

MINUTES OF THE WHITEWATER LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Whitewater, Wisconsin
March 2, 2017

Call to Order and roll call.

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. by Chairperson Blackmer. MEMBERS PRESENT: Blackmer, Oberle, Helmick, Kienbaum, Richardson, Haselow. MEMBERS ABSENT: Singer. OTHERS PRESENT: City Clerk Michele Smith.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes of 2/2/17. It was moved by Helmick and seconded by Kienbaum to approve the Landmarks Commission minutes of 2/2/17. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Date and Time of Next Meeting. April 6th will be the next regularly scheduled meeting, with May 4, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. being the next meeting. (This is the meeting where the Public Hearing relating to the nomination of the Dr. Virginia Epps' property on Highland Street (Moksnes house) as a local Landmark will be held.

Citizen Comments: None.

REPORTS:

Machine Parts (turbine) from Old Stone Mill. Pat Blackmer reported that a meeting is scheduled for next week relating to this project. Helmick noted that a volunteer by the name of Rich Forman has expressed interest in assisting with restoration of the hydro-power mill. Forman is eager to lend his expertise as a retired power engineer. Blackmer noted that there is a three-ring binder on file at the Library, and additional research could occur there.

Whitewater Historic Homes Photo Project. This project will continue once weather permits.

Burial Preservation Acts Committee. Kori Oberle and Richard Helmick reported that there has been no evidence that the Legislature has scheduled an update for deliberations on this subject. There is no new information to report.

Walton Oaks Local Landmarks Nomination. Pat Blackmer will be in touch with Ruth Walton as soon as she returns from Florida. Further information will be coming.

Brickyard Park. (Brickyard Historic Area at corner of Jefferson and Starin). Ken Kienbaum confirmed through the City Clerk's office that the property is still titled in the name of the City of Whitewater. It was agreed that it would be best to wait to do anything further on this until a new Parks and Recreation Director is hired and on board.

Effigy Mounds Preserve /Grant Report. Kori Oberle, who had worked tirelessly on the grant application, informed the group that Whitewater was not selected to receive the \$22,000 grant funds to be used to survey the Mounds. Oberle has been researching details on the other communities that were selected over Whitewater and the rationale used, so as to be able to use the information to benefit Whitewater in a subsequent submission. As a result of the inability to have the Mounds surveyed at this time, the boulder/plaque project is on hold. The Commission thanked Kori for the massive amount of time she spent on the Grant submission.

Inventory Tags for City-owned Historical Property. Suzanne does not yet have the quotation for the tags. She did participate in a lengthy webinar that discussed adhesives. Once the quote is received, Suzanne will contact Clerk Smith to get the supplies ordered.

Proposed Library Expansion Project. Kori Oberle indicated that she met with City Manager Clapper regarding the possible building of a Library in place of the Mercy Medical Center (Locally-designated Landmark – J.J. Starin House, 507 W. Main Street). The Landmark may potentially be replaced with a four-story Marriott Inn. Oberle believes that the development of this hotel would reduce the value of the Main Street historic district. Clapper indicated that Landmarks Commissioner Singer met with Clapper after the last Landmarks meeting, and asked Clapper to be sure that the Landmarks Chairperson be provided with the building plans once they are supplied to the Neighborhood Services Director. At their February 20, 2017 meeting, the Library Board charged the Developer with

coming up with a parking plan that convinces them (the Library Board) that there is sufficient parking for 150 cars. The Neighborhood Services Director, after completing calculations using other business models, has determined the amount of parking needed. There is some concern that the Developer may not be able to come up with the required amount of parking. It was noted that there are 62 spots located in the Congregational Church Parking lot, but that does not constitute even half of what is needed, and no one from the Congregational Church has confirmed that they have even been contacted by the Developer (Troy Hoekstra). Also necessary is acquisition of the property south of Mercy Medical, owned by Robin Vos. It has been reported that the Developer has not been successful in making contact with Vos, so that property's availability is uncertain as well. This is problematic as the Developer has to break ground by August in order to receive his tax credits.

The Developer has indicated he is not interested in saving any portion of the J.J. Starin property (currently Mercy Medical) as Marriott will allow only specific designs for their hotels. The possibility of physically moving the structure would be possible, but as time moves forward, it is very unlikely that this could be marketed and arranged. In addition, the Developer has asked the Library for a fairly large up-front financial contribution. It was noted that the Developer has desires this specific location.

Richard Helmick, who also serves on Library Board, confirmed that the Developer has asked for the up-front costs, but the Board has asked him to meet the City's conditions prior to any local contribution. Further information will be provided at the next meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Landmarks Project to introduce Information to the Public It has been decided that this project will coincide with the Library's Summer Reading Program and will cater to the younger generation at this point. A very detailed work plan was presented and one of the projects includes making buildings out of clay. Assistance would be appreciated at the Library on June 15, 2017.

Public Education Regarding Local Landmark Status and Education regarding Local Landmarks Status for Neighborhoods. Blackmer reported that a subcommittee was formed for this subject. A potential audience would be the Friends of Fairhaven, at their 9/26/17 meeting.

Revision of City Landmarks Ordinance. It was agreed that any amendments to the Landmarks Ordinance should wait until after pending matters are resolved.

Moksnes/Epps Nomination Paperwork – Highland Street. Virginia Epps has executed Nomination paperwork to have her home at 970 Highland Street designated as a local Landmark. The home was designed by Peter Fritz Dreger, is described as "Wrightian" and was built in 1970-71 for Stephen and Billie Moksnes. Architect Dreger is an American architect who is licensed in several States. Dreger was a local Whitewater talent who attended Whitewater College High and graduated from Whitewater High School in 1960. The Moksnes family sold the home to Dr. M. Virginia Epps in 1993, and she still resides there today. The Public Hearing will be held at the May Landmarks meeting.

Conservation of Birge Fountain. The Birge Fountain meeting scheduled immediately before the Landmarks Commission meeting had to be cancelled due to the inability of several members to attend. Kori Oberle reported that she had met with City Manager Clapper about the Birge Fountain on February 21, where she informed the Manager of the Conservator cost. She indicated that the Manager was interested in going forward with the full project at a cost of \$15,000. The Manager was not, however, certain as to whether approval of the Agreement would have to go before the Common Council. Clapper is to check that matter out and get back to Oberle. Oberle indicated that she is also awaiting the meeting of the Birge Fountain Committee for an additional approval, even though at the January meeting the Birge Fountain group unanimously voted to approve the assessment. Oberle wants to be sure the Birge Fountain group knows the price and details. Oberle is waiting to hear back from the City Manager. She is prepared to go before the City Council should this be required to approve the assessment agreement. Once the conservator views the Fountain, he can provide a detailed listing of necessary repairs/improvements, a proposed timeline, and a cost estimate. It was agreed that Chairperson Blackmer will e-mail Birge Fountain Committee chairperson Luckett to request that Luckett reschedule the Birge Fountain meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Consideration of the Nomination of Flat Iron Park; the property at 401 W. Center Street; and the property at the corner of Center and Fremont Streets as local Landmarks. It was agreed to look into the possibility of

whether the owners of the property at Center and Fremont (believed to be First Citizens State Bank) would be interested in having that property designated a local Landmark. City Clerk Smith is to send Helmick information as to the ownership of the property at 401 W. Center Street (corner of Center and Fourth). It was agreed that designation of Flat Iron Park as a Landmark should be delayed until after Birge Fountain restoration/decisions are made.

Individual Commission Assignments.

Future Agenda Items: Discussion about a Library window display in May to celebrate Historic Preservation Month is to be discussed. An Action Plan/Update on the Landmarks brochure needs to be discussed.

Adjournment. It was moved by Helmick and seconded by Oberle to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele R. Smith, Clerk