

REGULAR HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
March 4, 2019

The Regular Historic Resources Commission meeting was called to order by Chairperson Brisson at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Members Hebert, Ballard, Brisson, and Crongeyer
Absent: Members Porter, Friday and Bronson

Approval of Minutes, December 3, 2018:

Motion by Crongeyer seconded by Ballard to approve the Historic Resources Commission minutes of December 3, 2018 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business:

- **Awards Program Criteria Discussion** – Vice-Chairperson Hebert noted she and Commissioner Friday did have discussions but have not come to any conclusion. She went on to state the overriding thing is that everybody is so busy and there are so many programs that are taking place that we really have to think of just the right thing that is significant enough that it does not take too much time. She went on to state it will encourage others, noting the B&B has provoked a lot of interest in other people redoing their and feels if we draw attention to it in some special way it would be worthwhile. How we do it, she does not know. One city does it simply by putting a sign on the building to commemorate the fact that it has been given attention. Chairperson Brisson commented like any award part of this, it is what is given. He said he does not know if there is an opportunity at any community event where the award could be given; it would be a lot for the Commission to try and put together a banquet to give the award(s) out. Perhaps another community event where there is a large populous gathered. Commissioner Crongeyer mentioned the Chamber event. The Commission thought that was a great idea, hoping the Chamber would be willing to let the Commission do that. As with any award, you want some ceremony when presented that highlights it. Chairperson Brisson warned against doing an annual award of any kind because that would put so much pressure on the Commission every year and then there would be some years where there is nothing worthy and that would diminish the people who got it for very good reason. Commissioner Crongeyer suggested a nice pamphlet that would be at the Chamber or Carnegie or at the B & B that would have a nice picture of the building and a little bit of history about it, so people that visit that are interested in historical buildings this would be like a little map for them. Comments were made that originally there was a very good pamphlet and the property owners were given the designation. Commissioner Ballard suggested a four-fold instead of a tri-fold brochure so there can be more information. Commissioner Crongeyer said although the Bed & Breakfast has not been designated, it is still a historic resource. Vice-Chairperson Hebert asked if we are now talking about the awards program or just a general education program. It was noted that not only designed buildings, but also any historical buildings. Vice-Chairperson Hebert commented the block from Nelson to Court Street containing the Church, Bed & Breakfast and 4-Plex there should be a statement made about these buildings as they represent a lot of money and investment. Chairperson Brisson asked if anyone has checked with the Michigan Historic Preservation Network as to whether or not there is another awards program. Vice-Chairperson Hebert answered she asked and there is none. City Manager Eustice commented he thinks the suggestion by Ms. Crongeyer of incorporating that within the Chamber's annual dinner is a good venue to do it in.

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Chairperson Brisson said since everyone is not in attendance, let's do some homework and everybody think about it and at the next meeting we will come together with some criteria on which an award would be based, noting the criteria could be broad, i.e. an individual property owner or several property owners within a given neighborhood. He went on to state we don't want to make the criteria so restrictive so it could be given to an individual for work they have done or to a property owner that did restoration or several property owners who did not necessarily work together but did something in their neighborhood. Commissioner Ballard asked if the award stays with the building. Chairperson Brisson replied yes, noting this is an award to encourage people to do preservation.

Vice-Chairperson Hebert spoke on information from Otsego County, noting they call themselves history detectives and are looking for volunteers to do a number of things. One of the things they put out there that we could share with all the owners of historic buildings is that there is an online resources tool kit if you own historic property. Otsego County is going to do theirs by doing YouTube Videos, which she thinks is a little more than Cheboygan can reach for but we could maybe start with the awards program. Commissioner Crongeyer said they can probably do something when they do the Main Street web site, speaking of Owosso. She explained they are doing a Michigan Main Street Program web site, which will be linked to the City's or off of the City's. Discussion held on what historic is on the City's web site, which is called Historic Rivertown. Further discussion held on placing contact information, historic sites, maps, etc. It was noted that people visit cities just to see old churches or Carnegie libraries, etc. City Manager Eustice said we need to add to the Visitor's tab.

Vice-Chairperson Hebert commented that Mr. Curt Chambers, via video, presented the early history which showed Main Street and told the story of the fishermen, which will be presented in Lansing for Michigan Main Street, and it continued on with others. Just this alone on the website would be cool. Commissioner Ballard suggested we then go into the historic buildings. Chairperson Brisson commented there is only so much we can get in to our brochures, but the website is limitless, but you don't want to overwhelm people with too much. It allows us to hit several different areas of interest and we can have current and historic pictures, and other photos that may encourage other owners to apply. Commissioner Ballard commented on a directory for all of the Northern Michigan museums.

City Manager Eustice noted we have a lot of historic buildings that people would visit and come to see like the Carnegie Library, Range Lighthouse, Opera House, etc. It is unbelievable how many people come in here and ask to see the Opera House. Chairperson Brisson commented the exterior does not give the impression there is much inside. A brief discussion on the Opera House in Charlotte that was modernized on the exterior and then brought back, and also raising monies in addition to applying for grants.

Chairperson Brisson summarized as follows: publicity in general with a new brochure (revised and expanded); website information; and an awards program through the Chamber (if the Chamber would be willing to simply allow seven minutes at their dinner for an award to be presented by the City. Vice-Chairperson Hebert expressed her displeasure of competing for an award and does not feel it works for historic preservation. Chairperson Brisson said the Commission's criteria could simply not include that; the Commission would simply look at this themselves. City Manager Eustice stated it is not something we have to give away, it is not an annual recognition; one needs to meet the criteria to be recognized.

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- **Preservation Funding Sources** – Commissioner Crongeyer had information regarding the places she found to get funding, but it will be added to a document for people wanting to do historic preservation. Vice-Chairperson Hebert had information from the Historic Preservation Network (HPN) regarding grant sources, stained glass, Michigan Main Streets, Land Use Institute, the Barn Preservation – everything to do with preservation in one place. There is information for technical preservation services, sustainability, etc. Chairperson Brisson commented what the HPN does; if you are a member they provide you with the deadlines for the grants that are coming up and they are a resource. Perhaps the HPN could be linked on the website.

- Vice-Chairperson Hebert then stated she has all the Federal Renovation Grants she could find. Commissioner Ballard asked if the 40 year information she sent Vice-Chairperson Hebert was Michigan or National (a property can be 40 years or younger.) Vice-Chairperson Hebert replied she believes that is in Michigan also. She went on to state she looked at state, federal, foundation, and philanthropic giving through history; so what do we do with this book? Chairperson Brisson commented on the National Trust, National Park Service, Historic Preservation Network and the SHPO. Commissioner Ballard commented someone would need to have more information in order to figure out where to go. Chairperson Brisson stated the HPN will note on their grant funding pages, all the potential federal grant funding and private foundations. Vice-Chairperson Hebert then said the people who bought the B & B did not know what to do and there was probably money they could have had if they would have known. This goes to City Manager Eustice’s earlier point – there needs to be a go-to-person so that people are not lost. She went on to comment on the person that bought St. Charles Church who does not know what grants are available and probably will not take the time to research it. It seems that everybody falls when it comes to writing the grant and getting it out the door; this has been a stumbling block in a lot of categories, but it doesn’t mean we can’t fix it. Commissioner Ballard said there are workshops people can attend. Vice-Chairperson Hebert commented people do not have time to attend conferences on how to write a grant for historical preservation; they need the information fast and they need a go-to person and an advocate, which could be the Commission because we want our City to prosper. She then stated that Mayor Pro Tem Couture is wondering what sources are available for his historic home. Commissioner Crongeyer said now that we have a document that we created and the information in contained in the document, someone can then know what website to go to. Other information can be City and County contact information. Chairperson Brisson said the Commission’s only role would be to introduce them because writing some grants are complicated and are complicated for a reason because money is being given away and they want people to prove their worthiness and to make sure the money is going to be spent correctly. Commissioner Ballard said that she went to two different people who are professional grant writers and they both said they can’t write it for me but when you get it written they would look it, but she did not know how to write it. Commissioner Crongeyer inquired as to who in the County does grant writing. City Manager Eustice replied there is no one at the County level but Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA) does write some grants for the City but they don’t have a lot of experience either because they had such a turnover of grant writers. He noted he has written some grants for the City but they are not easy to do. Chairperson Brisson added that Ms. Kathy Johnson also writes grants. Chairperson Brisson said it is grueling and then when you get the grant you have to manage it and do reports. A private individual trying to get money for a private property would have to write the grant and administer the grant, in addition to coming up with the money for matching funds which can be difficult. He went on to state maybe what the Commission can do is try to provide a different summary as to what is available or bring them into talk with the Commission about what we know about; this may be all they need. The Commission really cannot do anything beyond that. Commissioner Crongeyer asked if a person came to one of

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our meetings would they be able to ask questions. Chairperson Brisson replied yes, we could provide them some guidance and in some instances hook them up with the Michigan Preservation work staff, etc. Also, a list of grants could be provided telling them what they would be eligible for. Vice-Chairperson Hebert said that she has to title all the property for the Carnegie to a 501C(3) before being eligible for a USDA loan. We are at a wonderful moment because there are a lot of interested people. Chairperson Brisson said he thinks providing the resources and doing an awards program are going to be very positive, Commissioner Ballard commented on perhaps using the college for at least the basics and she will check with Michelle Andrews at the college.

Public Comments: None.

Board Member Comments:

St. Charles Church - Chairperson Brisson said he would like a little more information on who bought St. Charles Church. City Manager Eustice informed the Commission the gentleman's name is Bill Price and he is a retired licensed electrician and knows a little bit about building. He has some of his children that are in the building industry that can help him with renovating the facility. Mr. Price doesn't really have an end game to the property. It is the City Manager's understanding that Mr. Price is paying cash for the facility. He put an offer in and it was accepted. He just wants it to not get any more dilapidated than what it is, so the first thing he is going to do is to try and get a construction loan and is waiting to get the best interest rate on the loan. Mr. Price will be putting a roof on first to stop damage from occurring. Following the roof, he will begin to work on the exterior. He wants to bring it back to the original state of the Church. There is no renter or church that is going to move in. Someone using it as a church later on could be a possibility but there could be other possibilities, i.e. a museum. Also, there is interest from an individual who is a caterer who wants to use it as a wedding venue only with catering the reception. Commissioners Crongeyer and Hebert both commented the caterer wants to work a Latin Mass into it and is an inventor, as well. City Manager Eustice said the City will help Mr. Price any way it can. Commissioner Ballard inquired if the stained glass windows are all there and intact. City Manager Eustice replied yes, with Vice-Chairperson Hebert stating some the lower transit ones are missing. Mr. Price mentioned at a meeting this morning the people that donated and there are well-known families who are all registered. Chairperson Brisson said it is a tough thing to turn it back into a Church because a Church is nothing without a congregation that wants to use it. He would encourage Mr. Price to find a use for the structure, noting old buildings make really bad museums. You need a place for museums that are galleries that are climate controlled where you can exhibit things. It would be difficult to make the Church into a museum. The other thing that is ideal for a venue/banquet hall is that it has parking. A person could have their wedding ceremony in there and then set up for the reception, or it could be a place for a family reunion or concerts/recitals.

Carnegie - Vice-Chairperson Hebert commented the Carnegie, which is not completely done already has had three weddings and two reunions, noting she did not market for these. She asked if one can have an extraneous building that is contiguous in a Planned Unit Development (PUD). She is thinking about the Carnegie, 2 houses and warehouse. City Manager Eustice replied that is an interesting concept and he will look into it.

Huron Street Tabernacle Property – Vice-Chairperson Hebert said a gentleman from Chicago wants to purchase the Carnegie and turn it into a residence; she is not selling. She is going to try and talk this gentleman into purchasing the Huron Street Tabernacle Property. Chairperson Brisson

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commented on a Methodist Church in St. Ignace that has been beautifully restored and turned into a house. Vice-Chairperson Hebert commented she could take the gentleman to see that.

Duncan Avenue Property – Commissioner Crongeyer commented on the little stone building on Duncan Avenue.

McArthur Home on Duncan Avenue – Commissioner Ballard informed the Commission that she spoke with Sam McArthur and he said he would ask his uncle who owns the McArthur home on Duncan Avenue to see what his plans are for it. She will follow up on this.

Walton House on S. Huron Street – City Manager Eustice stated the Walton House owned by Stephen Lindsay has a Historic Resource Designation. Mr. Jim Conboy drafted a letter in 2010 that questioned whether the renovation was original. The Commission discussed the issue that deals with the enclosed porch on the front of the house. City Manager Eustice stated the home still has the Designation and the Commission needs to take action to close this out. Chairperson Brisson said since 2010 Mr. Lindsay wanted the improvements more than the Designation, asking the City Manager to let Mr. Lindsay know.

Adjournment:

Motion by Crongeyer seconded by Ballard to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m. Passed by unanimous vote.

Steve Brisson, Chairperson