

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 16, 2008

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission met in regular session on Wednesday, January 16, 2008 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Council Chambers at the Muscatine City Hall, 215 Sycamore. Members present included Jerry Lange, Jo Ann Carlson, Diane Day, Devin Pettit, Dan Clark, Mary Anne Kessler and Jane Reischauer. Staff present included Jim Rudisill.

The consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the December 19, 2007 minutes, was reviewed. Pettit reported that he had said city directories, not newspapers up to 1924, were now online. Carlson then moved to approve the consent agenda, with the correction; Day seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The commission then reviewed the West Hill Historic District nomination, which would be presented during a public hearing following the MHPC's business meeting. Rudisill reminded the commission of the February 8 State Review Committee meeting when the nomination will be considered. McCarley will represent the city and commission at the meeting and make the formal presentation. Others are welcomed to attend if they wish.

The Mulberry Avenue survey work was then discussed. Kessler reported she had not moved any farther forward. Pettit said he had completed three reports. Reischauer requested a copy of a sample report to review.

The endangered historic buildings list was discussed next. Reischauer and Pettit had each submitted a list at an earlier meeting. Both had identified 807-809 Chestnut as a potentially endangered building. Pettit asked Reischauer how she had developed her list.

Reischauer said the key factors included its appearance (condition) and significance.

Pettit said he did not use any criteria, but focused on the possibility of any particular building being added to the city's demolition list over the next 5-10 years.

Kessler said she had recently visited 417 W. Third for a tour and suggested it could be added to the endangered list. She reported a large hole in the roof. The owner had originally indicated an interest to sell the property, but the initial price was reportedly high. Since then, the interest to sell has apparently fallen.

Pettit said he had also talked with Steve Boka about the endangered list and Boka had said he wanted to meet with the commission before compiling any list that might be presented to the city council. Kessler wondered if the commission's list might not provide Boka with a list of potential buildings for the city's demolition list. Clark suggested the flow of information could be reversed if Boka would bring his Top Ten Demolition List to the commission before going to the council.

Pettit said he did not expect Boka to develop a new demolition list for a few more years. He hoped to go to the council this spring or possibly even during the budget review period.

Kessler suggested the Friends of Historic Preservation could develop a booklet of the endangered buildings as a fundraising tool. Pettit said the book being developed by Tom and Sharon Savage was intended to meet that purpose.

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Pettit said anyone wishing to add any buildings to the endangered list should contact Rudisill. Rudisill is to contact Boka and let him know the lists will not be released in the foreseeable future.

The 2007 CLG Annual Report was then discussed. Pettit said he had updated the Susan Appel report. The report had focused on the downtown and revisions included one moved building, one removed and 19 demolished. Sixty-six buildings and two sites needed to be added.

In a related discussion on the annual report's training table section, Carlson pointed out that Paul Mohr, Iowa CLG coordinator, had offered in the past to conduct training sessions for the commission. She suggested Mohr could be contacted for a training program in the spring.

Rudisill reported he would continue to work on the report.

The commission next discussed joint historic preservation month activities with the Friends of Historic Preservation. It was suggested a house tour, possibly with three houses, be developed. There is also an investigation being conducted into reprinting the Pearl City book originally published in 1914 by the Record Printing Company.

The company's current owner is unsure of the copyright and estate rights to the publication.

Pettit asked if there was any discussion on recognizing any buildings that have been restored or rehabilitated. Kessler said the Friends would work with the MHPC to try and develop a list. Reischauer said Friends' President Mike Maharry had also indicated the public might be asked to provide input into possible building nominations.

There were no formal committee reports or other business.

The business meeting of the commission then adjourned at 6:15 p.m. and the commission prepared for the 7 p.m. public hearing on the West Hill Historic District nomination and MPD amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair