

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
DECEMBER 15, 2010

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Wednesday, December 15, 2010, at 5:15 p.m. in the lower level conference room at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Jo Ann Carlson, Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer and Ramiro Vazquez. Others present were Jim Rudisill and Michael Maharry.

The commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular November 17, 2010 meeting. Pettit requested the minutes be amended to show renovation work had been completed in the 400 block of East Second Street; and also add that renovation work had been completed in the 100 block of West Second. Carlson moved to approve the consent agenda with the changes; Vazquez seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

Several Certified Local Government (CLG) issues were the commission's first discussion items.

There was no new discussion on education issues.

Rudisill did remind the commission members of the 2010 CLG Annual Report and the need to provide updated information on any training, renovation work or other report requirement.

The commission next discussed issues relating to historic properties and districts. Rudisill provided an update on the Alexander Clark Heritage District and National Historic Landmark (NHL) application.

He reported Paul Finkelman would be in Muscatine in February for a speaking engagement unrelated to the NHL nomination, but would be working on that project while here. Sissel was also continuing to coordinate with other consultants on the work.

Carlson and Reischauer then provided a report on the historic district signage effort.

Carlson said she would use city maps to identify possible sign locations and determine a number needed. Using the existing cultural and entertainment sign posts to mount the new historic district signs was still under consideration.

Reischauer reported Gary Carlson of HNI had contacted her and requested once those numbers are available to let him know and the company would consider whether it would provide any type of a donation. Reishauer had previously contacted Carlson concerning a donation after learning the company was planning to demolish a historic building and a non-historic building at the corner of Walnut and Mississippi Drive.

Reischauer said she, Rudisill and Dan Beenan (unofficial city photographer) had met earlier at the demolition site with Glenn Stelzner, HNI Building and Grounds Supervisor, and

had inspected the historic building and taken photographs. Rudisill will provide the State Historical Society of Iowa with an updated site inventory report.

The non-historic building being demolished sets on the site formerly occupied by the family of Mark Twain. The only sign identifying that site is currently across Walnut Street near the McKibben House, which is currently housing the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Reischauer said she might also ask HNI to consider a sign marking the Twain site.

Pettit recalled a previous effort to reconstruct the Twain House and use it as a tourist attraction.

In other reports, Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation representative Michael Maharry reported Preservation Iowa has officially agreed to hold its annual meeting in Muscatine in either August or September. Maharry said he had requested guidance from the association on organizing the event. Preservation Iowa will provide funding support for the program.

Maharry also reported Humanities Iowa had awarded a \$1500 grant to help fund future Paul Finkelman activities in the community.

Pettit next reported on demolition efforts involving several buildings along West Sixth Street near Mulberry. He said Tom and Ann Meeker now have control of half-block area near that intersection, with the exception of the old church property at the corner of Walnut and Sixth; and plan to demolish several historic buildings under Phase I of a several phase rehabilitation project. Phase II would include restoration of the 500 block of Mulberry, including the Manjoine Apartments and a double-house in that area. If a Phase III is launched, it would involve construction of an 18-unit complex for seniors in the area.

Maharry pointed out that restoration/renovation of existing buildings provides the most "green" benefit and suggested every effort should be made to look into that possibility. If that is not feasible, then as much material as possible should be salvaged from any buildings demolished, he added.

Maharry also said the Friends were still reviewing possible tours as part of its 2011 Historic Preservation Month activities in May. He said the organization was looking at either holding a tour of homes associated with Civil War activities or individuals, in recognition of its upcoming sesquicentennial anniversary; or one recognizing the centennial of Muscatine's 1910 Pearl Button Strike. He was waiting to hear back from Dan Clark concerning reports from Clark on the event.

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Wednesday, January 19, 2011 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair