

MINUTES

Cheney Historic Preservation Commission September 6, 2007

Commissioners Attending: Bettye Hull, Charlie Mutschler, Fred Lauritsen, Steve Emerson and Chris Stewart.

Commissioners Absent: Aimee Flinn. (one position vacant)

Staff Attending: Susan Beeman.

Councilpersons Attending: None.

Call to Order: Chairman Hull called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Mutschler to approve the minutes from the June 7, 2007 regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, with typographical corrections. Seconded by Commissioner Stewart; motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Participation: None.

Old Business: Moorman House Preservation Plan. Ms. Beeman reported that our grant agreement with DAHP has been approved by City Council, and the \$8,000 grant to develop a preservation plan for the Moorman House will be available after October 1. Our timeline calls for preparation of a Request for Qualifications by October, with interviews and selection of a consultant before the end of the year.

Commission members will be responsible for preparation of a history of the house, and our selected consultant will develop a preservation plan addressing modifications to the building to make it suitable for a public use, including designs, cost estimates, and recommendations on accessibility issues.

Commissioner Lauritsen reported on a meeting held earlier today with Ann Heehn and Joan Mamanakis from the Tilicum Museum. One of their suggestions was that we refer to the building as the Sterling-Moorman House, to acknowledge the earliest owner and likely builder of the house, as well as the Moorman family, whose ownership stretched from the 1930s to 1997.

Commissioner Lauritsen reported that upon completion, this will be the only museum in the state housed in a working-class home, according to Ms. Mamanakis. Other historic house museums all seem to be located in larger, more elaborate structures. Commissioner Lauritsen noted that because the house is ordinary and modest, it would have been more sparingly furnished than many of the larger, more affluent homes.

Commissioner Lauritsen reported that the discussion had included discussion of a number of more technical details, such as maintaining a desirable and constant temperature and humidity level. He said that there is a possibility that we would not be required to provide handicap access to the second floor of the house, as long as there is provision for showing on the main floor what is contained in the less accessible areas. This could be done with a video of the upstairs areas, or by some other means.

Ms. Beeman said that she is not sure that exemption from the accessibility requirements will apply to us, because we have moved the building from its original site, and also are changing the use from residential to a public use. We will research that question and report back.

Commissioner Lauritsen said that the discussion also included the importance of documenting every stage of the rehab project. Ms. Mamanakis suggested that we begin offering tours of the building at very early stages, as soon as it is determined that the building is structurally sound. Seeing the interior as it undergoes construction work will be educational, even before the building is completed and furnished.

Discussion followed on how to address needed improvements without undue damage to the historic fabric of the building. By consensus, the Commission agreed that referring to the house as the Sterling-Moorman House is very appropriate, but that we will need to explain this so we do not convey an impression that there are two historic house museums under construction.

Old Business: Cronk's Hill Proposal. Chairman Hull reported on a meeting this week with members of the Public Works and Parks Department, and the Park Board to discuss the possibility of retaining a portion of Cronk's Hill to site a historic marker as that part of town is developed.

New Business: Commission Vacancy. Ms. Beeman reported that Commissioner Gamon has resigned her position due to a change in her residence. Discussion followed on possible candidates to fill the vacancy.

Commissioner Reports: Commissioner Stewart suggested several candidates for the barn rehabilitation program. The McMillan Barn on Granite Lake Road is situated next to a very early log cabin. Commissioner Emerson said that he was familiar with that cabin, and the first white girl in the county was born at that house in 1874-75.

Commissioner Stewart mentioned that another good candidate is a barn on Salnave Road owned by Susan Miller. This working structure still has the original gasoline pumps in the yard, and stone outbuildings nearby. Lastly, the Grine homestead barns currently owned by John Montague are possible candidates for preservation.

Commissioner Emerson reported that he has been working on a survey and report on the Garland business district. He has also been photographing the Shadle Park High School and Field Elementary School, and has submitted a proposal to do another project on the Canon Hill Park neighborhood. He noted that his term on this commission expires at the end of 2007, and we will probably need to find a replacement for him.

Chairman Hull reported on a recent vacation in western Montana that included historic buildings in Anaconda, Montana.

Commissioner Lauritsen noted that the Gamon House on 6th Street has been purchased by Dan Hilton, and it will remain an owner-occupied home.

Commissioner Mutschler reported that he attended the Society of American Archivists' meeting in Chicago recently, and visited the Museum of Science & Industry. He is currently building a 2-car, 2-story garage, with a railroad room in the second story.

Staff Reports: Ms. Beeman reported that a planner has been hired to fill the vacancy created by Mr. Scholten's resignation last year.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Chairman Hull adjourned the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Approved:

Bettye Hull, Chairman

Susan Beeman, Secretary