

## MINUTES

### Cheney Historic Preservation Commission October 6, 2005

**Commissioners Attending:** Bettye Hull, Martin Seedorf, Fred Lauritsen, Nikki Gamon, Steve Emerson, Aimee Flinn and Chris Stewart.

**Commissioners Absent:** None.

**Staff Attending:** Glenn Scholten and Susan Beeman.

**Councilpersons Attending:** None.

**Call to Order:** Chairman Hull called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Seedorf, to approve the minutes of the September 1, 2005 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission as distributed. Motion carried.

**Citizen Participation:** Chairman Hull welcomed Pat Kennedy, 105 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Old Business: West Cheney Survey Project Progress Report.** Ms. Beeman reported that our grant materials were submitted to Olympia by the due date, and timesheets are ready for signature. Ms. Beeman noted that both Commissioner Emerson and Commissioner Flinn donated hours to the survey project prior to being pressed into service as our contractors to complete the survey, but to minimize any possibility of appearance of fairness issues, those hours are not being counted toward our match for the grant. She thanked the Commissioners for their time and expertise, both as volunteers and as contracted staff.

Ms. Beeman noted that the financial report portion will be submitted to Olympia as soon as month-end reports are available for September payroll expenses.

**Old Business: Moorman House.** Ms. Beeman noted that Mayor Sooy has indicated an interest in rallying community support to solicit donations and grant funds in order to move the Moorman House to a nearby city-owned lot, and to refurbish it for use as a museum. She reported on meeting with members of the Tilicum Board to discuss the possibility of moving their museum collection into the Moorman House. Their concerns have to do with layout and space, and being sure the building is refurbished with humidity and temperature controls to ensure the safety of their collection. Those are concerns we should be able to address somewhere down the road.

Ms. Beeman reported that we are looking at other small towns to see how they fund museum operations. At this point, we are still expecting that the building needs to be removed from its present site by the end of the year. Rough estimates come to approximately \$24,000 to move the

building and place it on a foundation at the new location. That would buy us some time to procure additional funding to see the renovation of the building.

Commissioner Seedorf noted that other small towns are able to support museums, and places like Grant County have extensive community-funded collections, including buildings and grounds. He said he realizes that Cheney's budget is already stretched, but he hopes it is possible to begin to support a community museum effort.

Ms. Beeman said that the Mayor's position is that there must be some new revenue source to provide the funds for operating expenses, that it cannot be squeezed out of present funding sources. It may need to be a creative package. In Ritzville, the city owns the building and contributes a small amount toward operating expenses, but the museums are run by volunteers in the community. Repairs and maintenance are shared between the city and the volunteers. She noted that we have consistently seen in public meetings that historic character and historic values are items of interest to the community. If that is truly a community value, perhaps City Council will be willing to allocate some small amount toward operating expenses for a museum.

Chairman Hull reported that she had talked to the museum directors at length, and they had been willing to provide a letter of support to accompany grant applications, indicating their interest in seeing the Moorman House refurbished for use as a museum. While this does not obligate them to anything, it does indicate support for the City's efforts to acquire funding for the project.

Commissioner Stewart agreed that this is a hard issue for the city, knowing that the city's budget is completely stretched already. Adding another project is probably not what any of the council members have in the forefront of their minds at this time.

Chairman Hull said that applying for grants is a place to start, and if the grant funding does not materialize, we are not out anything.

Ms. Beeman noted that a letter of support has been received from the museum directors, indicating their support for efforts to acquire funding to move and rehabilitate the Moorman House to meet the needs of the museum, with the expectation that it could be made suitable for the museum.

NOTE: Commissioner Lauritsen arrived at 5:30 p.m.

**New Business: Local Register Application – Kennedy House, 105 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.**

Ms. Beeman explained that the ranch-style house was built in 1948 by Marion "Mo" Malmo, the Union Oil distributor, and then was owned for 40-some years by Kenneth and Kathleen Kennedy. Their son, Pat Kennedy, now owns and resides in the house, and has applied for listing on the Cheney Register of Historic Places.

Ms. Beeman noted that the application form in the agenda packet will be finalized in the next couple of weeks. This house is located in our survey area, and the opinion of the surveyors was that it may be eligible for National Register listing. Ms. Beeman asked the Commission to

schedule a public hearing for consideration of the nomination. She explained the public notice requirements for the hearing.

Commissioner Seedorf made a motion to set a public hearing for the November meeting to consider the nomination of the Kennedy House to the local register. Seconded by Commissioner Gamon; motion carried unanimously.

Discussion followed. Commissioner Seedorf asked Mr. Kennedy how many owners there have been. Mr. Kennedy stated that he was the third owner; the house was built in 1948 and his father purchased it in 1959.

Commissioner Stewart thought it was noteworthy that this nomination is a direct result of the survey project in a new section of Cheney. The year is not even over and we are already seeing a nomination to the local register resulting from the survey project.

Commissioner Emerson volunteered to expand on the physical description of the house. Chairman Hull asked if the interior of the house has any significant features. Mr. Kennedy invited Commissioner Emerson to visit and see the inside of the house.

Commissioner Seedorf noted that there is an interesting row of trees in front of the house. Mr. Kennedy said that they are maple trees, but an unusual variety. He noted that he has a photograph of his father pruning those trees in 1963, probably the first time they were pruned.

Commissioner Emerson suggested that there should be added to the nomination a statement about it being a ranch style house with good integrity, and that being the justification for the nomination.

**New Business: Report on Planning Workshop of September 26.** Chairman Hull reported that she had attended the workshop, along with Commissioner Gamon and Commissioner Lauritsen. Ms. Beeman noted that the Planning Commission, Park Board, Historic Preservation Commission, and Pathways to Progress were represented at the workshop.

Chairman Hull reported that it was a very good conversation with comments from each group about what is important in determining the future of the city. Commissioner Gamon felt that it was a good discussion with people who have already expressed an interest in the community by participating on one of the boards or commissions of the city. She felt it was very valuable to be sharing ideas about where Cheney is and where we want to grow. Commissioner Lauritsen felt that he learned several things, especially about plans for the expansion of SR-904, and where the city's priorities are.

Ms. Beeman reported that the Planning staff is going to be giving a presentation to the Planning Commission next week that will essentially be a work plan for how to continue this community dialogue. The Park Board feels there is a real need for pedestrian and bike paths. There is a tremendous demand right now for additional residential housing, and as we adjust to growth in the community, this is a great opportunity for members of the Historic Preservation Commission to participate and have input on how growth will affect the historic resources in our

neighborhoods. She encouraged the Commissioners to continue to be involved in these conversations, including the Park charette which will be held at the Wren Pierson Building on October 13.

Commissioner Lauritsen noted that there had been discussion at the workshop about removing non-historic buildings to provide room for new development, with the possibility of adding underground parking.

Commissioner Seedorf said that it is important not to lose all the small, modest houses which are representative of working-class homes, as well as preserving the larger, more ornamental buildings like the Governor Martin House.

Commissioner Stewart asked about the date of the last comprehensive planning efforts. Ms. Beeman said that the last major revision to the Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1997, with minor amendments made over the last 7 years. The city will be receiving a planning grant next year to help update our comprehensive plan to be consistent with the Growth Management Act. This would be a good time to consider what changes should be made to the comprehensive plan to further encourage preservation of historic properties. For instance, we have had discussions on whether there should be design review for buildings in the downtown historic district; if the Commission feels that is important, it needs to go in the comprehensive plan. Things like which buildings should be subject to design review, and what features on historic buildings should be subject to design review are good topics to be considering.

Commissioner Flinn asked if there is any kind of design review process in the city at this time. Ms. Beeman said there is not, except for review of local register properties for issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Commissioner Flinn noted that the City of Spokane is dealing with these issues right now. They have a design review process, but the problem is that it just makes everybody mad. It is all about property rights.

Mr. Scholten said that the Planning Commission had discussions about design review, but those bogged down at the question of who should be responsible for design review. Ms. Beeman added that a consistent theme with the Planning Commission was that design review does not make sense for residential properties, but it may be appropriate for the downtown, where you have a public interest in having a unified, historically identifiable commercial area. In that regard, it may come back to the Historic Preservation Commission to begin to identify what features make buildings historically identifiable. The town of Oysterville has a classic booklet on design review guidelines, but it is very much tailored to their community. They used grant funds to hire a consultant and then have a series of public meetings where they identified very precisely what characteristics of their buildings contributed to the unique character of the community. Ms. Beeman suggested that it might be difficult to do with Cheney, as one of the selling points for our downtown historic district was the diversity of our buildings. The downtown core is quite eclectic, with commercial, residential and industrial uses within the same four-block area. But the conversation is likely to come back to the Historic Preservation Commission as the city's experts on historic buildings.

Mr. Scholten said that one of the questions we asked was, "Where is Cheney going to grow?" Our projection is that by 2025 we will have a population of 13,700 people. Pathways did a study

on under-utilized land in the downtown area, and concluded that there could be an additional 500 residential units fit into the downtown by making better use of under-utilized properties.

Chairman Hull asked if the Commissioners have copies of the comprehensive plan. Ms. Beeman said that we are having copies printed of the plan which will include all the updates made since 1997, and she will see that Commission members receive copies as soon as they are available. The comprehensive plan is also available on the City's web site at [www.cityofcheney.org](http://www.cityofcheney.org).

Chairman Hull asked the Commissioners to review Cheney Municipal Code Title 19.22, which establishes and empowers the Commission. Ms. Beeman noted that the local register hearing in November will fall under the guidelines of that chapter, and since we have these hearings rather infrequently, it would be good to refresh our knowledge of the code.

Commissioner Seedorf noted that much of Cheney's development has been in the west and north of town; will there be much development to the south and east? Mr. Scholten said that there will be, but it will be costly to get water and sewer lines under the railroad tracks, and costly to develop because of the rock and the wetlands in that area. But there is currently a proposal for a large development of 300+ houses in the area south and west of the developed city. At this point the design is still dynamic, but it is probably going to happen relatively soon.

Commissioner Lauritsen said that in defense of larger developments, they often take better care of their property, such as snow removal on their sidewalks. He noted that if the Park Department is interested in additional walkways and pathways, the winter maintenance issues need to be considered, as well.

**Commissioner Reports:** Commissioner Stewart reported that Auntie's Bookstore is advertising "22<sup>nd</sup> Street in the 50s" as being of interest to local history buffs. She suggested that we are not really in the mindset of considering the 50s as being 'historic.' Commissioner Stewart reported that there is a historic home near Sacred Heart in Spokane that is being redone, and that is encouraging to see.

Commissioner Flinn noted that the flyer on the historic preservation workshop in Pullman may have a change of location, but if that is confirmed, she will let everyone know.

Commissioner Emerson reported that he has finished the Cheney survey project, and also the Moran Prairie and Glenrose Prairie survey projects for the City of Spokane.

Chairman Hull reported that she has just returned from Albuquerque, El Paso and Santa Fe. She noted that there are building codes in Santa Fe which require that the buildings must be constructed in a Spanish/Pueblo style, and that contributes to a very cohesive atmosphere there. She shared a copy of a walking tour brochure from El Paso.

Commissioner Lauritsen suggested that it would very easy to make people aware of a self-guided walking tour that started from the PUB on campus.

**Staff Reports:** Ms. Beeman distributed copies of a letter from Tetra Tech, Inc., representing Verizon Wireless. At this time, Verizon has cell phone towers on top of the Fischer Administration Building at 520 4<sup>th</sup> Street, a contributing property to the Central Cheney Historic District. Verizon is proposing to replace three existing rooftop cellular antennas with four smaller models. They are asking for comments. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Emerson asked how long the towers have been there; do they predate the Central Cheney Historic District? He stated that his opinion is that we have to accept cell towers to some degree, and if this has a lesser impact than the existing towers, then he has no problem with the proposal.

Commissioner Seedorf agreed that there is a precedent that the towers are already in place, and do not appear to be too intrusive.

Commissioner Flinn stated that as long as they are not permanently affixed to the building in a way that is destructive to the exterior appearance, and they could be removed entirely at some point in the future, she does not have any objection to the proposal.

Ms. Beeman will draft a letter for the Chairman to sign.

Ms. Beeman distributed copies of an updated contact listing, and received further corrections to the list.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Chairman Hull adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

**Approved:**

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Bettye Hull, Chairman

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Susan Beeman, Secretary