

Official Minutes
Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission
June 27, 2006

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, June 27, 2006. The commission initially met in a work session at 3 p.m. Members attending the work session included Diane Mayer-Day, Jo Ann Carlson, Daniel Clark and Jay Brady. Others present at the work session included Devin Pettit, Rebecca Lawin McCarley and Jim Rudisill. Those attending the work session assembled the final West Hill Survey products prior to shipment to the State Historical Society of Iowa. The commission then held its regular business meeting at 5:15 p.m. in the lower level conference room at the Muscatine City Hall. Members who attended this meeting included Jay Brady, Jo Ann Carlson, Diane Mayer-Day and Daniel Clark. Jim Nepple arrived late. Others present included Rebecca Lawin McCarley and Devin Pettit

Brady called the business meeting to order at 5:08 p.m. Carlson moved to approve the consent agenda, including the May 16, 2006 minutes as distributed; seconded by Clark; motion passed, all ayes.

McCarley reminded the commission of the June 30 deadline to get the survey forms to the state. Application deadlines for future funding to establish an historic district in the West Hill area are September 1 and February 1. CLG grants are due September 8. Awards would be announced in January, with projects starting in June for next year. The HRDP grants are due May 15. They are mainly for physical rehabilitation of a property.

It would cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000 for an historic district nomination of the West Hill area to be developed and submitted to the state. The downtown historic district nomination was financed with \$4,000 in city funds and \$4,000 through an anonymous donation arranged by Gary Carlson and the Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Brady said at the next meeting the commission would need to decide whether or not to apply for a CLG grant. A preliminary proposal is due August 11. He also suggested the commission should present the city council with some kind of information about the West Hill survey, prompting Rebecca to report that she will be doing a press release.

Brady said the commission would have to decide what to do with the CLG application and Rebecca pointed out the cost of submitting a West Hill proposal would go up over time. She also said the survey will need to be updated within five years. Brady said he would talk to Gary Carlson and inquire into possible funding sources through the chamber. The CLG grant is usually a 60-40 state/local match. McCarley told the commission that \$12,000 could be used during funding discussions.

Clark asked about the survey late fees that have been assessed. McCarley said it had been \$500 per week for the last couple months, but she did not have a total cost. She also reported a proposed press release on the West Hill survey could include a plea to help fund a nomination of the West Hill. Pettit also added that it could be brought up at the MAPS meeting.

McCarley explained historic properties would be eligible for a 20% federal credit and a 25% state credit. The federal credit is based on the value of the property. The HRDP grant is for up to \$30,000 and a match of 25% is needed.

Brady asked about budgeting for surveys. He questioned if a survey could be determined per house. McCarley said each survey would cost between \$150 and \$200 per property for context, report writing, etc. She also added there were many ways to do this. A consultant could do the writing, with volunteers/commissioners doing the research, etc. She also said the hours could be fixed, with staff time used to match any CLG grant award. Many areas were discussed as possible target locations for any potential future survey. Clark added the commission might consider the area around HON/HNI because the company is "gobbling" them up. Brady recommended the original town for improvements and as a step in compiling what is important or not. He said the legal description for the original town didn't change so it would probably be the best. He also recommended all commissioners read the report as to what areas are worth it.

McCarley said there are 5000 properties in Muscatine that would qualify. She recommended the commission continue surveying, regardless of the sites chosen. She suggested the surveys could also be sent to Rudisill for evaluation.

Pettit asked if the commission could do research before the grant and use the volunteer hours on the grant. McCarley said it would affect the grant match. Brady thanked McCarley for her suggestions.

Clark also requested the commission thank Mayor O'Brien and city staff for developing a proclamation declaring May as Historic Preservation Month.

There were also remarks about the tour of the new HNI building, which none of the commission members attended. The building no longer shows any historic significance from the Norman Baker Hospital era. It was also reported the cigarette outlet building would be torn down soon in that area.

Brady asked what was done about Historic Preservation Month. Clark said nothing was final yet. Brady suggested building owners or shop keepers could take one to two paragraphs could be taken from the downtown survey for their specific building and put it in a storefront window for a possible walking tour. There was additional discussion on other presentations of the downtown district nomination. Carlson suggested Mayor O'Brien's concert series could provide an opportunity for these presentations. Clark said he would contact the mayor about this. McCarley suggested a walking tour brochure could be developed for next year's preservation month activities and/or West Hill survey announcement.

Pettit reported he is still waiting for bids from Lifetouch and Sycamore Printing for the costs to print a book with the previous surveys information and history. Clark also suggested talking with the Muscatine Journal. Pettit said he should have the information soon and he would email it to all commission members.

The commission agreed to hold its next meeting on July 18, 2006 at 5:15 p.m. at City Hall.

The meeting then adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman