



Whitewater Landmarks Commission

MINUTES

Thursday, September 7, 2017 – 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

Chairperson Blackmer called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Present: Patricia Blackmer, Suzanne Haselow (arrived 6:10 PM), Ken Kienbaum, Daniel Richardson, Richard Helmick, Kathy Brady (arrived 6:25 PM), Chris Grady

Absent: None

Guests: Cameron Clapper, Patrick Singer

- Approval of Agenda

MSC Helmick/Kienbaum to approve the agenda as written with the last four items from New Business to be considered before Reports.

Ayes: Blackmer, Kienbaum, Richardson, Helmick

Nays: None

Abstain: Grady

- Approval of Minutes – August 31, 2017

Minutes were not available for approval. Item tabled until the next regular meeting.

- Set date and time of next meeting – October 5, 2017

The date of the next meeting will be October 5, 2017 PM in the City Manager's Conference Room at 6:00 PM.

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.

New Business

- Discussion on agreeable procedure for introducing new ordinances (Clapper)

Singer led the discussion. In the regular order of things, the sitting commission would take up an item before coming to the council. There has been no governing rule on this procedure. At times, this has happened many different ways. There has also been some confusion in the past over who should have the city attorney draft new ordinances. Clapper has checked with other cities to see what is their standard of practice. Singer said it is a balance (for the council) to move quickly and still protect the public interest. Blackmer noted that there is an unprecedented situation with Landmarks voting no confidence in its council representative and asking the council for a new representative. This still needs to be answered.

- Discussion regarding Council action of Ordinance 17.08.040, Sub-Section 17.08.040 (9) and Sub-section 17.08.040 (10) (Clapper/Singer)

Singer stated that original drafting of the ordinance was for 30 days. The author of the ordinance requested it be extended to 60 days to give city offices more time to respond. Helmick questioned why there is not an equitable time line for all parties. Singer agreed. Clapper concurred. Time lines for all parties will be 60 days. Additionally, this will be the process used only for city owned property.

- Discussion and possible action regarding rewrite of Ordinance 17.12, Sub-Section 17.12.020 (3.1)

Haselow questioned why Commission minutes would not be sufficient notice to the city administrator. Clapper felt more direct communication would be better. Singer added that notification is only part of the issue. Notification does not automatically equal consent. Blackmer pointed out the significant amount of research that goes into designating a property prior to its consideration as a potential landmark. Haselow suggested that this rewrite amounts to a lot of micro management. Clapper pointed to the “intent” of the notification. Blackmer suggested that the way the ordinance proposal is written seems to be backwards. Singer said that this is just a first attempt at writing this. Brady suggested the following wording:

“Before the Landmarks Commission explores a city owned property as a potential landmark, the Commission should notify the City Manager with a notice of intent. The City Manager shall then include the notice of the requested designation on a Common Council meeting agenda, that is held within 30 days of the notice, and provide the Common Council with its option to object to the designation under Whitewater Municipal Code Section 17.12.020(5).

The Common Council shall not be required to act on the designation. However, if at the meeting, a majority of the voting Common Council members vote to object to the designation, the Landmarks Commission shall dismiss the proposal.”

All parties agreed that this would be a better way to have it stated. The city attorney will redraft the ordinance so that Landmarks can review and comment on it during the Commission’s October meeting.

- Budgetary needs for Landmarks Commission (2018)

Blackmer pointed out dues and conferences that the Commission is expected.... Plus some expenses needed for educating for the public interest. Clapper asked for a simple statement of needs and estimated costs to be considered rather than having a separate line item in the city budget for the Commission.

(Singer and Clapper left the meeting at this time.)

Reports

- Report on Whitewater Historic Homes and Landmarks Photo Project (Richardson)

No report.

- Status of the Burial Preservation Acts Committee (Helmick)

No report. This item may be removed from future agendas until additional, legislative action is considered.

- Brickyard Park (Brickyard Historic Area) report (Kienbaum)

No report

- Effigy Mounds Preserve (Helmick/Blackmer)

Blackmer reported that the Park and Recreation Board has heard a request to mow the grass around the perimeter of each mound. It was pointed out to the Park and Recreation Board that such an activity had several, cautionary considerations such as the equipment to be used, conditions under which the mowing would be done, and, most importantly, where the exact perimeters were located.

- Proposed Library Expansion Project (Helmick)

Helmick reported the Library Board is currently updating a space needs assessment with library consultant Anders Dahlgren of Library Planning Associates. Information from the assessment will be presented at future, public venues.

- Birge Fountain Conservation (Kienbaum)

The conservator's report has not been received.

- Historic City Owned Property Inventory Tags

Blackmer has the tags. She volunteered to tag all the Pescheret prints at the city library. Once done, she intends to tag other property housed by the city.

Unfinished Business

- Progress of subcommittee volunteers to work on reprint of brochure

The subcommittee is working on the new layout for the brochure. All photos and wording have been completed. Blackmer will reach out to the Tourism Council to see if they would like to financially support the printing of the brochure as they did with the previous one.

- 222 Center Street as a Local Landmark

No report at this time. Haselow still intends to contact the owner.

- Landmark Hotel: Submission of written plans by Aschbrenner

Blackmer reported that she knew of no new plans received by the Commission or the city.

- Wisconsin State Historical Society Local History-Historic Preservation Annual Conference

The conference will be held Oct 20-21 in Lacrosse WI. Blackmer asked if anyone interested in attending contact her for the application form.

- Home Tour of Local Landmarks

Blackmer will be meeting with the Whitewater Federation of Women to see if they would be interested to co-sponsor a tour. Haselow suggested a tour of sorts that could be done during Halloween for children and their families. Haselow also suggested the Commission join with the public schools to sponsor another Moon Walk at the Effigy Mounds Preserve.

Lyman Wight Octagon House Update

The house has been sold. The new owner has not been contacted by the commission. Blackmer intends to reach out to them with the Commission's support in any future building improvements they would consider.

New Business

Individual commission members projects for September

Richardson – none

Kienbaum – Continue working on signage for the Brickyard.

Helmick – minutes

Brady – none

Blackmer – letter to Lyman House, tagging city owned property.

Haselow – assist Blackmer tagging at library; research potential Moon Walk activity.

Grady – Grady reported he would be working on creating additional, new ordinances which would affect the Landmarks Commission. When asked by Blackmer what these ordinances would say, Grady refused to explain.

Discussion on agreeable procedure for introducing new ordinances (Clapper)

See above.

Discussion regarding Council action of Ordinance 17.08.040, Sub-Section 17.08.040 (9) and Sub-section 17.08.040 (10) (Clapper/Singer)

See above.

Discussion and possible action regarding rewrite of Ordinance 17.12, Sub-Section 17.12.020 (3.1)

See above.

Budgetary needs for Landmarks Commission (2018)

See above.

Future Agenda Items

None at this time.

Adjournment

Blackmer adjourned the meeting at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Helmick, secretary, pro-tem