

REGULAR HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
April 1, 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 Friday and Bronson

Approval of Minutes, March 4, 2019:

Motion by Crongeyer seconded by Ballard to approve the Historic Resources Commission minutes of March 4, 2019 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business:

- **Continued Discussion of Awards Program Criteria** – Vice-Chairperson Hebert offered that perhaps when Commissioner Friday is in attendance we can do something simple to make sure that every building that has been restored there is a feature article about them. Perhaps including historic buildings when voting for the best of this and that through the Chamber of Commerce. She then stated she feels stalled on this until Commissioner Friday attends. Chairperson Brisson said if there are no objections this matter will be delayed at this time.

- **Update on Preservation Funding Sources** – Commissioner Ballard said she talked with Michelle Andrews at the College and she is going to meet with the person that does their not-for-credit program on Wednesday, so she will have more to report at the next meeting.

- **Update on Carnegie Project** – Vice-Chairperson Hebert informed the Commission that she and City Manager Eustice will be hosting a meeting on April 10, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers to coordinate what she is hoping to become a planned unit development (PUD), which will include the Carnegie, the house next door, the Sangster house and the warehouse. They will then begin to look at brownfield redevelopment money and also USDA funding. In addition to that, in the plan unit development they are going to look into if non-contiguous parcels can be included and, if they can, they would include St. Charles Church, which closed today, with the new owner. She went on to state the other building in play would be the Huron Street Tabernacle Church, noting she is making really serious inquiries about and today she found somebody who would be the end user who are the young women at Nourish. If we can secure the building at a reasonable rate and then as we move forward looking at funding for the planned unit development the St. Charles Church could fall within that and so could the Huron Street Tabernacle. This is her effort in doing funding for historic preservation.

Chairperson Brisson asked what a property qualifies for with brownfield money. Vice-Chairperson Hebert replied because the property is obsolete, as is the Carnegie because they have not had individual use for some years and had been dormant for a while; the Huron Street Tabernacle has been empty at least 8 years and the same thing with St. Charles Church. She went on to state the owner of the St. Charles Church is seriously considering an acquisition of the school, if it becomes available. If we take these seven (7) historic buildings into consideration as we are fighting for one and seeking funding for one, we may as well do it for multiple properties. Vice-Chairperson Hebert

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went on to state funding could be sought at the same time for the Opera House through the USDA Renewable Energy monies that are available for HVAC, windows, heating, etc.

Commissioner Ballard inquired as to what the women from Nourish are interested in the Tabernacle for. Vice-Chairperson Hebert answered their interest is not to own it or try and seek the funding to restore it but merely to program it. The way they see it would be a smaller entertainment venue, which she thinks is a very practical use for that building as it has about 150 seats and is small. Her architect for the Carnegie went through the Tabernacle and said it is about \$300,000.00 to \$400,000.00 to restore it. City Manager Eustice commented the Tabernacle would qualify for multiple tax incentives from the State and would qualify for the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act and brownfield. Even though there is no contamination there might be asbestos; if a building is endangered as far as being blighted because the outside surface is falling off and because it has sat their unoccupied for several years, it would qualify for brownfield tax incentives, both money and tax credits, if unoccupied for over three (3) years. The only way somebody can put \$300,000.00 to \$400,000.00 into a building is to not tax them for every dollar they put into the building, otherwise there is no return on investment.

- **Other Endangered Buildings** - Vice-Chairperson Hebert inquired on other endangered buildings within the City she should be thinking about. City Manager Eustice noted commercial buildings within the City include Century Products. Commissioner Ballard mentioned the Mackinaw Avenue School. Vice-Chairperson Hebert said maybe we go this first round and then sharpen our skills so if somebody comes in and they want to purchase something we then will have information on funding tools. City Manager Eustice commented with regard to the Century Products building, if the plan for Hope Networks follows through it will be a nice redevelopment site, as it will be new residential units on a mid-high end, well done, they believe they can put in the facility about 30 units; they will demo the industrial part of the building and put in their own parking. They are trying to get the property on the Court Street side that is owned by Straits Corporation, a parent company of the railroad, because they would like not to only rehabilitate the Century Products building but would like to put townhouses along Court Street, perhaps in an “L” shape. Chairperson Brisson asked if a sale is pending. City Manager Eustice replied there is an offer in but it has not been accepted by Karl Wixon, the owner, yet. Commissioner Porter asked who the potential buyer/developer is. City Manager Eustice answered it is non-profit corporation called Hope Networks, a foundation out of Grand Rapids. They do multiple housing projects throughout the State and so some Section 8 and low income housing. For a period of time a certain percentage of these units will have to be available to low income people and then after an eight (8) year period they can rent them to whomever they like. Because we are a low to moderate income community and the City of Cheboygan’s median income is about \$25,000.00 they use federal dollars to rehabilitate these facilities and if they do that they have to have a certain amount of the residential properties available to low income people. City Manager Eustice went on to state they are a good organization.

- **Update on MacArthur Home on Duncan Avenue** – Commissioner Ballard reported she talked with Tim MacArthur’s wife and a cousin of his owns it. Mr. MacArthur will talk with his cousin to find out what the cousin has in mind to do with it. It is the beige building on the right side of Duncan Avenue; go two blocks past Sutherland Street and it is on the right hand side. There is a MacArthur Street in that area, too. She thinks if the owner does not have anything in mind for it maybe we can give him something. She will follow up on it. It has been empty for over ten (10) years. Chairperson Brisson commented he thinks there are some homes along Duncan Avenue that

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actually came from Duncan City – they were moved and placed along there. He thinks we can tell them by their architectural style, which would be significant.

- **Correction in Minutes** – Commissioner Ballard noted page five should state Tim MacArthur and not Sam.

Public Comments: Ms. Lofgren commented the MacArthur home is really a plain jane home (more of a yellowish color then beige), but the one across the street from it is much more architectural. City Manager Eustice said the home previously owned by John & Nancy Ward on Duncan Avenue may be one that was moved, noting it was about well before 1900. Chairperson Brisson said he does not think it was moved; it was the small houses that were moved.

Board Member Comments:

- **Trails Town Application** - Commissioner Crongeyer informed the Commission that the Parks & Recreation Commission is working on the application to make Cheboygan a Trail Town and part of that application is finding historical spots along the trail. What they are doing is making a section of the North Central State Trail a Pure Michigan Trail and it will be from Topinabee north to Mill Creek. City Manager Eustice interjected almost to the City limits of Mackinaw City, which will be called the Mullett to Mackinaw Trail. Commissioner Crongeyer went on to state part of this is they want to see markers and interesting sites to bring people to downtown or off the trail. She contacted the History Center and “Kay” is going to work a little with her, but they don’t have a listing of historical sites in Cheboygan or the County, asking if there is any place that has a list of buildings. Vice-Chairperson Hebert replied there is and she did it for Michigan Main Street; she had to find out everything on the National Register, State Register or anything that had a marker or any kind of special designation. She will give it to Commissioner Crongeyer. Chairperson Brisson said the marker should be close to the place along the Trail or in the general area. Commissioner Crongeyer said she was looking at a book written by Matt Friday and learned the Breakers Bar has Rittenhouse furniture, but it does not have a marker and did not know if the places should be something with a marker, adding she thinks that would be really interesting to somebody. Chairperson Brisson commented Pt. Nipigon doesn’t have a marker and thinks it is significant to mention on the Trail. Commissioner Crongeyer then inquired on the ruins or an old lumber mill on Lake Huron or the River. Commissioner Ballard mentioned Emery Martin’s Mill. Chairperson Brisson mentioned the MacArthur Mill is where the Plant is now. City Manager Eustice commented the Emery Martin Mill is located at the end of Todd Street. He stated there are remnants of the Mill but most of it is under water, noting there is a dock still there and it was shut down in approximately 1910. Commissioner Ballard stated the Cheboygan Museum used to have tours of historic homes and she was going to talk to “Kay” about that because she thinks that would be a good thing but it would a project for them in terms of activity and income. She went on to state they are going to do the cemetery tour again this year. Commissioner Crongeyer said as she starts to create the list what is the information she needs to find out about a place, i.e. year established. Chairperson Brisson said the questions that need to be answered are why is this a historically significant and why would anybody want to know more about it. He added to start with the list from Vice-Chairperson Hebert and answer the questions he just stated; there are probably going to be two or three really significant places with Mill Creek being one. He suggested creating Mill Creek and others as anchors along the way and then have them go to smaller places, which he feels is the better approach. Vice-Chairperson Hebert asked Commissioner Crongeyer if she is seeing it as a specifically marked place or as additional information added to a website. Commissioner Crongeyer replied strolls or directing somebody off the Trail to a place. There could maybe be a bench or an interpretative marker there.

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Commissioner Ballard commented it could be similar to what was done at Aloha, i.e. the Village of Aloha, the story of Aloha. She then explained the current redoing of the Inland Water Way map, etc. Commissioner Crongeyer commented next year they are going to be working on getting the Inland Water Way designated as a Pure Michigan Water Trail, so the Aloha information will be really good for that. Commissioner Porter asked if there is any part of the Iron Belle Trail going through Cheboygan. He explained the Iron Belle Trail is a series of trails that basically connect Belle Isle with Ironwood Michigan; the idea being you can cross Michigan on a series of trails and this was a big issue of Gov. Snyder who wanted to make Michigan the Trail State, so if you can get trails designated in your area as a part of that is a way to help promote it and Pure Michigan will pick up on that and so on. The road around the Island was just designated as part of that. Commissioner Porter then told Commissioner Crongeyer they can supply what she would need on Mill Creek.

- **Four-Fold Brochure** - Commissioner Ballard said she has not started on the four-fold brochure, but was thinking that the only pictures that would be in it or on it starting off with the Newton-Allaire House, which is a National and State historical site. Chairperson Brisson asked if this house is up for sale again. Vice-Chairperson Hebert said it is her understanding that it is listed at \$150,000.00 having sold last for \$120,000.00. Comments were made that the current owner has not been there that long.

- **Meijer Project Status** – Chairperson Brisson inquired as to where the community is at with regards to the Meyer Project. City Manager Eustice replied they are going to build a store stating he has some bi-weekly communications with Meijer’s Manager Developer, Cris Jones. In fact he received an e-mail this morning with some suggestions as to what they want to see in the 425 Agreement. Those changes/amendments have been made and their attorney is reviewing it. They do not give us any timeframe; we are not trying to pin them down and are trying to work with them as best we can. He would think the earliest they will build is the spring 2021. From the time they break ground to opening is about 15 months. Strategically they build 3 stores a year and they are building stores in Indiana and Ohio right now. They are not concerned about property taxes in Michigan because the store they are going to build in Cheboygan County will generate about \$210,000.00 a year in property taxes; for the stores they are building in Indiana they are paying \$900,000.00 in property taxes.

- **Michigan Main Street Select Level Achieved** – Vice-Chairperson Hebert noted the City has achieved the Michigan Main Street Select Level within the last two weeks, but thinks we need to know that this whole program was embedded in the National Trust for Historic Preservation. They started it, conceived of the notion and did it at the time four years ago when many historic downtowns were failing and needed revitalization because big boxes were coming in, etc. She thinks we should never let the fact that our Michigan Main Street is embedded in the National Project and that the work is going to have national significance and we should take advantage of that as much as we can so that we can use that to our benefit and to actually make sure that Main Street captures accurately as much of our history as possible and integrates it into the planning. City Manager Eustice commented their number one priority is historic preservation. Commissioner Crongeyer asked if there is anything the City has that designates a building as a historical building. Chairperson Brisson replied they as a City Commission do that. Commissioner Crongeyer asked if the Kingston Theater is on the list. Chairperson Brisson answered it is not but it certainly has the potential to be, noting somebody has to complete an application and pay the fee. He explained the main purpose of this Commission in its charge initially was to identify historic properties in town and designate them as historic. Commissioner Crongeyer asked if it is only houses and churches.

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Commissioner Porter interjected it could be any structure, even a commercial structure, residential, etc. City Manager Eustice said he will get Commissioner Crongeyer the information on historic buildings, noting the Carnegie Library is also a designated historic building. The City Hall building is also and there is a plaque in the front entrance. Commissioner Crongeyer commented on the Chimner Building where her office is, adding it is an old old building, adding also the building that houses the Purple Tree. Chairperson Brisson stated that building is designated and has a marker. Commissioner Porter commented he does not believe the two big houses at Duncan Bay near his home are designated and those are two of the most historic structures in town. Commissioner Crongeyer said that is where the bandstand used to be. Commissioner Porter replied a much more recent one, but these are two buildings that were part of the community that was the City of Duncan and they are the only thing that is left out there. Chairperson Brisson noted any building is eligible but it has to be nominated by someone and brought to the Commission for review to either approve or reject it as there is certain criteria to be met. Commissioner Crongeyer inquired if the State Street Bridge is the last bridge to be built of its kind. Chairperson Brisson commented that Bridge is on the National Historic Registry and this designation does not actually come with any sort of physical marker. It goes on the National Register and you can have a marker made. Commissioner Crongeyer said this could be pointed out for our new trail that goes from downtown out to the State Park. City Manager Eustice said Commissioner Friday has pictures and their might be some here at City Hall of the Bridge. Why it is historical is because it was really one of the first drawbridges in the country and was all manually run with pulleys. Also, it was basically a wooden bridge across the River in the horse and buggy era. The Bridge would lift straight up in the air; back then it was mainly sailboats that had to get through there. Commissioner Ballard commented this was before the swing bridge. Commissioner Crongeyer asked if the Preserve is part of what was Duncan City. Commissioner Porter replied no; Duncan City really began in front of one of the big houses going all the way to the shore, which is gone now because they put in Duncan Bay Marina. The Preserve of the Little Traverse Conservancy was and is still primarily a wetland; the vast majority is wetland going up and down depending on the level of the water. Commissioner Crongeyer asked if the current condominiums on Duncan Bay were part of Duncan City. Commissioner Porter replied yes; it is the far end on the other end. It was basically along the west shore of Duncan Bay because that is where they had to dock and there are still ruins of some of the docks and mill and there were streets running up and down. There are photographs of those streets and when they were all taken out that street that ran north/south became the runway for a small private airport, Marx's Airport. Mrs. Trudy Lofgren commented it is now Harbor Side Estates property. Commissioner Porter commented Duncan as a City existed before Cheboygan. Commissioner Crongeyer said it would be nice to have some kind of interpretative signage out there, asking if one is allowed to point out people's private homes as one of the original homes from Duncan City. Commissioner Porter replied you can from the street. Commissioner Crongeyer then stated as part of the Bring It Group they had a meeting with kids that were older elementary and middle school age and one of the main things they asked for in Cheboygan was to learn more about the history of Cheboygan. They wanted to know more about their City, so she thinks things like that would be really interesting. Commissioner Porter commented it is unfortunate that schools are not mandated to teach State and local history in this State as they are in other states. Traditionally a role of historical societies is to teach the history. Commissioner Ballard said something needs to be done about the Historical Society. Vice-Chairperson Hebert commented the National Park Service has a complete curriculum dedicated to Carnegie libraries, the story of Carnegie and what he did and so on. She is going to suggest that we pursue as an alternative, because trying to get volunteers to do it is almost impossible, is that we do something like find a grantor that would embrace the National Park system curriculum as a beginning and then partner with the school system and the library and see if we can't

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put something together that actually solidifies and has enough money in it to pay somebody to do this so that you can count on it and it is not on the whim of volunteers. Commissioner Ballard commented it is a very good thought. Chairperson Hebert said she will not let this slide, noting it is on her to-do list, but it may take a while to connect the various pieces. When young kids come into the Carnegie they are enthralled just by the fact that it has a dome and is old and big. We can tie it together with this is how your city was 105 years ago when the Carnegie building was built, etc.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned by unanimous vote at 6:44 p.m.

Steve Brisson, Chairperson