is a member of the FOHEC board. He suggested that Ms. O'Connor attend the next FOHEC meeting on the 18th and voice her opinion.

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

December 8, 2009

Page 2 of 8

Mr. Aardema suggested that someone who attends the HPC meetings should attend the next FOHEC meeting, which is scheduled for noon on the third Friday of the month in the Alumni Hall at Walwood Hall.

Ms. O'Connor advised that she would not be able to attend the December meeting, but she hopes to attend the FOHEC meeting on January 15th. Mr. Aardema urged those present to express their opinions to FOHEC and WMU.

Mr. Wright inquired if the HPC could draft a letter stating their concerns. Ms. Ferraro advised that the HPC could not advocate for the buildings on East Campus, but individuals may advocate for those buildings.

Ms. Milne suggested drafting a letter that would be educational. The letter could suggest adding the two buildings that were not previously included in the National Register designation. Ms. Ferraro stated that it might be possible to suggest adding the two buildings to make the designation complete. It is rare for a university to have a complete group of historic buildings. Mr. Aardema stressed the importance of having individuals other than the FOHEC board, express their opinions about East Campus.

Ms. Ferraro stated that she would draft a letter with the information that was discussed, and provide it to the HPC and guests for review. Mr. Carroll inquired if he could deliver the letter to FOHEC on December 18th and read it at the meeting. Ms. Ferraro responded in the affirmative.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Ferraro advised that she received the sponsor commitment form for the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Conference in Grand Rapids this summer. The HPC pledged \$500 to support the conference. The money will not be sent until January of 2010 because the sponsorship was part of the 2010 budget.

Grants are available through the Michigan Preservation Fund for \$1,000 to \$5,000. The grants cannot be used to buy property but they can be used for planning and feasibility studies. The grants can also be used to bring speakers to non-profit organizations. The deadline for the applications is February 1st.

The NAPC (National Association of Preservation Commissions) conference runs from July 28 through August 1st. For every five representatives from Michigan, the NAPC will provide one complimentary registration. The cost of registration is about \$200 to \$250. There will be a bus tour in Kalamazoo in conjunction with the NAPC conference.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

a. City (Jacobs) (Item C)

Ms. Jacobs was not present to provide the report.

b. Kalamazoo: Lost and Found book project (O'Connor) (Item D)

Ms. O'Connor advised that the Barnes and Noble purchase orders are still being sent to Ms. Ferraro. They should be sent to Ms. O'Connor and Barnes and Noble has been made aware of that. Ms. O'Connor delivered 20 copies each of the hard and soft cover books to Barnes and Noble today. The authors will be at Barnes and Noble from 1 to 3 p.m. for a book signing this upcoming Saturday, December 12.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 13, 2009 (Item B-1) and November 11, 2009 (Item B-2)

October 13, 2009

Ms. Ferraro referred to the gray highlighted areas of the October minutes (page 3). She confirmed that the number is correct. She requested that the reference to “\$131” by Ms. Jacobs, be deleted from the minutes due to the lack of verification for that figure.

Mr. Dunn, supported by Ms. Milne, moved approval of the October 13, 2009 HPC minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

November 11, 2009

There were no changes to the November minutes.

Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Wright, moved approval of the November 11, 2009 HPC minutes as submitted. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

IX. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Work Plan Reports from Team Leaders

i. Designation (D) – Jacobs

Ms. Jacobs was not present to provide a report.

ii. Communication (C) – Milne

Ms. Milne had nothing to report.

iii. Partnership Development (PD) – Willson

Mr. Willson was not present to provide a report.

iv. Preservation Month (PM) – Holewinski

Mr. Holewinski was not present to provide a report.

v. Iannelli Fountain (IF) – Carroll

Mr. Carroll advised that he met with Larry Bryan from Cincinnati Fountain on December 2nd. There have been many changes to the fountain over time, and the consultant is suggesting replumbing the fountain completely with lights incorporated into the water jets. For a nominal investment, the new equipment can maintenance friendly for an extended period of time and be much more energy efficient than the existing equipment.

Ms. Ferraro advised that that estimate includes plumbing, electricity and pumps; the existing filter is not sufficient to remove contaminants. There are new purification systems available to keep the sediment to a minimum and make water cleaner without use of chemicals. Mr. Carroll mentioned that it is becoming more of a liability for cities if the public comes in contact with water; the purity and cleanliness of the water can be an issue. Mr. Carroll stated that the consultant has advised that the

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

December 8, 2009

Page 4 of 8

equipment needs to be located in a room adjacent to the fountain rather than inside where it is subject to a high moisture level. The consultant suggested treating the west pool as its own entity and creating a mini station for that pool. The separate mini station could be very inexpensive and small scale, and located below ground, but that would depend on the expense.

The new water handling system would allow for different light patterns to be programmed into the system. A new water display may help with the fund raising efforts. The new system would be more streamlined and lower profile. It will be built into the new concrete that will be added to reinforce the existing structure.

Mr. Carroll advised that the consultants have a copy of the plans for the fountain, the report from Tom Nehil, and the circulation report from EPI. Larry Bryant from Cincinnati Fountain has worked on many fountains around the country. He probably won't have the report ready until January.

Mr. Aardema inquired as to the budget for the fountain restoration. Ms. Ferraro advised that the estimate from Tom Nehil was about a quarter of a million dollars. It may be more than that or possibly less because contractors are bidding lower than they did two years ago. Mr. Carroll stated that Mr. Nehil's budget includes the cover and other items that may not have been considered part of that budget. The concrete repair was estimated to cost \$125,000. That would include water proofing the pools and repairing the broken concrete. The consultant advised that the concrete work should be done first with the plumbing changes incorporated into the new concrete. It may be another year or two before the plumbing is complete.

Ms. Ferraro advised that Tim Fink from the Parks and Recreation Department advised that the light fountains that are part of the holiday decorations are non-functioning and will not likely work again.

Mr. Aardema inquired if there was something to initiate the fund-raising process. Mr. Carroll advised that the assessment needed to be completed in order to have an idea of what the goal would be for the fund-raising process. He has provided Andy Charles, a graphic designer, with the text for the brochure, which needs to be finalized. Ms. Ferraro advised that a fund will need to be set up at the city so there will be a place to accept the donations. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Brose met to discuss some of the details of the fundraising process. Mr. Brose stated that he spoke with his contacts at the National Register Program to inquire about thematic studies of concrete construction. They directed him to the National Parks Service, National Register Property of the Month. Last month the National Register property was a concrete Indian statue in Oregon, Illinois.

Ms. O'Connor advised that she read the Statement of Significance and she is discouraged. The sculptor, Lorado Taft, is internationally known for his work and that is a major portion of the Statement of Significance. They talk about his body of work, where it was and why it was done. That type of information does not exist for Mr. Iannelli. Mr. Brose advised that he hadn't had a chance to pursue the aspect of the Art Deco style and the part it played in Iannelli's work.

Mr. Brose will talk with Margaret Nouri who runs the Native American program at the University of Michigan. She has been in contact with a number of people, including the Gun Lake tribe of Pottawatomi. Ms. Nouri is an Oshtenobik ????? and she is working in conjunction with the University of Michigan Museum.

Mr. Carroll commented that improving the acceptance of the Iannelli Fountain could expand the opportunity for resources during the fund raising process. Mr. Brose mentioned that if the Native

American community doesn't raise objections regarding efforts to save the fountain that should also be helpful during the fund raising process.

Ms. O'Connor stated that Sara Weisblat from the Weisblat Family Foundation contacted her to inquire if she had any information that should be discussed at the conference call later that day. Ms. O'Connor had previously forwarded an estimate to the Weisblat Foundation. Ms. O'Connor confirmed that funds are not being requested from the Foundation this year for restoration of the fountain. In the year that fund raising begins, a request would be made to the Foundation for matching funds up to \$15,000 per year for a three year period.

Mr. Carroll suggested that the subcommittee meet on January 12th at 6 p.m. in the third floor conference room before the HPC meeting. Ms. Ferraro stated that she would reserve the room.

vi. Operations (O) – Wright

Mr. Wright suggested sending an e-mail to the team leaders to discuss which items can be marked off the work plan. He encouraged everyone to submit their work plan reports prior to the next meeting.

X. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

a. 1884 movie – DVD sales (Ferraro) – report

Ms. Ferraro stated that sales of the DVD have now reached \$1,000; there are only nine copies remaining in inventory. The initial investment was \$300. Ms. O'Connor advised that when she sent the second round of fund raising letters for the O'Connor fund, she included an order form for the DVD. She will be requesting reimbursement for the money she used for postage to mail the DVD's; the reimbursement would be about \$30.00. The order form for the DVD is on the city's website.

Ms. Ferraro advised that she would be providing the O'Connor Fund reports on a quarterly basis.

Affirmation of e-mail decision to purchase a small handcart to be used in delivering copies of "Kalamazoo: Lost and Found"

Ms. O'Connor has already purchased the cart and is seeking reimbursement for that cost, which is approximately \$24.00.

Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Wright, moved approval to reimburse Ms. O'Connor for the cart she purchased to deliver copies of "Kalamazoo: Lost and Found." With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Request from Old House Network for support for January 23, 2010 Old House Expo (Pat McCarthy – Old House Network.)

Ms. Ferraro advised that Ms. McCarthy was unable to attend the December HPC meeting. Ms. McCarthy has requested that Ms. Ferraro stand in for her as representative of the Old House Network. The Old House Network sent out an appeal in early October which has yielded gifts to the Network in the amount of \$1,700. Ms. Ferraro inquired if the HPC would be willing to make a donation to the Old House Expo. It costs about \$6,000 each year to host the Expo.

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

December 8, 2009

Page 6 of 8

Ms. O'Connor suggested that HPC and the Network could sponsor a table and share that space during the Expo. This would provide a place to sell books and DVDs. Sales of the DVD have provided some extra money in the HPC budget, which could be used for that purpose. Mr. Dunn mentioned that this expense is not included in the HPC's 2010 budget. Ms. Ferraro suggested a donation of between \$500 and \$700. Mr. Wright expressed concern about donating the entire \$700 profit from the sales of the DVD. Discussion followed with regard to an appropriate amount to donate to the Expo. Mr. Carroll mentioned that the sales from the DVD were not included in next year's budget. A donation to the Old House Network to support the Expo would provide an opportunity for the HPC to have a booth at the Expo where they could possibly sell more books and DVDs. Mr. Brose suggested providing a donation now and then donating sales of the DVDs from the Expo to the Old House Network. Mr. Wright advised that the Network needs the money up front. Ms. Ferraro stated that the booth can be purchased for \$90; the additional funds would be used for the sponsorship. She has submitted an application to MSHDA to request that they also sponsor a booth at the Expo. Mr. Dunn suggested being more conservative and donating \$500. Ms. Ferraro suggested that the remaining \$200 could be used to purchase additional DVDs to sell at the Expo. Ms. Milne concurred with the suggestion to not spend the entire \$700 on the Expo. Ms. Ferraro indicated that there is some leeway with regard to choosing the location of the booth.

Ms. Milne, supported by Mr. Wright, moved approval for the HPC to spend \$500 as a sponsor of the Old House Expo. The \$500 will be coming from the general fund/sale of the DVD. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Ferraro thanked the HPC for their support. She advised that the Expo will be held on Saturday, January 23rd, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers are needed to work at the Expo. Discussion followed with regard to compiling e-mail addresses for an HPC newsletter. Last year at the Expo, an intern circulated among the attendees to get answers to a survey – Ms Ferraro suggested having a person dedicated to gathering email addresses for the HPC might give the best result. Mr. Aardema suggested asking people at the door if they are interesting in being on the e-mail distribution list for the HPC newsletter and entering them in a drawing for a copy of Kalamazoo: Lost and Found.

The Historic Homes Committee will start meeting again in January for next year's tour.

NAPC Sponsorship form (Item E)

Please refer to Item VII, last paragraph.

Revised Study Committee reports – planning for public hearing. Next steps (Ferraro) (Item F)

Ms. Ferraro advised that the revised Study Committee Report was returned from the State Historic Preservation Office with Bob Christensen's comments. He advised that the 100 Block of E. Michigan should be added to the Haymarket District. This would require including the Argos East building as a non-contributing building. Ms. Ferraro has been in communication with the Skartsiaris family, who owns the Argos East building as well as DKI, James Daly from Mavcon, and the lawyer for the Skartsiaris family. After some discussion, the Skartsiaris family decided they would not object to being included in the historic district.

Ms. Ferraro revised the Study Committee Report and the National Register Nomination. The National Register Nomination will not be on the agenda for the State Preservation Review Board until May because it is too late to meet the January deadline. Ms. Ferraro spoke with DKI about the necessity of making sure the 100 block is a certifiable district. If the National Parks Service doesn't certify the local historic district, that means the tax credits would not be available for the 100 block project.

She suggested that the HPC to officially approve the nomination since it is an modification to the nomination the commission reviewed in July.

Ms. Ferraro hopes to have a schedule showing when the rest of the events for the historic designation will occur. The public hearing regarding the local historic district will be scheduled for January. DTI, Sandy Gillman, and representatives from the Skartsiaris family will be invited to attend the public hearing and make comments. The public hearing in front of the City Commission will likely take place in February or March, after the closing.

Mr. Dunn, supported by Mr. Carroll, moved approval of the revised study committee report for the local historic district to include the 100 block of E. Michigan. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

XI. Coordinators Reports

Site Watch & Issues (Item G)

Hillcrest Neighborhood National Register nomination Ms. Ferraro reported that Elspeth Inglis from the Kalamazoo Valley Museum is interested in working with 7th and 8th graders at the Kazoo School to research and help prepare the Hillcrest National Register Nomination. She was enthused about the idea when Ms. Ferraro approached her about it. Ms. Ferraro will look into the Save America's Treasures, which is educationally oriented, to find out if there is a grant available. This could be a great way to raise awareness of preservation among the kids and encourage their appreciation of the neighborhood. The boundaries of the neighborhood are Howard, Cherry, Oakland and Stearns. Details of this project will need to worked out with the director at the Museum. This should be integrated into the 2010/2011 curriculum or the following year. Ms. Ferraro already has a lot of data for the kids to use.

Ms. Ferraro advised that there is no Section 106 report for December.

There will be two, two-week-long window workshops in February and March for contractors. There will also be two window workshops for homeowners. The session for homeowners will be a three-day workshop at the Sexton's Lodge. All the workshop are free. The participants will leave the workshop with the basic tools to do window rehab.

Ms. Ferraro was advised of another \$4,000 that is available for eligible programs. She is writing a grant proposal for distributing the DVD from the 2009 window workshop to all the CLG's and Historic District Commissions in Michigan, along with the book, "Save America's Windows."

Ms. O'Connor mentioned that she recently finished editing a piece for the National Trust Forum News regarding the July window workshop. She will distribute the information when it is available.

XII. Commissioner Comments

Mr. Wright inquired as to the feedback from the HDC regarding the possibility of commissioner training. Ms. Ferraro advised that they would prefer an evening session in February. Ms. O'Connor suggested that the HPC should not pay for the training unless at least six of the seven HDC members attend the session. Ms. Ferraro suggested that the HDC members could attend the training provided by the MHPN at the conference in Ann Arbor, but transportation to the training may be an issue. She will have further discussions with the HDC about a training date that is agreeable with the commissioners and determine the

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

December 8, 2009

Page 8 of 8

cost of bringing a trainer to Kalamazoo. It is important that they commit to the training because it is part of the state mandated for Certified Local Governments.

Ms. Ferraro advised that nearby commissions could be invited to attend the training, and the local HDC could attend training sessions in neighboring towns. Ms. O'Connor suggested coordinating with Nan Taylor regarding the training in Battle Creek. Further details are available in the Network Minutes.

Mr. Wright advised that he visited the Mt. Home Cemetery recently and he feels the cemetery is in disarray. Ms. Ferraro pointed out that the grave sites belong to the families and not much work can be done by anyone other than the owners of the monuments.

Mr. Wright suggested looking into the private property issue to determine what exactly could be done to clean up the cemetery. Mr. Aardema suggested getting a waiver for permission to work on the monuments. Ms. Ferraro advised that it is difficult to find lot owners. Many of the grave sites are over a hundred years old and the families are not around to take care of them anymore. Ms. O'Connor suggested that high school students who need to do community service could be enlisted to assist with the clean up efforts. Ms. Milne was advised that a new stone can be set in place with the same information, but the broken pieces of the old stone cannot be removed. The new stone essentially becomes a gift. Ms. Ferraro stated that she would request more information about this situation and put it on the next HPC agenda. City staff would likely accept volunteers to help with the clean up effort.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Wright, moved to adjourn the December 8th meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Dated: _____
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by: _____ Dated: _____
Historic Preservation Coordinator

Approved by: _____ Dated: _____
HPC Chair