

MINUTES

Cheney Historic Preservation Commission

July 6, 2006

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

Commissioners Absent: Martin Seedorf.

Staff Attending: Tom Richardson 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 Gamon, seconded by Commissioner Lauritsen, to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2006 Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission with minor grammatical corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Participation: None.

Old Business: Moorman House Update. Ms. Beeman reported that a contract for moving and constructing a foundation for the Moorman House will be going to City Council next week. The house should be off its present location by the first of August. The house will be placed on its new foundation, and then we will have time to search for additional grant funding and donations to complete the renovation of the building. We will be working closely with members of the Tilicum Museum Board through the design process to be sure that it meets their needs, and the Historic Preservation Commission will be the design review board for the project, since it is on the Cheney Register of Historic Places.

Commissioner Lauritsen asked how the house would be oriented on the lot on 2nd Street. Ms. Beeman said that it would be oriented the same way it is on the lot on 4th Street. Mr. Richardson added that it will be placed on the lot so that it is the same distance from the street as the other houses on that block, to maintain visual continuity. Commissioner Lauritsen suggested looking into the possibility of working with 'This Old House' on the restoration project.

Chairman Hull suggested that members of the Commission review the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings, since those will be the guidelines for restoration of the Moorman House. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Stewart mentioned that the sale of personalized bricks was very successful for the Friends of the Library, and they are still receiving inquiries about whether they will be selling any more bricks. A similar sort of fundraiser for the Moorman House could be very effective. Also, during the library fundraising campaign, the Free Press ran lists of new donors each week, giving public acknowledgment to contributors.

Commissioner Hull suggested that we could look for donations for other amenities, such as an outside bench, landscape trees, etc. Auburn's museum has an actual storefront which is sponsored by businesses or local families. Commissioner Lauritsen suggested that we also be mindful of the need to build up some kind of fund to cover future major repairs when they become needed, such as roof replacement, etc. Mr. Richardson noted that those larger repair items would be included in the City's capital facility plan. Ms. Beeman suggested that those repairs could be funded by the hotel/motel tax revenues, as the maintenance and operating expenses will be. The opening of the Holiday Inn Express is timely, as our revenues in that area are going to increase substantially, and those funds must be used for tourism-related activities.

Old Business: Survey Report. Mr. Emerson reported that he and Ms. Flinn are working to finish up the survey report. The 25 houses are selected, and some of them are very nice, while others are very ordinary. Ms. Beeman reported that the data entry into the electronic database is finished, and all that remains to be done is linking the photographs to the database entries. We have not received the material back from Charlie Mutschler's class; they surveyed approximately 50-60 properties which were constructed in the 1940s.

New Business: Rodeo Days Parade. Ms. Beeman reported that our Historic Downtown Cheney banners will be displayed on the historic fire truck in next Saturday's parade. The Planning Department will have a booth downtown during the parade & street fair, and will be soliciting opinions with a 'penny poll,' allowing people to vote on their priorities for implementing the vision elements identified in earlier public meetings. Mr. Richardson said there are openings for volunteers to help with the booth, if anyone is available. The kiddie parade starts at 10:30, and the parade begins at 11:30. The booth will probably be busiest after noon.

New Business: Cheney High School Alumni Reunion. Ms. Beeman reported that Ann Heehn has invited us to have a table at Salnave Park during the reunion picnic, showing photos of our historic buildings and inviting comments and stories from people who grew up here. Volunteers are needed to help on Saturday, July 15, from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Stewart asked if we can have printed copies of our properties in notebooks for people to page through, as well as the database on a laptop. Commissioner Gamon suggested that we concentrate on collecting names and phone numbers from people who have a story to tell, and then contact them by telephone or email later. Chairman Hull asked that we be sure to have copies of the house photos from the Tilicum Museum, to see if anyone can identify those buildings.

New Business: Cheney Christian Church, 524 5th Street. Ms. Beeman reported that the congregation of the Cheney Christian Church is planning to donate their building to the University, which will use it to house their Religious Studies program. The church is planning to include stipulations in the ownership transfer documents that will require the University to maintain the building on the Cheney Register of Historic Places, and to maintain the features which contribute to the integrity of the building, such as the steeple and bell, the stained glass windows, etc.

Ms. Beeman noted that the zoning on the church property was inadvertently changed many years ago and it shows on the zoning maps as public zoning; a proposal was to go before the Planning Commission later this summer to change the zoning back to a more appropriate designation, but that will be withdrawn since the University will be taking ownership of the building.

Commissioner Reports: Commissioner Lauritsen reported that he will be attending a wedding in Minnesota on July 15, and will be giving tours of a historic 22-room farmhouse while he is there. The original owners were friends of his family, and donated this house to the county historical society.

Commissioner Gamon remarked on a recent Spokesman-Review article that described how prices of houses in Nettleton's Historic District are increasing rapidly.

Commissioner Hull reported that her daughter is married off now!

Commissioner Emerson said that the Rookery Block in Spokane is now slated for demolition, and he will be photographing the building for posterity. Commissioner Lauritsen asked what would happen to the decorative stonework panels from the exterior of that building. Ms. Flinn said that would be up to the demolition company. Commissioner Emerson noted that they are classic Art Deco terra cotta panels, some of the best in Spokane, made with clay mined from Clayton, Washington. He is hopeful that some of them will be saved.

Commissioner Flinn reported that the front page of the Washington Trust summer newsletter has a story on Nettleton's Addition which was attributed to her, although she was not really the author. She speculated that the article was based on a press release.

Commissioner Stewart said that there have been two thefts from the museum recently, with items going missing during the hours the museum was open. The police are investigating.

Commissioner Stewart reported on an unusual house at 921 Verkler in Spokane, at the corner of Verkler and Desmet. There are decorative castle turrets made of metal surrounding the house. And nearby, there is a wonderful Victorian house at 11514 – 17th.

Staff Reports: Ms. Beeman reported that Mr. Scholten retired on June 30. Mr. Richardson will be handling all the day-to-day planning activities now, in addition to his Light Department duties.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Chairman Hull adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Approved:

Bettye Hull, Chairman

Susan Beeman, Secretary