



Landmarks Commission

Minutes

Whitewater Landmarks Commission

Thursday, November 3, 2016 – 6:00 PM

Municipal Building, City Manager's Conference Room, 2nd Floor
312 Whitewater Street, Whitewater, WI 53190

Call to Order

- Call to Order and roll call: Richard Helmick will take notes for the Commission.
Chairperson Blackmer called the meeting to order
Present: Patricia Blackmer, Kori Oberle, Suzanne Haselow, Ken Kienbaum, Daniel Richardson, Patrick Singer, Richard Helmick
Absent: None
Staff present: None
Guests: Anne Hartwig, Charlotte Haselow
- Approval of Agenda
New Business item, Library Report on Expansion Project, will be moved to the first item under reports in order to facilitate Hartwig's time at the meeting.
MSC Oberle/Haselow to approve the agenda as arranged.
Ayes: Blackmer, Oberle, Haselow, Kienbaum, Richardson, Singer, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None
- Approval of Minutes – October 6, 2016
Minutes were not available at this time. This item will be tabled until the next meeting.
- Set date and time of next meeting – Thursday, December 1, 2016 - 6:00 PM
The next meeting of the Landmarks Commission will be held at 6:00 PM, Thursday, December 1, 2016 in the City Manager's Conference Room.
- Hear Citizen Comments: No formal Landmarks Commission Action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Commission discusses that particular item.
There were no citizen comments.

Reports

- Report on the Library expansion project (Hartwig)

The library board has been exploring a private/public partnership as a possible way to develop library expansion. The developer has been provided a letter of support from the Library Board to WEDA in order to secure some tax money. He has been exploring possible sites around Whitewater. As yet, he has not chosen a site. The Library Board is still waiting for him to bring forth a proposal. Oberle commented that the word on the street suggests that the developer has been talking to property owners to secure property. If that is the case, the Landmarks Commission would like to be at the table to discuss the project, especially in a pro-active manner. Hartwig asked what the Landmarks Commission would like. She said that there have been no time lines established. Singer commented that the developer will be leasing the library space to the city. Blackmer asked if the developer was aware of the Landmark's position. Singer suggested that the next time the developer gives the Library Board an update that the Landmarks Commission should be invited to hear firsthand what is being proposed. Hartwig agreed that is a good idea. She further said that any help the Commission can provide would be appreciated. Richardson asked what has changed from the previous library being built. Hartwig said that the city could not afford the cost of an expansion on the existing site. Singer said that the library mission has changed from the past. It is no longer just a place to have books. Hartwig said the developer wants to have the new building located on Main St. She added that the project may not even happen. Oberle said that the Commission cannot wait to see if it will happen. Hartwig concluded by saying that the next time the developer comes to discuss the project, the Commission will be invited to attend the meeting.

- Birge Fountain Report (Kienbaum/Richardson)

Richardson reported that the last meeting of the Birge Fountain Commission was this past May. The chair of the Committee has not called another meeting. Since May, a number of concerns have become evident. Richardson said that there are visible deteriorations of the fountain structure, statues, and possibly, the mechanics. He showed photos of the deterioration. He is increasingly distressed by what he is seeing. A meeting needs to be called to deal with these issues. Oberle said that in April, the Commissioners discussed this concern with the Birge Fountain Committee. At that time, the Commissioners suggested that an appropriate art, historian, experienced in fountain restorations, be contacted to give a professional opinion on how to restore the fountain and steps to take to maintain and protect it into the future. This suggestion was to be discussed at the next Birge Fountain Meeting that should have been held this past fall. Kienbaum said that there needs to be some protection of the fountain from the winter elements. Blackmer asked Singer if he thought it would be a good idea if Chuck Nass, Streets Superintendent, be invited to a Landmarks meeting in order to discuss the issue. Singer said he did invite Nass and that Nass is intending to attend the Commission's December meeting. Kienbaum said that Home Lumber is getting a bid together for a cover to be used during the winter. The bid should be available at the December meeting. Discussion ensued on the funds available to the Birge Fountain Committee and how they were appropriated. Oberle commented that the fountain is an important, local landmark and as such the Commission is responsible for it. Commissioners agreed that a Birge Fountain meeting needs to be called to deal with this issue. Kienbaum said that the city clerk will call a meeting as soon as the election is over. Singer added that the Fountain Committee will have \$20,000 at the end of 2016. Blackmer summarized the discussion:

1. A meeting of the Birge Fountain Commission will be called as soon as possible,
2. An accurate and detailed account of remedial steps will be addressed,
3. Home Lumber's bid will be reviewed.

- Report on Whitewater Historic Homes Photo Project (Richardson)
Richardson said that he has taken a few dozen more pictures since the last meeting. He intends to develop a map to highlight where he has been taking pictures in the city so Commissioners can more easily track his progress. Oberle asked if there would be enough public interest to put the photos in a slide show and present it the public sometime this winter. It would be good public education of what the Commission is doing. Richardson said he would think about this.
- Meetings of the Burial Preservation Acts Committee (Helmick/Oberle)
The Legislative Council Committee has not meet since the last report. There are two more meetings being planned. At these meetings, statutory language changes will be addressed. Richardson said he recently talked with Chip Brown, attorney for the Historical Society. Brown felt good about what is happening at the Legislative Council meetings. Oberle said that a straw vote taken at the last meeting resulted in an 8 to 5 vote not to disturb any burial sites.
- Walton Oaks, 227 S. Boone Court and Moksnes House Nominations as Local Landmarks (Helmick/Blackmer)
 - 227 Boone Court: Helmick reported that the property owner has been contacted. The property owner indicated that he would get back to Helmick with questions.
 - Walton Oakes: Blackmer attended the UFC meeting and volunteered help from the Commission to nominate the site as a local landmark. The UFC expressed willingness to go forward with the nomination.
 - Moksnes House: Blackmer contacted the architect for the house and discovered that he had grown up in Whitewater. He is willing to work with the Commission on the nomination. Blackmer will keep in contact with him. The home owner is in favor of the nomination as well. Blackmer needs to get a copy of the templet developed by Luckett for nominations.
- Brickyard Park (Brickyard Historic Area) as a Local Landmark (Keinbaum)
Kienbaum is waiting for the city clerk to have some time to help him.
- Effigy Mounds Preserve Report (Adopt a Mound Program/Mounds Maintenance) (Oberle/Helmick)
 - Oberle reported that on Oct 24 the Friends of the Effigy Mounds together with the Urban Forestry Commission held a program at city hall on invasive species that are at the Mounds. The meeting was attended by 20 – 25 people who expressed great interest in the discussion.
 - Adopt a Mounds work day Oct 24 9:00AM to 12:00PM. A press release on the activity was placed in the Janesville Gazette. A radio interview with Michael Kliss on WFAW is scheduled for Monday, November 7. Oberle and Blackmer will discuss the Adopt a Mound Program. Today, personal email invitations were sent to 24 people to invite them to attend the program. Some have already responded.
- Report on Budget (Singer)
Cameron will be placing \$2,000 in the City budget to be shared by the Commission and the UFC to attend conferences and receive training.
- Report on Wisconsin Historical Society Historic Preservation Conference (Blackmer/Richardson)
Richardson said that Chip Brown gave an excellent presentation on the Burial Mounds Preservation Act. The conference was very well attended. Richardson said the local projects by small communities were of great interest.

Unfinished Business

- Mounds Preserve signage project update (Oberle/Kienbaum)
Kienbaum was pleased to report that the stones are all at the Preserve.
- Lyman Wight Octagon House garage addition oversight update (Blackmer)
Blackmer talked with the owner the other day. The cement pad has been poured. No work is being planned to be done until this Spring.
- Haselow's Project regarding Local Landmarks introduced to public, report on venue for display, selected landmark site, dissemination of project, corporate sponsorship of project (Haeslow)
Haselow asked how much money the Commission would want to spend on this project. She presented some financial figures on printing and distribution for consideration. She also inquired if private companies here in Whitewater would be interested in contributing to this project. According to her information, they would not want to contribute. Blackmer asked if the elementary school would be willing to help with it. Haselow said no. Oberle asked if we could find companies in a compatible industry to help fund the project. Another thought would be to have a public program held at the library, possibly in May during Historic Month. Singer talked to Kelly Davis from the school board. She suggested joining it with the Park and Rec program. That way the city would have more control over it. Other ideas were put forward. Haselow suggested that she and Oberle work together on a program ideas and then bring them back to the Commission for consideration.
- Grant Proposal for Survey of Effigy Mounds Preserve (Oberle)
A copy of the proposal was distributed to the commissioners. Blackmer remarked that the work Oberle has done was excellent. She recommended that the Commission give the proposal the go ahead. Oberle gave a brief review of what was written and the time line that needs to be met in order for the Historical Society to consider the application. Itemized budgets are expected soon from architects interested in working on the survey. At least two are needed in order to complete the paper work for the Historical Society. Everything must be postmark by November 11, 2016 to be considered.
MSC Singer/Haselow to approve the survey grant presented by Oberle.
Ayes: Blackmer, Oberle, Haselow, Kienbaum, Richardson, Singer, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None
- Addition of recent Local Landmarks to brochure(s)/City Website (Richardson/Smith)
The wording for two additional sites was shared. Blackmer asked for comments. Minor language corrections were discussed.
MSC Haselow/Oberle to approve the wording for the Starin Park Water Tower. Ayes: Blackmer, Oberle, Haselow, Kienbaum, Richardson, Singer, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Changes will be made to the other landmark and brought back to the Commission for adoption.

New Business

- Individual Commission members action plan for December
Helmick: complete the minutes in a timely fashion.
Richardson: work on the photograph project; contact Walworth County to see how the LIDAR is working in relationship to the Effigy Mounds Preserve.
Kienbaum: the Birge Fountain and the Brickyard Park.
Oberle: finishing the paper work for the grant; finishing the boulder project – letter for the Kienbaums as well as the purchasing of the plaques; meet with Haselow on the public education project.
Haselow: continue working on the public education project.
Singer: contact Jim Allen regarding the fountain and its maintenance.
Blackmer: Moknes House paper work for nomination; Walton Oakes nomination; Hendricks House for possible nomination; attending the library meeting on the building expansion proposal.
- Revision of City Landmarks Ordinance regarding decertification/demolition
There are portions that are unclear and need to be re-written. Blackmer suggested that the Commission start to take small sections for study and possible re-write, not the entire ordinance. She asked commissioners to **review sections 17.12.040 and 17.20.010** for the next meeting and be prepared to discuss language changes.
- Library Board Report on Expansion Project (Hartwick) * This item to be discussed first at the meeting by guest, Ann Hartwick (please see above).
- Birge Fountain protection/preservation
Significant action will need to be taken. Kienbaum suggested that the repairs that were made earlier this year will need to be redone. No other additional comments were added to what was previously discussed.
- Public education regarding Local Landmark status and designation of Local Landmark status for neighborhoods
Blackmer suggested that the community is unaware of the work that the Commission does. She asked if there were other agencies or ideas that could be used to help better the public's understanding.
- Notification of Local Landmarks to area realtors
Oberle reminded the Commission that a letter at the end of each year go to property owners thanking them for another year of maintaining their property was discussed at an earlier meeting. Blackmer will work on a letter to local realtors for consideration at the Dec. meeting.

Future Agenda Items

- City acquisition of the historical machine parts of the old mill that was located along Main St.
- Inventory tags for city owned, historical property

Good of the Order

Blackmer thanked Oberle once again for all her work on the grant project. She also thanked Kienbaum for getting the boulders to the Effigy Mounds Preserve. She thanked Anne Hartwig for attending the meeting and agreeing to include the Commission in future discussions of the library expansion.

Adjournment

Blackmer adjourned the meeting at 7:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Richard Helmick, secretary, pro-tem