

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes
January 12, 2010
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;
Tony Holewinski; Katie Jacobs; Claire Milne; Josh Willson

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

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Approval of Absences was postponed to allow for Ms. Jacobs to arrive at the meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Carroll requested the addition of a discussion regarding HDC training under Old Business.

(7:05 p.m. – Ms. Jacobs arrived.)

Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Wright, moved approval of the January 12, 2010 HPC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (December 7, 2009)

Mr. Brose referred to page 4 and advised that Margaret Nouri is in charge of the Native American Language Program. The name of the Indian tribe is spelled as follows: Anishennaabe(k).

Mr. Dunn, supported by Ms. Jacobs, moved approval of the December 7, 2009 HPC minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

V. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Aardema, Mr. Brose and Ms. O'Connor were present at the meeting.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. O'Connor advised that the MHPN (Michigan Historic Preservation Network) awards would be announced at their annual conference in Ann Arbor in mid-May. The applications are available on the MHPN website; they are due by February 17th. It has been awhile since a Kalamazoo project won an MHPN award. Projects completed within the last three years would be eligible for an MHPN award.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Ferraro advised that Johanna LaRue, Chief of Projects and Content at the CVC (Quebec) will be making a trip to Kalamazoo to see some of the Frank Lloyd Wright houses in this area. Ms. Ferraro was hoping to accompany her on the tour. However, her visit is scheduled during the week that Ms. Ferraro and many of the HPC members will be at the conference.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

a. City (Jacobs) (Item C)

Ms. Jacobs advised that the HPC budget for 2009 was about \$11,000; approximately \$9,700 of that money was spent. There is a carry-over of \$1,253.22.

(7:12 p.m. – Mr. Aardema arrived.)

There were questions regarding the 2008 and 2009 budget. Ms. Ferraro suggested that she and Ms. Jacobs meet with Karleen Steppenwolf, Records Coordinator for the City of Kalamazoo, who may be able to provide answers to those questions. Ms. Jacobs would like to see how the current budget is being affected as the year progresses.

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

Ms. O'Connor stated that she submitted an invoice for royalties for books sold from the second printing in the amount of \$330.28. Ms. Ferraro advised that this is a unique line item for the city. It would be difficult to set up an invoice to keep track of what has been sold. Ms. Houghton has also submitting an invoice for her royalties.

Ms. O'Connor inquired if anyone was willing to help her run the booth at the Old House Expo on January 23rd. Mr. Brose, Mr. Holewinski and Ms. Milne volunteered to help with the booth.

Ms. O'Connor inquired if the HPC would like to offer the book at a discount during the Old House Expo. The retail price of the hardcover book is \$46.95 and the retail price of the soft cover book is \$34.95. Discussion followed with regard to an appropriate discount for the book. A request was made to have the recording secretary review the minutes from 2009 to determine the amount of the discount offered last year. Ms. O'Connor suggested that the book be offered for a discount greater than 20%.

Ms. Milne, supported by Mr. Dunn, moved to allow up to a 40% discount on the book, *Kalamazoo: Lost and Found*, at Ms. O'Connor's discretion, during the Old House Expo.

Ms. Jacobs suggested posting a sign stating that the discount would apply only on the day of the Expo. With a 40% discount, the hard cover books could be offered at a price of \$28.17, and the soft cover books would be \$20.97. Ms. Milne suggested offering the books for \$30.00 (hard cover) and \$20.00 (soft cover).

Mr. Milne, supported by Mr. Dunn, amended the motion to state that *Kalamazoo: Lost and Found* could be sold during the 2010 Old House Expo at a price of \$30.00 for the hard cover and \$20.00 for the soft cover, which approximates a 40% discount. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Jacobs referred back to the budget with the following comment: the \$500 donation to the Old House Network appears twice in the 2009 budget. Ms. Ferraro advised that the \$500 donation from January of 2009 was for the 2009 expo. The \$500 donation made later in 2009 was for the 2010 Expo. The second donation came from the sales of the DVD.

Mr. Wright advised that he met with Mr. Carroll regarding the work plan. They discussed the fact that Preservation Month is approaching soon, and it was suggested that Mr. Carroll step in as Chair of the February HPC meeting (Mr. Wright's term will be ending in March). Mr. Wright requested that updated work plan updates be submitted to him within the next couple of days so that the current information can be handed over to Mr. Carroll. The updates need to be included on the back of the HPC agenda.

IX. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Work Plan Reports from Team Leaders

i. Designation (D) – Jacobs

Ms. Jacobs had nothing to report.

ii. Communication (C) – Milne

Ms. Milne had nothing to report.

iii. Partnership Development (PD) – Willson

Mr. Willson had nothing to report.

iv. Preservation Month (PM) – Holewinski

There was a brief discussion with regard to the need to energize the planning process for Preservation Month. The process was more organized last year, and work should begin shortly to make sure speakers and events are lined up for this event. There are people in the community who would like to participate, but someone needs to contact them. It was suggested that this year's Preservation Month activities could be less extensive than last year's.

Ms. Ferraro advised that a Great Unveiling has been scheduled for Saturday, May 22nd at Rich Munda's house on Burr Oak. Mr. Munda will be providing food from his restaurant for the participants in this event.

Discussion followed with regard to the possibility of having a separate meeting regarding the work plan. Mr. Carroll offered to host a mini retreat at his house on February 13th from 9:00 a.m. to noon to discuss the work plan.

Ms. Ferraro inquired if the HPC would like to find a nationally known speaker for Preservation Month or if they would prefer to find someone locally. Mr. Holewinski suggested that someone from the local Habitat for Humanity office might be willing to provide a presentation regarding rehabilitation. Ms. Ferraro stated that Don Jones from Habitat for Humanity advised that it takes about three times as long to rehab an old building versus building a new one. It might be advisable to have a discussion about how best to make use of the homes that are

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

January 12, 1010

Page 4 of 8

in good enough condition to be rehabbed. It has been suggested in the past that someone needs to convene a meeting among the various parties to discuss preservation. Maybe that meeting could take place during Preservation Month. Representatives from Habitat for Humanity, KNNHC (Kalamazoo Northside Nonprofit Housing Corporation), the City of Kalamazoo, the County Land Bank and other parties would be invited to participate in the meeting.

Ms. Milne referred to the rehab training programs that have become available lately. Coordinating those training sessions with Habitat for Humanity might be an interesting partnership. Mr. Brose suggested having a private meeting with key individuals, and then opening the topic up for public discussion. The HPC could spearhead the meeting. Mr. Aardema suggested that the County Land Bank could provide a house to be rehabbed. Ms. Ferraro advised that the city has acquired over 70 houses for potential rehab projects. She will speak with Lee Larson, Building Inspector, to obtain further details about those properties, and to possibly set up a meeting with Ms. Ferraro, Mr. Larson and Mr. Holewinski.

Mr. Wright suggested appointing people to serve on the Preservation Month Subcommittee. Mr. Holewinski, Ms. Ferraro, Mr. Carroll and Ms. Jacobs volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. Mr. Holewinski will e-mail the subcommittee with proposed meeting dates.

Ms. Ferraro advised that Preservation Month 2010 will not be as extensive as it was last year. There will be an awards ceremony, a Great Unveiling and an event to be hosted by preservationists in Oshtemo. There were approximately 8 or 9 Preservation Month events in 2009; there will be about half that number in 2010.

Mr. Carroll suggested that Ms. Houghton might be willing to conduct tours of the State Hospital campus, the water tower and East Campus, which could be part of Preservation Month activities. Similar tours in the past have attracted over 100 people.

Ms. Milne inquired if the awards ceremony and the reception would be catered. Ms. Ferraro advised that it would be up to the committee to decide if those events would be catered. A location for the awards ceremony and the reception have not yet been determined. It was suggested that a different venue would be nice. City Hall and the Ladies Library were suggested as possible sites for the awards ceremony. If the chosen site has a kitchen facility, that will help determine how to approach the issue of catering.

Discussion followed with regard to the importance of having publicity for Preservation Month. Ads can be posted for free in many places. Ms. Ferraro stated that she would be sending out announcements shortly regarding the call for nominations, which are due on March 1st.

Mr. Aardema suggested asking the city to donate a house to use for a rehab/restoration project. Ms. Ferraro stated that she is expecting to receive a list of city-owned properties that may be eligible for rehab.

Discussion followed with regard to the possibility of sending the HDC members for training in February. Battle Creek, Holland and Jackson will have training sessions in the near future, and it may be possible for Kalamazoo to have a

combined training session with the a historic district commission in one of the cities. Members of the Holland HDC attended the November HDC meeting in Kalamazoo. Ms. Ferraro will check with Nan Taylor regarding the possibility of hosting a regional training session in Kalamazoo in March.

Mr. Wright inquired if there was a new HDC member. Ms. Ferraro advised that Chris Roussi was recently appointed to the HDC.

1. Preservation Awards mailing (Item E)

Ms. Ferraro advised that the mailing for the preservation awards will go out this week.

v. Iannelli Fountain (IF) - Carroll

Mr. Carroll had nothing to report.

vi. Operations (O) – Wright

Mr. Wright had nothing to report.

X. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

XI. COORDINATORS REPORTS

a. Site Watch & Issues (Item F)

Ms. Ferraro stated that planning for the window rehab workshop is going well.

Ownership of Noble Lodge has been officially transferred to Western Michigan University. Mr. Aardema inquired if it would be possible to get in front of that issue before it becomes necessary to catch up with it. Ms. Ferraro advised that the task force (East Campus) is scheduled to meet on February 4th. Mr. Aardema inquired if it would be acceptable to approach WMU about this issue. Ms. Ferraro advised that HPC members cannot advocate, but guests such as Mr. Aardema would be free to do so.

Mr. Carroll suggested that Noble Lodge could be converted to a hotel and utilized for training hospitality majors at the university. Ms. Ferraro stated that the lodge was redone in the late 1990s for use by the department of Corrections. It might be possible for the city to approach WMU to ask about their plans for the building and offer assistance.

Ms. Ferraro advised that she has the preliminary elevation of the 100 block of E. Michigan. She can ask Mr. Dally to provide a presentation for the HPC; he will be at the HDC meeting next week. May or June is the anticipated start date of the 100 block project.

Ms. O'Connor inquired if it would be possible for people to tour the 100 block buildings during Preservation Month. Ms. Ferraro advised that there will be safety issues with those buildings during the renovation. The closing on the property will not likely occur until February or March and work should begin shortly thereafter. Mr. Dally might host the preservation awards in 2011 when the project is further along.

Ms. Ferraro stated that progress is going well on the 100 block nomination. She will resubmit the amended nomination to Bob Christensen at the State Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

January 12, 2010

Page 6 of 8

Office next week. The Preservation Review Board will likely review the addition of the 100 block of E. Michigan to the Haymarket Historic District at their May meeting.

The HPC sponsorship of the NAPC conference has earned the HPC one free registration. The two and a half day conference will be in Grand Rapids at the end of July. Volunteers are needed to help prepare for a tour of Kalamazoo that will take place the day before the conference. The tentative title for the Friday mobile workshop is “The Kalamazoo Preservation Story.” Ms. O’Connor suggested that Lynn Houghton might be willing to assist with the tour. Ms. Ferraro may send out a request for assistance to determine who is willing to help. It might be possible to present a case study and/or a tour of one or more of the historic districts. Ms. O’Connor mentioned that the Kalamazoo preservation story is in the beginning of Kalamazoo: Lost and Found.

Ms. Ferraro advised that there will likely be discussions at the National Trust Forum regarding “Cash for Caulkers” and window replacement, etc. Ms. Ferraro is proposing a sign to be posted in the houses where window rehab workshops are being held. The signs would read, “THESE WINDOWS MATTER.”

Ms. Ferraro referred to the Section 106 Report that was included in the HPC packets. Some of these are Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) properties received by the city as tax foreclosures. Ms. Ferraro uses the Reconnaissance Level Historic Resource Survey (1999 – 2001), to review which properties in the Section 106 Report are historic. The historic review decision will be based on the historic integrity of the property, not condition. Ms. O’Connor advised that she spoke with Ms. Ferraro earlier in the day to express her concerns about the properties on the Section 106 Report. There are 49 NSP buildings; demolition has been proposed for 35 of those buildings. There should be a conversation with the city to discuss the potential for loss of tax base regarding the proposed demolitions. Also, more work needs to be done on the demolition ordinance, and the historic resources survey should be updated.

Mr. Aardema commented regarding the success the City of Kalamazoo has had in the past with regard to preservation. The proposed demolitions are a disappointment for a city the size of Kalamazoo, and could create serious negative impact. Ms. O’Connor pointed out that in cities that don’t have a historic survey, the houses are more susceptible to demolition. Mr. Aardema inquired as to what steps could be taken to prevent demolition, and if the houses would be put up for sale by the city.

Mr. Willson inquired as to what the HPC could do as a group to save the houses. He suggested that education about historic preservation may be a key factor in saving the houses. Many people who spend our tax dollars don’t know about historic preservation and the impact it has on the community. Ms. Ferraro advised that some of the biggest gains in historic preservation in Kalamazoo occurred during economic hard times of the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. We are currently in economic hard times. Maybe it’s time to really push for more historic preservation.

Mr. Willson suggested having conversations with the Mayor and City Manager to try and get the city to consider historic preservation as a viable option. Ms. O’Connor inquired if it would be appropriate to speak with the city’s neighborhood coordinator regarding this matter. Ms. Ferraro suggested that representatives from the HPC could meet with Laura Lam, Community Development Manager, to discuss the properties in the Section 106 Report.

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

January 12, 1010

Page 7 of 8

Mr. Aardema inquired if the NSP funds could be used for renovation rather than demolition and Ms. Ferraro replied in the affirmative.

It was suggested that it might be possible to find a block where the majority of houses are threatened and funnel rehab dollars into that area, subsidizing the rehabs with the NSP funds. Ms. Ferraro expressed concern that rehabbed houses may wind up being sold for less than the cost of the rehab.

Mr. Willson inquired as to the best way of educating people at the city regarding these issues. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that Lynn Houghton's historic homes tours are important. That educational activity spreads. Mr. Willson inquired if anyone knew someone in the Northside Neighborhood who would be interested in participating in historic preservation.

Mr. Holewinski referred to the Smart Shop, an artist's studio in the Northside Neighborhood, which is in a rehabbed building. Mr. Aardema mentioned that the Stuart Neighborhood is connected to the Northside Neighborhood. Ms. Ferraro referred to old information pertaining to Preservation Month activities that was utilized to get people involved. She suggested having a neighborhood leaders' workshop to discuss the byproducts of preservation. The Northside Neighborhood begins at North Street. Mr. Aardema suggested contacting members of a historic church (Paterson and Park Sts.) on the north side to inquire if they would be willing to host a meeting about historic preservation. Ms. Ferraro suggested hosting a smaller version of the Old House Expo on the north side of the city or in any of the city neighborhoods.

Ms. Ferraro advised that attendees at the NACD window workshop in the fall mentioned they were unaware of some of the simple things they could do to restore their windows. Maybe a small event could be convened at the NACD (Northside Association for Community Development) to discuss historic preservation. Discussion followed with regard to the positive aspects of preservation. An increase in property values is one of the positive side effects. Many people don't understand that an old house can become more valuable.

b. Old House Network Expo updates (Ferraro)

Ms. Ferraro advised that the Old House Network received a \$2,500 grant from MSHDA (Michigan State Housing Development Authority) for the Old House Expo. Old Home Rehab contributed \$725 to the Expo. Wilson Insurance Company and the Heritage Company also contributed to the Expo. Rick and Molly Reeves contributed \$200 and requested \$100 in matching funds from Pfizer. Their first fund appeal raised almost \$1,800.

Mr. Carroll mentioned that there had been discussion at the last HPC meeting about signing people up at the Expo to receive an e-letter. Ms. Ferraro stated that there is a space on the back of the ticket for people to provide contact information. The ticket can be entered for a door prize. She is thinking about adding a line that will state, "This will also add you to a mailing list for the HPC." Mr. Carroll suggested having high school students circulate among the attendees to talk with them about signing up for the newsletter.

XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Carroll, supported by Mr. Wright, moved to adjourn the January 12, 2010 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Recording Secretary

Dated: _____

Reviewed by: _____
Staff Liaison

Dated: _____

Approved by: _____
HPC Chair

Dated: _____