

Community Development Department

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MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 9, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers

HPC Members Present: Heidi Heinze, Mark Anderson, Jayne Hoffman, Denton Anderson, Michael Page, Jeff Bjork, Pam Friede
HPC Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Brandy Howe, Sam Wessel
Others Present: Sean Downing

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 12, 2018

M/Bjork, S/Friede – motion carried 6-0

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bjork acknowledged the passing of two women who contributed significantly to River Falls' historic preservation efforts: Marge Stokke and Bess Melgard Knott.

Council member Downing thanked the Commission for their service and looks forward to working together in 2019.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. 2019 Strategic Workplan

Heinze reviewed the 2019 Work Plan with the Commission. There was discussion about items 1-5 on the list. There was some discussion about Item 2, *power plant landmark nomination*. Howe reported that City Administration offered the suggestion that before beginning the landmark nomination process, that the HPC first determine which part of the building/site is proposed to be landmarked and identify a list of benefits for landmark designation. This will make it clear for administration to communicate the goals of the HPC to the City Council, as it is ultimately the Council that will decide on the landmark nomination. Heinze remarked that Joe DeRose noted in this presentation to the HPC at the November retreat that it is a key role of historic preservation commissions to identify and landmark city-owned buildings (note: Joe DeRose is with the Wisconsin Historical Society). Bjork noted that he believes the power plant might be the oldest city-owned building. Page commented that he does not see the building going away, but that the Commission will need to consider what designation may mean for redevelopment of the building/site. The Commission is going to consider the benefits and determine the which building/area will be landmarked. Heinze will bring a draft document to the February meeting for discussion.

The HPC continued their discussion on the 2019 Work Plan. It was determined that Item 3, *develop an interpretive walking tour*, should be moved to the end of the list. It is a project that they would like to keep on the list, but one that does not take priority for 2019. They noted that Item 4, *public outreach*, should be moved up the list as should Item 5, *historic plaques/markers*. Heinze noted that public outreach is a priority because the Commission is regularly asked to give presentations on preservation; the Tuesday Club, Rotary, Garden Club and the Chamber for Leadership River Falls have all requested HPC presentations or walking tours. M. Anderson commented that he enjoys giving walking tours and would like to host one during River Falls Days. Bjork suggested the annual postcard prepared by the Commission might be a good way to advertise the tour. Hoffman and Anderson noted that they were considering hosting a regular discussion group at the library to chat about historic topics. Regarding plaques; the Commission decided that the plaque for the Swinging Bridge and one for the power plant, if designated, will be the priority for 2019. A plaque for the Treasures building might be a future project, if it does not already have a plaque.

There was some discussion about National Register designation of historic districts and individual buildings. It was decided that the Commission would draft a letter of introduction and info package to be mailed to owners of property that are eligible for listing on the National Register. The letter will describe what listing their property entails, along with the benefits of listing a property. If property owners show an interest in designation, those will be prioritized for future designation projects. Heinze will prepare a draft letter for the next meeting.

2. Chapters of the Preservation Plan

The HPC reviewed the proposed changes and suggested some additional revisions to Chapters 1 and 2 of the Preservation Plan. Howe will revise the documents. The HPC will review Chapter 3 at the February meeting. Once all chapters have been reviewed, the HPC will take official action on the revised plan.

3. Veteran's Park

Heinze reported that she met with Neil Anderson (American Legion Historical Officer) at Veteran's Park regarding the commemorative plaque project. Heinze and Mr. Anderson agreed that the flag pole is a good location to place a plaque. Mr. Anderson also had some landscaping ideas for the site including relocating the mailbox and monument for better visibility. Heinze plans to meet with Cindi Danke, Mike Stifter, and Nate Croes to discuss these ideas. Bjork asked for clarification on the HPC role in the project. Everyone agreed that the HPC is the lead on the plaque which involves confirming the history of the site and drafting the text for the plaque. Unconfirmed historical events include parade routes beginning and/or ending there, ash disposal, the posting of war-related deaths, and a historic drinking fountain. Heinze asked everyone to bring in any relevant newspaper articles and pictures to the next meeting.

4. Glen Park Photo Boards

The HPC noted that their role for the Glen Park photo boards is to wait and see at the moment, but they requested that the Arts Committee come in to meet with them at some point to explain their role and discuss how the HPC can work together with them.

5. WHS Conference Update

Hoffman, Friede, Heinze, and M. Anderson provided a brief update on the sessions they attended at the WHS Conference in Elkhart Lake in October. Heinze reminded the Commission that there is budget available each year for Commissioners to attend training and that the annual conference is an excellent program and resource for the Commission.

6. Discuss Changing the Meeting Time

Howe noted that this item was on the agenda per the request of the HPC at the October meeting. At that time the HPC expressed an interest in having Amy Peterson regularly attend the meetings to ensure that both the Commission and Amy are on the same page in terms of communicating with the School District. Howe reported that unfortunately Amy has a conflict on Wednesday nights that prevents her from attending. The HPC expressed a desire that Amy not communicate on their behalf if she is unable to attend the meetings. It was decided by the Commission to keep the meetings on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

CALENDAR

Next meeting February 13, 2019.

AJOURNMENT

Bjork made a motion to adjourn at 7:14 p.m.

M/Bjork, S/Hoffman – motion carried 7-0

Respectfully submitted,



Brandy Howe, Senior Planner