

## CITY OF MISHAWAKA

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION June 7, 2016

A regular meeting of the Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission was held Tuesday June 7, 2016 in Room 205, City Hall, 600 E. Third, Mishawaka , IN.

#### **Meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm.**

Commission members in attendance: Terry DeMaegd, Dave Eisen, Judy Gray, Jennifer Johns, Doug Merritt, Nancy Seidler, Faye Sullivan and Kate Voelker. Advisory members present: Alan Grzeskowiak, Shirley McAlister, Thomas Morris, Jason Stoller, and Cliff Zenor. Staff: Christa Hill. Public: Todd Zeiger and Brad Miller representing Indiana Landmarks, ten Normain Heights residents including Ruth Pavich, Dick Barnett, and former Councilman Banicki, Dave Straughn, and Sandra Hamman.

Upon a motion by Dave Eisen, seconded by Shirley McAlister, the May 4, 2016 minutes were approved as submitted.

**Memorial Day Parade:** Terry DeMaegd thinks the event went well. There was a good turnout, but since we were towards the back there was a lot of time waiting to start. Also, as we passed the viewing stand, they were supposed to read a statement of who we were in addition to our name.

**T-shirts:** Alan Grzeskowiak asked if those that had shirts could wear them to next month's meeting and we could take a nice picture.

**Plaques:** Christa sent the mason's information to the Burns' with their thank you note so they could coordinate the installation of their plaque. The City will pay for the installation. Cliff Zenor had shown Mrs. Burns generally how it would be installed but the mason would know the best spot.

**Public Relations/Community Education:** Kate Voelker thanked Christa Hill for the recap of the tour last month. Cliff suggested we include the summary when we apply for our CLG this year.

#### **Staff Notes:**

- a. Mary Watt withdrew her landmark status application for 1207 Prospect. She may proceed with it in the future.
- b. The Engineering Department is planning a project that will fix the section of the rock wall next to the bathroom in Battell Park. This work requires new safety guidelines to be added, such as a railing above both walls. The railing will require a COA. Christa passed around pictures of the condition of the existing wall. Kate Voelker asked if the place on the wall where stones have obviously been taken out or fallen out, marked with orange paint, could be included in this project.
- c. Realizing that the July 5 meeting is the day after a holiday, Christa wondered if there would be a quorum or if we should cancel the meeting. Terry asked for a show of hands of those who planned on being there, and it was determined to proceed with the meeting as scheduled.

#### **Old Business: Normain Heights**

Terry asked Sandra Hamman, who attended last month's meeting, to recap her letter. She deferred to Ruth Pavich. Mrs. Pavich was looking for a local landmark district, because the National district did not give them the protection they thought. They want to maintain the integrity of the neighborhood, its been going downhill because of the age and size of homes. Basically, they don't want to lose any more

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houses, so after the neighborhood discussion with Indiana Landmarks, they would like to proceed with a conservation district. This may be more acceptable by residents. Most homes have been modified from their original condition. Todd Zeiger explained a conservation district only reviews new or re-construction, demolition, or moving a house. Guidelines would be put in place to have new buildings match existing. Additionally there could be voluntary guidelines for repairs to help the owners know what the houses were like originally. After two years, the HPC would have to vote again to keep it a conservation district, or it will become a full district. Nancy Siedler asked if they had to vote every two years. Todd explained it was a one-time thing. Todd admitted there are several problems that can't all be fixed by one tool. Todd suggested buying up, rehabbing and selling back to Veterans to go back to the original significance of the neighborhood to the Veterans. Code Enforcement would be a good place to go for people who aren't keeping up their houses. Kate asked where the boundary would be. Todd explained we would have to write a legal description to include all of Normain Heights. The first row of houses on the west side of Main Street are part of the National District. Kate mentions tiny houses and using that trend as a marketing tool. Terry asked if there was something in State law that allowed for this conservation district. Todd will send some examples from other cities and help us write guidelines. It will still require public hearings and ultimately go to Council.

Mrs. Hamman brought up the amount of traffic on Main Street makes those houses undesirable. The street widening reduced the tree lawn and people can't park in front of their house on Main Street. Kate thought the widening of the road was a benefit for many people. Mrs. Pavich suggested turn-arounds for those houses on Main Street, so they did not have to back out. Also a permanent speed sign so people know how fast their going. Dick Barnette reiterated the speed limit is only 30 mph. Mrs. Pavich also says semis go down the street and that is not part of the truck route. Todd mentioned since Normain Heights is on the National Register, these houses are already eligible for tax incentives for people rehabbing their homes, both Federal and at the State level. He also shared a solution for the people on Main Street might be a shared parking area if there was some available land. Doug Merritt offered he could answer questions about the tax credits since he utilizes them for his home the Old No. 4 Firehouse. He is pleased to see so many Normain Heights residents here to start a dialogue. He wants to explore marketing the neighborhood between the City and Indiana Landmarks, highlighting the original intent of the subdivision. Todd directed that first guidelines need to be put in place before marketing. Doug understands that when a permit comes before the Building Department, the HPC would review. Todd reiterates only new construction, demolition, or moving a house. This adds responsibility to the Commission and Staff. Christa explained the procedure currently followed by the Planning Department for a demolition or new construction. Someone with Normain Heights is checking with a Veterans group to connect these homes with people who need them. Doug has an idea for a TIF district or redevelopment district to alleviate fees for permits, but specifically for the houses on Main Street.

A committee was formed consisting of Kate Voelker, Doug Merritt, Shirley McAlister, Alan Grzeskowiak and Cliff Zenor to meet with Mrs. Pavich and representatives of Normain Heights before moving forward. Terry asked if Normain Heights has a monthly meeting. Mrs. Pavich says there is not a schedule, just when she calls them. Dave Eisen asked if anyone from the west side of Main Street would be on the committee. Normain Heights has a page as part of the Next Door Neighbor website. We thanked the Normain Heights residents for their input and the committee would be contacting them to discuss the next steps. Also thanks to Todd Zieger for explaining the conservation district and providing guidance with examples of ordinances and guidelines.

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#### **New Business: Questions for Don Heirman RE: Museum**

We received a letter from Mr. Heirman last summer, and it was also published in the Mishawaka Enterprise. He has an idea for a Mishawaka history museum. We had previously discussed it, agreed it was a good idea, but weren't sure how we could support it, given our limited budget and function as a city entity. Mr. Heirman will be in town for our August meeting and wants to know how to direct his presentation. Our discussion yielded the following questions:

- 1) What will be the focus of the museum?
- 2) What type of items will you be looking to include in the museum?
- 3) How will your museum collaborate with Hannah Lindahl Children's Museum, the Library's Heritage Center and even The History Museum in South Bend?
- 4) We know you have been in touch with the above groups, but brainstormed a couple of additional partners:
  - a. One of the Commissioners had recently visit the Chico Museum in California. They partnered with a Native American tribe and in turn for contributions, allowed them space in the museum. The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi has an office in South Bend, naming rights to the baseball stadium in South Bend, in addition to the casino in Michigan.
  - b. The Visit Red Bank website you referenced looks like it functions as a "visitors bureau". Visit South Bend Mishawaka is run by the St. Joseph County Chamber of Commerce.
- 5) Have you considered starting a historical society or some non-profit entity that may qualify for grants or fundraising? Since the MHPC is an extension of the City, not a 501(c)3, the rules are different.
- 6) Do you have a building/location? While the MHPC does not own any property, we can let you know if a building has any historical significance.
- 7) What is the timeline for this project? What steps need to occur in what order?
- 8) How can the MHPC help?

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**Privilege of the Floor:**

Cliff Zenor mentioned Summerfest coming up at the end of June, which includes an Historic Bus Tour led by Pete DeKeever and Lexie Schroder-Kobb of the Hannah Lindahl Children's Museum. It runs about an hour, costs \$10, and you can sign up on the website.

Dave Eisen indicated the Heritage Festival would be held in the evening on the Sunday before Labor Day. Terry indicated he had received some correspondence from the organizers. We will put on the July agenda.

Dave Straughn thinks tiny houses are popular right now. Also, if we need any pictures, Lexie at Hannah Lindahl, can help find them. Kate Voelker agrees tiny houses are something that her kid's generation is interested in.

Kate was able to find the Sandborn maps Todd Zieger mentioned during the tour last month online, but not old enough for her house. Cliff was able to find older ones on microfiche at the Heritage Center.

Alan Grzeskowiak asked if those that had shirts could wear them to next month's meeting and we could take a picture.

A motion to adjourn was made by Kate Voelker, seconded by Nancy Seidler. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm.

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Terry DeMaegd, Chairman

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Christa Hill, Secretary