

MINUTES

Cheney Historic Preservation Commission

April 3, 2008

Commissioners Attending: Bettye Hull, Fred Lauritsen, Charlie Mutschler and Scott Wilbanks.

Commissioners Absent: Aimee Flinn, Steve Emerson and Chris Stewart.

Staff Attending: Susan Beeman.

Councilpersons Attending: None.

Call to Order: Chairman Hull called the meeting to order at 5:19 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Chairman Hull asked if there were any corrections to the minutes; hearing none, the minutes of the March 6, 2008 meeting were approved as distributed.

Citizen Participation: Commissioner Hull welcomed Ann Heehn and Joan Mamanakis of the Cheney Historical Museum, and Ernie Robeson.

Old Business: Sterling-Moorman House Project Work Plan.

Ms. Beeman distributed copies of the DAHP contract Scope of Work for the Sterling-Moorman House Preservation Plan, and reminded the Commission that they will be responsible for sections A through C, which deal with the history of the property and documentation of use of the property over time, and Mr. Robeson will be preparing sections D and E, which are comprised of the architectural description and assessment of the building.

Ms. Mamanakis said that she has a little more information on the Sterlings, which she will email to Ms. Beeman. They did not stay in Cheney very long; they appeared to arrive around 1880, and left around 1905. They divorced sometime after their child was born in 1887, and he remarried in Klickitat or Klickitat County in 1905.

Ms. Beeman asked if there was any further information on Frank Sterling's profession. We surmise that he was involved with construction of the house, but are not certain of it. Ms. Mamanakis said that Frank Sterling was listed on the census reports as a cabinet maker in Detroit and in California, and also in Washington, and agreed that it is likely that he was involved with building the house.

Mr. Robeson reported that he has begun measuring the building, and has been looking at NPS publications on historic structure reports. His copy of the book on Preparing Historic Structure Reports was published in 1989 and may be a little out of date; it refers to single lens reflex cameras, and he hopes we can use digital images at this time.

Mr. Robeson mentioned that he has been reading about the history of Cheney in Virginia White's Dreamers and Schemers, and found references to the railroad coming through Cheney in both 1881 and 1883.

Commissioner Mutschler explained that the Northern Pacific Railroad was built from both ends and met in Montana. The end that started in the west arrived in Cheney on its way east in 1881, and in Gold Creek, Montana, they met the crew from Bismarck, North Dakota in September 1883 to complete the railroad. Cheney, like all the other communities in the territory, had a jump in population beginning in 1883.

Mr. Robeson referenced a preservation plan prepared for the City of Spokane, and a Historic Structure Report and Maintenance Plan which was prepared for the Campbell House. He said the report was quite interesting, and contained some detailed information on what they recommended for electrical and mechanical systems.

In the short term, Mr. Robeson recommended putting a sheet metal cap over the chimney to prevent water from leaking into the house, and closing off the crawl space access so we don't get skunks underneath the house. He also suggested that if we have volunteer labor available, we could begin cleaning up some of the dust and debris inside the house. He would not recommend removing any of the plaster or other materials on the interior until we decide what actions will be taken, but some basic cleanup would make it more pleasant to be working in the building.

Chairman Hull suggested that we have a future meeting there in order to facilitate discussion and planning. Ms. Beeman will check into requirements of the City's insurer for utilizing volunteers.

Mr. Robeson asked if there is another good local history book he could read. Commissioner Mutschler recommended Cecil Dryden's Light for an Empire, and J. Orin Oliphant's History of the State Normal School at Cheney, Washington, and said that he would try to locate a copy of each to loan to Mr. Robeson.

Ms. Beeman asked for a volunteer to tackle the 'purpose' section of the report. Chairman Hull offered to work on that section.

Commissioner Mutschler will be rummaging in old newspaper records over the next few weeks, and will keep an eye out for anything related to the Sterlings or the Moormans.

New Business: Hargreaves Hall Tour.

Ms. Beeman reported that the Commission has been invited to tour the original portion of Hargreaves Hall sometime in the next several weeks to see the building which has been uncovered in the demolition phase of the project. A remodel in 1967 obscured many of the original building details, and divided the original 2nd floor into a 2nd and 3rd floor. That added floor has been removed, and the original high ceilinged reading room is again visible. Mr. Moeller will contact us to confirm the date for the tour; we are working with the contractor to

avoid having people wandering through the building at times when liability issues would be greatest.

New Business: Grant Application – DAHP 2008-09.

Ms. Beeman reported that applications for next year's funding cycle are due next week to the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation. Discussion followed on possible grant projects that would be appropriate for this funding source. Ms. Beeman said that the DAHP grants are not really intended to fund 'brick and mortar' projects; they would rather support survey work, preservation planning, and educational activities. The Commission suggested that our greatest need at this time is for additional interpretive signage around the historic districts, and possibly signs for downtown buildings showing the year built.

New Business: Grant Application – Heritage Capital Grants Program.

Ms. Beeman said that we are preparing an application for grant funding from the Heritage Capital Grants Program, which is designed to support capital projects related to heritage tourism. This is a matching grant for which we need to supply two dollars of City match for every dollar of funding requested. We are able to count the value of the Sterling-Moorman House itself as part of our match. At this time, it appears that we have enough 'match funds' to allow us to request approximately \$60,000 in grant funds. This could be a major source of funding for the Sterling-Moorman House rehab project.

Commissioner Reports: Commissioner Wilbanks and Commissioner Lauritsen reported on the Pathways Board meeting which they attended as representatives of the Commission. This was an unusually long meeting, and much of the discussion had to do with criteria for selecting a replacement for Charlie Dotson. Commissioner Lauritsen reported that there is a way of contributing a local business's B&O tax levy to Pathways and taking a write-off for it. He reported that there was some discussion on a survey being taken on the EWU campus relating to 'students as consumers,' and discussion on how to draw the students to the downtown businesses.

Commissioner Wilbanks recommended the Colt firearms display at the Museum of Arts & Culture.

Commissioner Mutschler will be attending the Northwest History Conference week after next.

Chairman Hull is scheduled to be a judge at the State History Day on April 26, at the University of Washington.

Commissioner Wilbanks visited the Dahmen Barn near Uniontown, and they have done a wonderful job of restoration of that structure. It houses an artisan studio, special exhibits, and space for community events.

Staff Reports: Ms. Beeman reported that the City has completed a preliminary round of interviews in the search for a new Community Development Director.

An open house related to the comprehensive plan revision was held last night, and had about 20 participants. Information about that process, and a draft vision statement, is available on the City's web site at www.cityofcheney.org/site/vision , including a citizen survey, and a report that documents efforts up to this point.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Chairman Hull adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Approved:

Bettye Hull, Chairman

Susan Beeman, Secretary