

Minutes

**West Lafayette Historic Preservation Commission
West Lafayette Public Library
208 W. Columbia Street
West Lafayette, IN 47906
April 7, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Susan Curtis, President, who presided.

Present: Peter Bunder, Kelly Busch, Linda Martin, Persis Newman, Chandler Poole, Arnold Sweet, Kurt Wahl, Jim Sondgeroth
Absent: Phillip Keller, Chris Kulesza

The minutes of the July 21, 2014 Historic Preservation Commission meeting were reviewed by all members. The minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote.

Historic Preservation Guide update – Kate Morrison:

Kate Morrison has been working on drafting a Historic Preservation Guide. The research portion of the guide is nearing completion. Some materials still need to be assembled for the guide. Kate presented a PowerPoint presentation depicting the progress she's made to date as well as the proposed design of the guide. Kate has spent a great deal of time going through the archives of West Lafayette which are housed in the West Lafayette Public Library as well as the Tippecanoe County Public Library. She intends to draft a brief history regarding the New Chauncey neighborhood in the beginning of the Guide. Kate has focused her research on New Chauncey neighborhood with a small amount on Hills and Dales. The guide will feature design guidelines for current homeowners and a list of decision making criteria. She believes she can be done with the guide by the end of May.

Discussion was given regarding whether or not to add a list of homes that contain which homes have Wabash Valley Trust plaques and whether the homes are outstanding, notable, contributing, non-contributing.

Persis noted that there is another guide to what is notable, contributing and noncontributing that she has at home. This lists the properties which are contributing, etc. Mr. Wahl offered to go through the neighborhood to assist in determining which houses are still contributing, etc. It's been 30 or so years since Persis' publication was printed and some houses have changed since that time period. Kate would like to take recent photographs of new homes and particular style hallmarks to add to the guide. It would be good for the commissioners to walk the neighborhood so that they could look at a building and decide what category the building should be in so that they may be updated and accurate. Mr. Wahl believes the commissioners could walk the neighborhood in a few days and get it finished. Peter Bunder suggested using interns to help with this process.

Chandler Poole suggested breaking this large map up into quadrants or easily digestible pieces so that they're easier to work with considering West Lafayette's district is so large.

The commissioners agree the guide should be done mostly focusing on New Chauncey. Hills and Dales can be included as long as it is signified that it's because of the national historic information. Hills and Dales doesn't need to be researched right now until the commissioners decide which neighborhood to do next.

Village District

Chandler Poole discussed the village district and provided a map that included 15 properties that were noted on the tour that the commissioners took in August of 2014 of the village neighborhood. He noted that the State Street master Plan is going forward and the timeline is a December 2018 completion date. He went on to suggest that the commissioners make the decision to move forward with doing the research on the 15 buildings in order to get the historic label moving forward to protect the historically significant buildings from developers. After the research is done and the buildings are decided the commission would have to go in front of council with some probable public sessions regarding the approval of the area based on the decision of the commission.

The building with the most danger for leaving is University Apartments, considering it's the easiest one to acquire. Kelly Busch voiced her objection for Triple X to be on the list of the historical buildings, stating that there is no architectural significance of that building and nostalgia is not a good reason to save the building. Kurt Wahl agreed with Kelly Busch and suggested that more discussion be needed. There is a book of written criteria in which they can base their decisions on. Chandler brought to question whether the group deals with historic preservation as far as structure, or does it preserve history?

Mr. Bunder noted that at this point the commission isn't at the point where they can devise a final map to take to city council. He suggested that there be a vote/motion that the next thing the commission does is examine a village historical district and get ready to present that to council.

Chandler mentioned that the benefit of the Chauncey one was that they had the benefit of the national district designation already done. They looked at the map of the national district and didn't follow it completely. Chandler stated if the commission decides to do this it is something that will cost some money and the commission will need to start looking at costs and where that will come out of. The commission can hire a consultant to research the buildings they decide to include into the new district and prepare the case as to why this is appropriate to make a local historical district.

Kurt Wahl stated there are 4 categories to identify the significance of a property: 1) event, 2) person, 3) design/constructions and 4) archeological sites. There are many subcategories of that, but if you don't fit any of those then you're not in line for a historical property.

Kelly Busch moved that the commission directs staff to start pursuing a group to undertake reviewing all the buildings in the proposed district regarding their historical significance. Linda Martin seconded. Counsel approved 5-0.

Mid-Century Modern

Chandler Poole spoke about Mid-Century modern due to the fact this was discussed at the meetings last year along with the happy hollow project. Due to State Street this has been taken off the project list. Chandler had an intern go out and take photos of all the buildings. With the move of city hall the box of mid-century project documents has been misplaced, but he's working on getting it found and by the May meeting we'll have the map and the photos that were taken.

Mid Century Modern may extend past Happy Hollow Park, using Happy Hollow as the focus. Jim Sondergrath offered to help with that. His house is a mid-century modern designed by Evans Woollen, an Indiana architect, which is outside of the Happy Hollow area. This pod could possibly go as far as the Grace's house as well.

CDBG

Chandler Poole discussed what the CDBG funds are and how the historical preservation commission can utilize this money. These funds could be used to do something such as replacing the Von's awnings back to the historically accurate awnings. However, the thought to use this money is to assist current homeowners in replacing items that fits within the Historic Preservation Commission. The realm of the Historic Preservation Commission is solely for the outside of the property, not the inside. Commissioners would like tie the money given back to homeowners who are willing to buy multi-family properties and turn them back into single family homes. Giving the money directly back to New Chauncey, Inc. was discussed, however, it would be better to tie the money back to a particular project. The commissioners do not want any money given to Landlords to fix up their rental properties. Chandler will have to go in front of Council to obtain approval to spend the money when we get to that point. He might ask someone on the Commission to stand in support.

Peter Bunder – Mr. Bunder handed out zoning maps for New Chauncey neighborhood. He also passed out the land use plan for the New Chauncey neighborhood. He brought the attention that the land use plan is in front of the ordinance committee and is up for amendment. The Area Plan Commission is developing an overlay plan or zone for the New Chauncey Neighborhood. The land use plan is based on a plan approved by the West Lafayette City Council last year. Many places in Lafayette have a land use plan. Once there is a land use plan you try and match the zoning to the land use plan. Once you have the zoning you get to do a descriptive and fairly specific zoning language of what can go in what districts (R1, R2, etc.). At the ordinance committee the challenge will be the rental corporations mounting a fairly uniform assault on this plan and try to rezone some places.

The Historic Preservation Commission has power over this zones because a building can't be torn town without their permission. A state ordinance states when zoning and historic preservation collide, the most restrictive language wins.

Ms. Curtis believes it is valuable for the commissioners to set up a recurring time every month in order to have this meeting. If there isn't a need for a meeting, it can be cancelled. Kelly Busch moved to have a monthly meeting. Seconded by Persis Newman. The motion was amended to include a time on the second Tuesday of every month beginning at 6:00 p.m. The next meeting is on May 12, 2015. The motion was approved 7-0.

Kelly Busch moved to adjourn. Linda Martin Seconded. Approved 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.