



City of
WHITEWATER
Landmarks Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, June 4, 2015 – 6:30 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 6:30 PM.
Present: Pat Blackmer, Suzanne Haselow, Suzanne Popke, Kori Oberle, Richard Helmick
Absent: Ken Kienbaum, James Langnes III
Staff present: None
Guests: Taylor McDarison
- Approval of Agenda
Under Friends of the mounds, Oberle will be reporting, not Helmick.
Under Research on Grants, remove Haselow, and replace with Blackmer
Delay the spillway on Trippe Lake to the next scheduled meeting.
Postpone the report on Birge Fountain.
MSC Haselow/Oberle to approve the agenda with corrections as above.
Ayes: Blackmer, Haselow, Popke, Oberle, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None
- Approval of Minutes – May 7, 2015
Correct the last line under Reports, Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve to read “...apply chemicals to deter invasive plants and to seed with **no-till** native prairie plants....”
MSC Oberle/Haselow to approve the minutes of May 7, 2015 as presented.
Ayes: Blackmer, Haselow, Popke, Oberle, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None
- Set date and time of next meeting – Thursday, July 2, 2015 - **6:00 PM**.
Commission members discussed whether or not there should be a meeting held in July. Consensus was to follow past precedent.
MSC Oberle/Haselow to hold the next meeting of the Whitewater Landmarks Commission on August 6, 2015 at 6:00 PM.
Ayes: Blackmer, Haselow, Popke, Oberle, Kienbaum, Helmick

Nays: None

Abstain: None

- 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)
A group of 15 people met at the city library on June 01, 2015. A summary (attached) of the meeting was distributed to the commissioners.
- Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve – Preservation and Maintenance Plan (Helmick) (Oberle)
 - Midwest Prairie was contracted to do work at the Preserve. Whether or not this work has been completed is undetermined. Oberle will contact Matt Amundson for clarification.
 - Oberle proposed to develop a short power point program to list preservation tactics learned from the staff at the National Effigy Mounds Monument. Discussion ensued. Commissioners encouraged Oberle to develop the power point program.
- Whitewater Effigy Mounds – Face Book (Oberle)
Oberle would like to remove this item from each month's meeting agenda unless some unusual activity arises or progress report is needed.
MSC Oberle/Haselow to remove Facebook from the monthly reports.
Ayes: Blackmer, Haselow, Popke, Oberle, Kienbaum, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None
- Landmark Signage (Popke/McDarison)
McDarison displayed prototypes of two molds that she has completed. Discussion ensued. McDarison explained that the plaques will not exactly represent the specific houses but will reflect their color pallets. McDarison still needs to create three, additional molds. Oberle asked for opinions of the two commission members who presently own landmark homes. Discussion ensued. Questions were raised on the colors of the plaques and their attachment to the houses. The completion date was May 31, 2015. McDarison asked that it be extended until the next, scheduled meeting in August.
MSC Haselow/Oberle to extend the project's completion date to August 6, 2015.
Ayes: Blackmer, Haselow, Popke, Oberle, Kienbaum, Helmick
Nays: None
Abstain: None

Unfinished Business

- Work on wording on signage for the Mounds in conjunction with the Friends of the Mounds Committee
Oberle asked for an extension on this project until Monday, June 9, 2015. She will email a copy to Blackmer for a first read and following that, to the rest of the commissioners. She will also send a copy to Bill Quackenbush, Ho Chunk Nation, for his remarks.
- Interactive Map on the city's web site (Lockett)
No report.

New Business

- Research on Grants (Haselow/Blackmer)
Blackmere works with the Community Foundation of Southeast WI. The foundation controls some money through a fund called The Getzen Fund. This fund is specifically established to help restore commentaries within Walworth County. Blackmer reports that the Foundation would consider the Indian Mounds Preserve as a monument. Oberle pointed out there are several mounds that need restoration within the Preserve. Would the foundation recognize individual mounds as being under its requirement for monuments? Discussion ensued. Commissioners are excited about the possibility of being awarded a grant to help with mound restorations. Various steps were discussed prior to submitting a request. This will be a Future Agenda item.
- City Water Tower nomination as a local Landmark (Haselow)
Oberle explained that she received an email from Luckett indicating he had met with Rick Lien to learn his reaction to the proposal. According to Luckett, Lien was in favor of the nomination. Luckett should be contacted again to determine the next steps to be taken in the nomination process.
- Annual Report to be filed with the State Historical Society.
The report is due August 01, 2015. Blackmer will be completing the report by then. Oberle also reported that the report needs to be filed with the National Parks Service as well in order for the city to maintain its CLG status. Again, Blackmer said she would complete this.
- An annual calendar of events and tasks to be done and/or attended
Blackmer asked commissioners to give this some thought and develop ideas for an annual calendar. Helmick reminded the commissioners that the major duties of the commission were education and preservation. Thinking along these lines would help us to organize our ideas. Blackmer would like the commissioner's ideas by the next meeting.
- Discuss and create a list of strategic priorities on which the Landmarks Commission should focus on over the next 5 years.
Blackmer wants the commission to be forward looking. She requested commissioners to think on this as well and be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting.

Future Agenda Items

- Calendar of Events
- Strategic Priorities
- McDarison's plaques
- Luckett report on the site map
- Signage for the mounds

Good of the Order

Adjournment

Blackmer adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted.

R. Helmick, Secretary

June 1, 2015: Summary of conversation regarding pros and cons of revitalizing the **“Friends of the Effigy Mounds Preserve”** (FOTEM) group which last met in March, 2013.

Present: Pat Blackmer (Landmarks Commission Chair), Karen Coburn (Urban Forestry Commission Chair), Nancy Dade (early member of FOTEM), Richard Ehrenberg (botanist), Michael Gueno (UW-W Asst. Professor of American Indian studies), Richard Helmick (early member of FOTEM, Landmarks Commission member), Ben Johnson (grandson of Pat Blackmer), Kori Oberle (Landmarks Commission member; Parks & Rec. Board member), Suzanne Popke (Landmarks Commission member), Ellen Penwell (Whitewater Historical Society President; League of Woman Voters leader), Dan Richardson (Walworth County Historical Society President), Roberta Taylor (early member of FOTEM), Denay Trykowski (Preserve’s native plant garden designer and principal gardener)

With us in spirit: Linda Loomer (early member of FOTEM)

Reasons to revitalize organized group:

1. Group meetings provide learning and touring opportunities that can further engage people in the Preserve and hopefully increase group membership.
2. Help (unaware) people become aware of Preserve, including immediate neighbors of Preserve, and other stakeholder groups, including at UW-Whitewater.
3. Help draw public and government attention to Preserve’s maintenance & interpretation needs.
4. Keep group members & general public updated on Preserve maintenance.

Past & current challenges of “Friends of Effigy Mounds Preserve” group:

1. Many players, many perspectives amongst all the different groups and individuals involved in the Preserve: City staff, supervisors & Dept. heads; City volunteers; neighbors of the Preserve; Wisconsin Historical Society’s State Archaeologist; Ho-Chunk Nation’s Historic Preservation Division;
2. What role has the Friends’ Group played with Preserve and players listed in # 1 above? There are so many needs and opportunities at the Preserve; where to begin?
 - a. Group worked to change name from “park” to “preserve”.
 - b. Also helped to procure and place large green Preserve sign that stands on sidewalk on Indian Mound Parkway near Preserve entrance, in conjunction with City and with Ho-Chunk Nation.

c. Also helped with property line dispute resolution.

d. Also designed garden and procured and planted native plants in area immediately adjacent to new Preserve sign.

3. Agreed at March 2013 (last) meeting to not elect officers, establish bylaws, create mission and vision statements, or apply for 501(c) (3) status.

Summary of **recent** and **current** maintenance & education efforts at Preserve:

Controlled Burn on March 10, 2015.

Contract w/ Midwest Prairies approved by Parks Board at 3/10/15 meeting; here are meeting minutes:

<<Discussion and action related to the maintenance of the Whitewater Effigy Mounds Preserve and direction related to proposals received: Amundson discussed the proposals received from Midwest Prairies and Tallgrass. He would recommend Midwest Prairies and the plan would include no till grass seeding on the area outside of the mounds. Getting rid of invasive is a two part process. Herbicide would be used on a time and material basis. City staff would work with their staff so that the City can potentially take over maintenance when the process is finished. This could take 3-5 years –and looking at other options. Board member Ken Kidd is looking for more direction from Midwest Prairies on how to delineate the mounds. A motion was made by Knedler to approve the proposal and as step one to remove invasive species, and to use Midwest Prairies to help us plan how to specifically help with the mounds, second by Oberle. Ayes: Jen Kaina, Ken Kidd, Bruce Parker, Kori Oberle, Brandon Knedler. Noes: None. Absent: Nate Jaeger, Rachel Deporter, Sarah Hansberry.>>

Interpretive signage. The Parks Dept has made new signage for the Preserve a 2015 project. Kori Oberle is researching and drafting the text for review by the Landmarks Commission, the Urban Forestry Commission, the WW Historical Society, the Ho-Chunk Nation's Historic Preservation Department, with final approval coming from the Parks Board and Matt Amundson. Ken Kienbaum has donated large rocks that will be placed in the Preserve in early winter 2016. The rocks will have signage attached to them. A new sign will be placed near the entrance and hopefully another new sign near the sidewalk.

Summary of Preserve's Basic Info

1. Owned by City of Whitewater. According to Parks & Rec. Dept's Strategic Plan, the Preserve was established in 1973. (Purchase date by City and subsequent administrative history are being researched.)

2. Managed by the City's Parks & Recreation Department as one of the City's many public parks,

including budgets, contracts, and procurement.

3. Preserve measures 21.5 acres and contains 13 extant effigy and geometric mounds, and a remnant of an oak savanna.
4. Designated a Whitewater Landmark in 1994. (Protective)
5. Listed on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places in 1991. (Honorary)

6. Preserve has its own "Preservation & Maintenance Plan" drafted with community input in 2010; finalized, approved, and revised in 2011 & 2012 by the Parks Board.

7. Parks & Rec. Dept. responsible for management and maintenance; Landmarks Commission responsible for preservation and education.
8. Walworth County does not have LiDAR* equipment/software to easily and clearly map the boundaries of each mound, although neighboring counties do have it.

Action Plan Agreed Upon at June 1, 2015 meeting:

1. Before July 4, Ellen Penwell will suggest to Whitewater's League of Women Voters that it feature the Preserve (and its needs) at one of its monthly issues forum meetings that will begin again in September, 2015. The hope is that such a meeting would provide a broader reach out to local stakeholder groups (& their individual members) than what tonight's gathering can do on its own. Hopefully, this will result in more related groups and interested people becoming involved with the Preserve's "new" Friends' group.
2. Dan Richardson will ask the Walworth County Historical Society Board at their next meeting (1st Tuesday of each month) if it would fund the purchase of the LiDAR system and donate it to Walworth County. The hope is that this would allow Walworth County and the City of Whitewater to prepare LiDAR mapping of the Preserve's mounds to document original boundaries and shapes of all effigy and geometric mounds. This is necessary to establish a new hiking trail that doesn't tread on any of the mounds, update visitor info, and plan for restoration of damaged mounds.
3. Kori Oberle will ask Parks & Rec. Dept. Director Matt Amundson to clarify whether a Preserve friends group would
 - a. Fall under City Friends Group's bylaws, 501 (c)(3) status, etc., or
 - b. Need to craft its own bylaws, mission, vision, tax status, etc.
4. This group will meet again during the week of July 20, 2015. Email will be used to determine meeting date, time, & location. Agenda will include reports on items listed directly above as 1, 2, & 3.

Contacts mentioned during meeting:

☞ Denay Trykowski recommended DNR's Matt Zine as a specialist in oak savanna restoration:

Matt J. Zine, Natural Area Conservation Biologist for WI Dept of Natural Resources, (608) 266-8916, Madison, WI; matthew.zine@wisconsin.gov