

## **MINUTES**

### **Cheney Historic Preservation Commission**

**May 6, 2010**

**Commissioners Attending:** Bettye Hull, Chris Stewart, Scott Wilbanks, Fred Lauritsen, Vance Youmans and Ann Heehn.

**Commissioners Absent:** Charlie Mutschler.

**Staff Attending:** Brian Jennings, Brett Lucas and Susan Beeman.

**Councilpersons Attending:** None.

**Guests:** Becky Thomas, Cheney Free Press, and Daniel Woods.

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

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the March 1, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed. Chairman Hull welcomed Brett Lucas, who has just started to work as Senior Planner in the Community Development Department. Mr. Lucas gave a brief introduction and was welcomed by members of the Commission.

**Citizen Participation:** None.

#### **Old Business: Sterling-Moorman House Spring Work Plan.**

Ms. Beeman reported that Rudy Torres is planning to work on final repairs to the front porch on Monday of Memorial Day weekend. It was agreed that we will have a work day from 9 to noon on Monday, May 31 at the house.

Mr. Jennings asked the Commission to consider forming a subcommittee to work on a plan for accomplishing the remainder of work on the house. He suggested that this could take the format of a short discussion with 3 members of the Commission, then coming back with proposals to the larger group. Discussion followed; Commissioner Stewart asked if this could come back on the June agenda for discussion, and possible action following the end-of-school-year activities of the next month.

#### **Old Business: Northern Pacific Depot Discussion.**

Commissioner Heehn reported that there have been 145 hits on the Facebook page for the Depot. Commissioner Heehn read an article about Clarence D. Martin's complaint about the condition of the 1884 depot. He was successful in lobbying the railroad for the new depot building, which was built in 1929. Discussion followed; it was agreed that there is interest in preservation of the depot, but we need to see the leadership emerge to sustain the effort. An example of the type of

grassroots preservation effort Mr. Jennings has in mind would be the Friends of the Davenport Hotel.

Commissioner Heehn said that the Museum booth at Mayfest will have a donation jar for the museum, and also a signup list for supporters of the depot.

**Old Business: Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation Grant Application.**

Ms. Beeman summarized the grant application which was submitted to DAHP for this year's round of competitive grants. If funded, the project will have Commission members completing historic survey work for the City's parks and memorials, and preparing newspaper articles detailing the history of the community's public spaces. The grant funds would be used to place interpretive plaques in at least 5 of the parks and memorials.

**New Business: Preservation Month – May 2010.**

Ms. Beeman reported that May is Preservation Month, and we have purchased bookmarks to place in the community library and other locations. Mr. Jennings added that the Mayor will sign a proclamation at this week's City Council meeting marking the observance.

**New Business: Mayfest Booth.**

It was agreed that we should have a table promoting the Sterling-Moorman House at Mayfest. Ms. Beeman will make arrangements for the table space and will email Commission members about a schedule for the booth.

**New Business: Cheney Middle School Project.**

Commissioner Stewart explained that she had requested discussion on this subject. The Middle School is architecturally significant as representative of the 1970s energy crisis, although not necessarily historic. With the passage of the bond levy, plans are underway for construction of a new Middle School, and the existing building will be demolished. We should make some effort to document the structure before that time comes.

Mr. Jennings reported that Community Development staff met with representatives of the Cheney School District today in a predevelopment conference for the Middle School project. They have architectural plans of the existing building, and construction records. The expectation is that the building will come down after completion of the new school building in 2012. Mr. Jennings noted that the Middle School was designed by Spokane architect Kenneth Brooks, who also designed the Washington Water Power building and the Spokane Opera House.

Discussion followed. Commissioner Lauritsen asked if there is any significant artwork inside the building. Chairman Hull said that the Indian motif is used throughout the building, which is not as common here as in the Southwest. It was suggested that this could be an opportunity to obtain interviews with residents and former students as part of a project to document the building. Commissioner Heehn stated that Jack Phileo was the principal at the time of

construction. Commissioner Stewart said that she thought Ron Tan, another local architect, was a school board member at the time of construction. He was architect for the Cheney Library, and also for the Rockwood Clinic.

**Commissioner Reports:**

Commissioner Heehn reported that she has been researching the house at 213 B Street. It was built by Abel Brown, who was the father of the 'Brown' associated with Brown & Holter, and grandfather to Nolan Brown.

Commissioner Lauritsen reported that he has not attended a Pathways / Downtown Cheney Partnership meeting recently; there is still an issue with the meeting notifications which causes them to arrive after the scheduled meeting time. Commissioner Lauritsen shared his new email address.

Commissioner Heehn shared her preferred email address and cell phone number.

Commissioner Lauritsen added that Commissioner Mutschler will be speaking on May 13 at 3 p.m. in the JFK Faculty Reading Room about *A Doctor Among the Oglala Sioux Tribe*, a collection of Dr. Robert H. Ruby's correspondence during his appointment as a physician on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Commissioner Lauritsen added that he is participating in the State West Dinner Theater on May 16 at the Lutheran Church; an offering will be taken to benefit Cheney Outreach.

Commissioner Lauritsen shared a booklet on Historic Ritzville that he came across. Chairman Hull said that this is something she would like to see us do for Cheney – something that talks about the life of the building, and not just the structure.

Commissioner Wilbanks reported that he was in Kellogg recently for the removal of the war memorial and American flag that has been the subject of recent news reports. He added that there will be a parade and celebration at the restored depot building in Wallace sometime during the month of August.

Commissioner Youmans promised a travelogue report at a future meeting on his recent trip to England.

Commissioner Stewart reported that she phoned the realtor about the possibility of touring the Mohs House on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street which has been listed for sale, but has not received a call back. She also shared several useful web sites for historic research from an article in the September 2009 *Family Tree Magazine*:

- [www.preservationdirectory.com](http://www.preservationdirectory.com) – a how-to site
- [www.digitalarchives.wa.gov](http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov) – listed in *Family Tree Magazine* as one of the 10 best sites for searching locally
- [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) – cemetery database

- [www.interment.net](http://www.interment.net) – cemetery database – not as large as [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) but it covers cemeteries which no longer exist
- [www.myheritage.com](http://www.myheritage.com)

Commissioner Stewart noted that several of Steve Emtman’s buildings in the downtown are displaying realtors’ signs.

**Staff Reports:**

Mr. Jennings reported that the University will be placing new gateway monument signs at either end of Washington Street, and 3 smaller signs throughout the community at entrances to the campus. He described the signs as modern looking, but borrowing elements from the original Showalter pillars.

Mr. Jennings invited Commission members to attend an open house at the Utility Building tomorrow from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. to see the new facility.

**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