



## Whitewater Landmarks Commission

### Minutes

Thursday, November 5, 2015 – 6:00 PM

Municipal Building, City Managers Conference Room

312 Whitewater Street, Whitewater, WI 53190

#### Call to Order

- Call to Order and roll call

Chairperson Blackmer called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Present: Patricia Blackmer, Kori Oberle, Ken Kienbaum, Richard Helmick

Absent: Suzanne Haselow, James Langnes III

Staff present: Alan Lockett

Guest: Daniel Richardson

Blackmer noted that Langnes has attended only one Commission meeting since his appointment to the Commission.

- Approval of Agenda

MSC Oberle/Kienbaum to approve the agenda as posted.

Ayes: Blackmer, Oberle, Kienbaum, Helmick

Nays: None

Abstain: None

- Approval of Minutes – September 3, 2015

MSC Oberle/Kienbaum to approve the minutes as posted.

Ayes: Blackmer, Oberle, Kienbaum, Helmick

Nays: None

Abstain: None

- Set date and time of next meeting – Thursday, December 3, 2015 - 6:00 PM

The next meeting of the Landmarks Commission will be held on Thursday, December 3, 2015 at 6:00 PM 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

- Friends of the Mounds (Oberle)
  - Oberle and Helmick presented a PowerPoint program on the Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve (WEMP) to c. 50 people at the Walworth County Historical Society in Elkhorn on 10/15. Approximately 10 people from this same group toured the Preserve on 10/17. Some general public also joined the tour. Thanks to Pat Blackmer for this opportunity.
  - The Friends of the Mounds met on 11/2 from 6:30 to 7:35 p.m. 10 people were present including 2 who had not attended previous meetings. The draft bylaws were reviewed in detail and changes have been made for review before their final reading at a proposed meeting on 11/30 at 6:30 at the public library. It is expected that those present at the 11/30 meeting will vote to approve the bylaws, thereby formally creating the Friends group as a membership organization.
  - On Mon, 11/23, Oberle and Helmick will present a program on the WEMP to the Delavan High School Alumni in Delavan. Thanks to Pat Blackmer for this opportunity.
  - The Friends will co-host a program with the Urban Forestry Committee at the public library on Monday, 2/1/2016, time TBD. The program will feature a speaker(s) (TBA) on native woodland and grassland plants, and will be free and open to the public. Attendees will be encouraged to become members of the Friends of the Mounds group.
- Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve – Preservation and Maintenance Plan (Helmick/Oberle)
  - Oberle & Helmick attended the WI Archeological Society's autumn meeting on 10/24 in Middleton. This included a tour of the Society's Heim Mound in Middleton, focusing on site maintenance. It was interesting to learn that some boundaries of the Heim Mound project beyond Society property and on to private property, and that the Society struggles with invasive plants, large trees that need trimming and removal.
  - On 10/27 archaeologist Kurt Sampson, co-owner of Gathering Waters LLC & current president of WI Archeological Society, visited the WEMP w/ Oberle & Helmick to discuss vegetation, best mowing practices / procedures, marking perimeter edges of mounds so they have at least a 5' to 15' buffer.
  - On 11/3 Oberle & Helmick toured Dodge County's Nitchke mounds with site manager Bill Ellenbach, Kurt Sampson, and Bernadette Williams, Invasive Species Specialist with the DNR Department of Forestry. It was learned that this site's mound boundaries project beyond County-owned property and on to private property, and that the County struggles w/invasive plants, large trees that need trimming and removal. They had installed a walking path with landscape cloth and wood chips. This trail surface is being abandoned because it did not work as expected. They now are mowing the path, regularly as needed, and then mowing the mounds with a riding lawnmower 3xs per year. People are staying on the walking path because they can

- easily see the path and it is temporarily lined with pieces of fallen trees and tree branches. Ellenbach trains and oversees the mowing staff (1 individual) at the site.
- On 11/3 Oberle received permission from the Parks Director, Matt Amundson, (& filed the required paperwork with the City) to volunteer prepping the Panther mound on the northeast corner of preserve for measuring / surveying / mapping to correct the walking trail in order to avoid walking on the mound and to determine where pieces of mound are missing and/or damaged.
  - On 11/4 Oberle volunteered 3 hours of work on the panther mound. She estimates another 3 hours are needed to complete the task. In theory, this work is being studied and documented as a model for a potential “Adopt a Mound” volunteer program marketed to families and interest groups, supervised by trained volunteers. All 13 mounds need this treatment, to be followed then by professional measuring / surveying.
  - With Amundson’s permission, Oberle contacted Jefferson County to inquire about the availability of using LIDAR mapping at the WEMP. She was told that the county does not own the LIDAR system and had rented it from a private company. Oberle suggested that the Commission wait until Walworth County acquires the system on its own.

Blackmer thanked Oberle for all the work and time she has provided in support of the WEMP.

- Birge Fountain (Luckett)  
There has not been a meeting of the Birge Fountain Committee. Luckett has left a message with the Committee secretary, Charles Jacobson. Jacobson has not returned his contact. The Committee has not met since 3/18/15. Discussion ensued. Kienbaum will call a meeting and forward an agenda to the city clerk, Michelle Smith.
- Landmark Signage (Luckett/McDarison)  
No report. Luckett has not gotten in contact with McDarison.

### **Unfinished Business**

- Work on wording on signage for the Mounds in conjunction with the Friends of the Mounds Committee and production time for boulders and plaques. (Oberle)
  - The plan was again presented to the Parks Board on 10/19. The Parks Board approved the signage project, with the understanding that the two new signs with the aerial maps of the Preserve will have to wait to be produced and installed until the new walking trail is determined and established. Production of the 8 metal plaques will proceed.
  - On 10/29 or 10/30 Oberle called Kienbaum to ask about inspecting the 8 boulders that he and his brother are donating to hold the 8 metal plaques. The Parks Director has asked Oberle to measure and photograph the boulders and report back to him before

the boulders are moved to the City garage, before the snow arrives. Kienbaum is checking with his brother and will get back to Oberle.

- Kienbaum said it will be important to make sure that granite boulders be selected and used.

- Interactive Map on the city's web site (Luckett)

Scott Weberpal has submitted an email request to Eric Compas to fix the glitch in the system. Luckett needs permission to edit the system. To date, there has been no reply from Compas.

- Revisit the idea of a "retreat meeting"

Blackmer requested that this item be tabled until the vacancy on the Commission is filled. This way, everyone will be brought up to speed with the same information.

- City Water Tower nomination as a local Landmark with added "Bibliographic References". (Luckett)

Luckett distributed a recent copy of the Royal Purple (11-04-15). The Royal Purple led its front page with an article on the water tower. Luckett also reviewed the material he had gathered on the water tower for its nomination as a city landmark. Blackmer reported that she and Oberle expanded and edited some of the material Luckett had prepared. Their intent was to make the nomination a perfect example of what should be done on a nomination form. Blackmer suggested that the new material be placed as an addendum to what Luckett had done. A review of the new material was presented. Discussion ensued. Hopefully, the nomination's public hearing can be held at the Commission's upcoming, December meeting. Blackmer will contact the City Clerk in order to reserve an appropriate room for the meeting as well as send out the necessary notices.

- Consideration of the spillway on Trippe Lake (Kienbaum)

Kienbaum presented some information on the spillway – not to be confused with the large, present dam going across the stream. The spillway is just to the North of the dam. His ultimate goal is to preserve it from being destroyed by listing it as a landmark. Discussion ensued. Questions were raised regarding the spillway's integrity as well as any concerns that the DNR would raise. Also, there is a question of who owns the property – the City or the condominium association. Discussion ensued as to its merits under the designation criteria as listed in the ordinance governing landmarks. Luckett suggested that it is no one's interest to do anything with the spillway. Oberle suggested that a photographic record be made of the spillway to document the state of its existence. The record can be kept in the Landmark's files and also be shared with the Historical Society. Kienbaum will continue his research.

## **New Business**

- Research on Grants (Blackmer)

Blackmer asked for specific needs to address in the grant request for work at WEMP. Oberle suggested that the priority now is to get a new, archeological survey of the property. She will contact the State Historical office to get direction on what would need

to be done and how much it would possibly cost. Blackmer and Oberle will work together to do more research.

- Report on UW-Whitewater Stone Pillar Entranceway Project, Part 2 (Blackmer)  
Blackmer reported that the original end date for the project, as listed in the media, was October 31. Recently, the contractor reported to her that there is no end date. He will stop reconstruction if weather turns bad and then continue in the spring. The time capsule was opened. Unfortunately, most of the material that was in it was damaged through water seepage. The time capsule has since been reburied with new materials inside.
- 1014 West Main Street Update  
An editor from the Royal Purple had contacted Blackmer about the petition to save the Maple trees on the property. Blackmer told her that the situation was not under the purview of the Landmarks Commission. To date, the large oak tree along the west side of the property is still standing.
- Continue to work on an annual calendar of events and tasks to be done and/or attended
  - Blackmer reported that in 2020, we will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of when the WEMP was first surveyed by Charles Brown. It would be appropriate for the Commission to plan some sort of program to mark that event.
  - No other items were brought forward to be included in an annual calendar.
- Continue discussion and creation of a list of strategic priorities on which the Landmarks Commission should focus on over the next 5 years  
Blackmer suggested that the coordination of media and events for the public presentation of the Landmark plaques be coordinated by Suzanne Haselow.
- Report on status of city owned property monitored by Landmarks Commission, Part 2 (Blackmer)  
Blackmer has located the missing dolphins from the Birge Fountain. They are now being safely stored on private property. To ensure their continued safety and availability in the future, Blackmer suggested that they be stored on/in city property. Discussion ensued. Luckett will investigate the possibility of storing them at the City Armory. Oberle stated that they should be properly crated before storage.
- Discuss best mowing practices/procedures at the Effigy Mounds Preserve and marking the perimeters of the mound.
  - To move forward with both of these needs, we first need to know the correct, accurate measurements of each of the mounds. We have between now and when the mowing season begins next April to get this figured out. Oberle suggested the following, in order: fundraising. Contracting for a survey, overseeing the survey, map making, trail determination. trail installation, mowing training, and mowing supervision.
  - The dimensions of each mound need to be factually determined through an archeological survey.
  - MSC Oberle/Helmick that the Landmarks Commission commits to secure \$600 to hire Gathering Waters LLC to do an archeological survey of the Panther mound at WEMP.

Ayes: Blackmer, Oberle, Kienbaum, Helmick

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Oberle will report to Amundson what the Commission intends to do.

- Plan to fill commission seat vacated by Suzanne Popke  
Lockett reported that the vacancy has been posted on the city's web site. Oberle encourage commissioners to actively think of possible, new members.

### **Future Agenda Items**

- Public hearing for the nomination of the water tower.
- McDarison's updated spread sheet on her work.
- Haselow to coordinate the presentation of the plaques and possible media releases.
- Revisit vacant, commission seat.
- Storage of Birge Fountain cherubs.
- Survey money for WEMP.

### **Good of the Order**

Thank you to Alan Lockett for all of his work on the water tower nomination.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Blackmer at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted

R. Helmick, secretary