



HISTORIC COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

WHEATON CITY HALL, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present in person: Nancy Flannery (Chair), Joe Szczepaniak (Vice Chair), Bob Purdy

Present virtual: Steph McGrath (Secretary), Emelie Engling

Absent: Lisa Buchanan

Public Comments: Frank Principe, Natalie Voelker, Caryn Andrews, Mike Andrews

Frank Principe, past Historic Commission member, presented information on the Federal Building that encompasses Wheaton's downtown post office, where he used to work. He shared history and documents about the history of the building, explaining how it also included federal offices for the Agriculture Department and the Works Progress Administration. There is a time capsule there to be opened July 1, 2033. He gave the documents to Nancy to copy for the Historic Commission files at the Wheaton Public Library.

Natalie Voelker, no comment.

Mike Andrews attended the meeting to learn more about the Historic Commission's current activities, future plans, and what kind of power and influence the Commission has. He expressed his appreciation of Wheaton's history and concern that proposed changes felt like a pivotal point that would negatively and forever affect the historic downtown, and start a domino effect. Especially Z.A. 22-16, the proposed 7-story apartment complex in downtown Wheaton, with its effect on downtown's streetscape, population density, and loss of historic buildings. Nancy explained the history and role of the Historic Commission.

Caryn Andrews said they moved to Wheaton because of its historic character, the old homes and buildings downtown. They are looking to connect with others who share their concerns and wondered what strategies work best. Steph suggested they look to lessons learned from the Warren Wheaton house, Seven Gables, Mariano's gas station, and the historic activism techniques used in Glen Ellyn, and asked Nancy to share her experiences

and suggestions, which she did.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the April 19, 2022 meeting approved as amended on a motion by Joe, seconded by Bob, and passed unanimously.

III. Old Business

- A. Preservation month: Nancy said some Pride in Preservation signs were missing when Commissioners went to pick them up; they'd been removed, lost or discarded. Steph said she's noticed over the years quite a few of hers get pulled by commercial lawn crews and tossed out of the way of mowing and edging, usually off in a garden bed or neighboring yard even, and are sometimes hard to find. Nancy suggested adding Property of City of Wheaton lettering to signs, since we need to order new ones. Discussed whether lettering might cost more than replacing the small number of lost signs. Will get quotes with and without extra lettering to compare cost. Need to discard old teal signs. Considering a new slogan, Bob expressed concern "Pride" might be confusing.

The lectures were well attended. The video of the Fires of Wheaton talk has been posted online, the Chicago Aurora & Elgin talk not yet.

- B. Wheaton Historic Register Map: Will do quarterly updates on the 1st of January, April, July and October. Any photos, new properties or text changes need to be submitted to Nancy before the deadlines. As to the word count for text, it is not known at present.
- C. Architectural identification: Keith Letsche will do his project in the fall.
- D. Attorney General's case: June 30 is the next court date.
- E. Landmark application: Discussed 417 E. Willow, applicant not present. Steph wondered if there were any old photos of the house, was curious if the porch had been altered by enclosing it or if that was original. Motion to approve by Bob, seconded by Joe, passed unanimously.
- F. Historic Commission logo: Discussed proposed logo design and color options. Motion to accept logo design by Joe and Bob seconded, passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

- A. Wheaton Register of Historic Places: Discussion of removing properties from Register due to exterior alterations from original was tabled to next month as Commissioner raising concern not present.
- B. Wheaton Patch: Need someone to send monthly historic dates to Wheaton Patch, Bob

volunteered.

- C. Commissioner vacancies: Currently have two openings on the Historic Commission.
- D. Time capsule: New time capsule to add to list, St. Michael Student Council.
- E. St. James Farm history: Discussed possible event and/or talk by Kevin Davis.
- F. Commissioner officer election: Elections can be on hold while awaiting proposed changes to term limits.

V. Commissioner Comments

Bob: Chicago Tribune had an article on Naperville's Mid Century Modern homes. While putting up Pride in Preservation signs he met Jim Allen and was able to learn more about the Wheaton Grand Theater's status and plans. Would be a good topic for a lecture.

Emelie: Saw fliers for a meeting for residents concerned about the proposed 7 story building downtown.

Steph: Has been getting more home history research requests.

VI. Adjournment

Joe moved to adjourn, Bob seconded, the motion passed unanimously; the meeting concluded at 8:56 p.m.