

**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
AUGUST 15, 2007**

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission met in regular session on Wednesday, August 15, 2007 at 5:15 p.m. at the Muscatine History and Industry Center, 117 W. Second. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jerry Lange, Dan Clark, Jane Reischauer and Mary Anne Kessler. Others present included Jim Rudisill and Jennifer Meyer of the Muscatine Journal.

Following a review of the agenda and July 18, 2007 minutes, Pettit requested the distributed agenda be amended to include a discussion on goals and objectives for 2007-2008. Pettit also requested the bylaws discussion reported on Page 1 of the July 18, 2007 minutes be amended to show the names of the new committees be "Research & Documentation," not "Research & Development,"; and "Education & Communication," not "Education & Community Development

Lange moved to approve the consent agenda, with the suggested changes; Reischauer seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The commission's first discussion item was the status of the West Hill Nomination. Pettit reported McCarley had modified the original district boundaries because of recent demolitions on Chestnut Street.

Pettit also said McCarley was scheduled to provide an initial draft of her report to the commission for its review by September 17.

The commission also discussed the account information provided by the community foundation. The account balances and titles that were reported in July had confused members. Pettit reported fees charged by the foundation had apparently caused the discrepancy. However, there is still some confusion over the balance of the fundraising drive for the West Hill contract cost. Pettit said he would like to ask the foundation for clarification on the balance in that account because some fundraising from an earlier riverboat excursion may have been included.

Members were also reminded about the August 23 meeting/seminar on the proposed historic district and the new state preservation tax credit program. Approximately 185 notices of the informational meeting were mailed to West Hill property owners, Rudisill said. A press release about the meeting was also distributed to the local media.

The next discussion item was the upcoming annual meeting of the Friends of Historic Preservation. That meeting is scheduled to be held Tuesday, September 18, at 7 p.m. at the Musser Public Library's large conference room.

Current plans call for Carlson to get a mailing list to Rudisill and Day. An invitation and informational letter will then be distributed.

The commission then discussed the book project, which is being co-produced with Tom and Sharon Savage. Pettit said he anticipates this project will be assumed by the Friends once a membership is developed, meaning this could be the last month this item will be on the commission's agenda.

Pettit also reported that despite his report last month, at which he announced the contract developed by Jim Nepple had been finished, that not all the details were finished. During a recent discussion with Shelia Chaudoin of the Musser Library, Pettit said he learned Nepple had not made arrangements with the library over use of the Grossheim photographs in the publication. There is a possibility the library may charge for the photographs' use.

The commission next discussed training dates for members planning to help with Mulberry Avenue historic research. Reischauer indicated she should have time in the following week to meet with the trainers. Other members were unsure of their schedules.

Pettit said most of the work to be completed will focus on the first two pages of the site inventory form and Question No. 8 (Statement of Significance). Question No. 7 will not be done at this time because of the potential for change before the research is actually used in a formal survey and evaluation.

Rudisill then updated the commission on the status of work on the American Spirit Plaza project. The parks department has completed the installation of the park bench, set the loose stones around the pedestal in cement, trimmed the trees behind the monument and fastened plaques to the bell stand. The department also cleaned and oiled the bell.

Originally the commission had hoped to hold a re-dedication of the plaza on September 11, but that conflicted with other community activities. No alternate date was set.

Rudisill then reported that the city council will likely receive an update on the renovation of the Dunker Church and Whiteway Hotel properties in early September. City staff anticipates that the renovation completed so far by the owners will not meet the minimum repairs required by the city and formal demolition procedures against both properties may be initiated.

Pettit said he was concerned the city's Top 10 List of deteriorated buildings would be updated and he requested Rudisill to ask Steve Boka, Director of Muscatine's Planning, Zoning and Building Safety Department, for any new information.

Specifically regarding the church and hotel buildings, Lange said both owners had been given sufficient time to make the repairs and he did not favor the commission becoming involved in any preservation effort.

Clark said he was concerned the owners be notified of this new push and suggested they be specifically invited to the August 23 seminar. He also said the commission has the ability to give recommendations to the council. He offered to contact the owners about the new development.

Reischauer said she felt the commission should make an effort to save the buildings, but wondered what happens when a specific property is placed on the list.

Pettit said if preservation efforts fail and enough time is given before any demolition happens, the Research & Documentation Committee should document both properties by completing a site inventory of each. Kessler said she would photograph the properties.

There were no formal committee reports.

Pettit then asked the commission about potential goals and objectives for the next year. He said the 2006-07 goals and objectives approved by the commission had all been met except for renovation of the Schmarje Building on Mississippi Drive. Accomplishments included completion of the West Hill Survey, book project and development of a Friends group.

A proposed list of 2007-08 Goals and Objectives for the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission was eventually developed and included the following:

**1. Development of a list of endangered buildings/sites in the community.**

One potential candidate for the list is the former trolley barn now located on the Heinz plant property. A former plant manager had indicated support for preserving the building, but there had not been any contact with the new manager. Kessler said she had recently met the new manager and would contact him about the building.

Members also agreed the proposed list should not be seen as a competing list for the city's Top Ten List of Deteriorated Buildings.

**2. Continue survey work on Mulberry Avenue**

**3. Update the construction dates on the MAGIC website**

**4. Provide digitized versions of the West Hill and Downtown Survey Reports**

Rudisill was directed to contact McCarley to determine if she had digital copies available.

**5. Set up a web page for the MHPC**

Pettit said the Planning and Zoning Commission had discussed a similar effort. Lange suggested the webpage could be a Friends project. Clark also reminded the commission about his participation in the development of an Alexander Clark website and he would be willing to develop a similar page for the commission.

**6. Conduct training**

The commission then adjourned at 6:40 pm..

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair