

REGULAR MEETING
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE
JANUARY 6, 2010
WEDNESDAY, 2:00 PM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The Historic Preservation Commission held a regular meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2010. Members in attendance were: David Felmet, Jr., Peter Sterling, Bob Kearney, Sandra Owen and Bette Sprecher. Also in attendance were Town Planner Paul Benson and Administrative Assistant Ginny Boyer. Those absent were Chairman Nikki Owens and Shawn Leatherwood. Vice-Chairman Bob Kearney called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Bette Sprecher made a motion to accept the minutes of November 4th, 2009. David Felmet seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Williamson House

Bob Kearney talked to Town Manager Lee Galloway who informed him that the Board of Aldermen revoked local landmark designation for the Williamson House. Sandra Owen asked about possible re-designation. Paul Benson said the Town would be happy to re-designate the house as a local landmark once restoration is complete. Paul Benson mentioned the issue was whether or not the house was receiving a tax credit. Sandra Owen inquired as to whether or not there was a protest at the meeting. Bob Kearney said the Williamson brothers did not attend but were represented by Attorney Jack Kersten who asked that the Board not remove the designation.

Howell House (Windover Inn)

Paul Benson said the application report for Local Historic Landmark designation has gone to the State Historic Preservation Office and they have thirty days to comment on it. He mentioned that it was a complete application package and he was impressed with the work the Duerrs and the commission members did. It would be up to the Town Board to enact an ordinance designating Howell House as a Local Historic Landmark. When the comments do come in from the State Historic Preservation Office, which are expected by the end of the month, the Howell House could then be an agenda item for the Town Board of Aldermen to address.

Walking Tour Brochure

Bob Kearney said the graphic designer who had been working on the walking tour brochure was no longer employed with the Mountaineer and did not have time to devote to the brochure. Furthermore, Bob, after talking with the production manager at the Mountaineer, has given up on locating the files of all the work that had been done thus far. Bob wants to take the design to another

graphic designer. Sandra Owen mentioned Chris Sylvester's pen & ink drawings for most of the houses have already been drawn and printed and that the previous tour booklets including those drawings were beautiful.

Peter Sterling inquired about distribution and mentioned June 5th being the big celebration called Appalachian Lifestyle sponsored by the Downtown Waynesville Association.

Monthly Newspaper Column for 2010

Bob Kearney has spoken with editor Vicki Hyatt of the Mountaineer and a column will be ready for January. He added that might be good timing if we have to challenge some uses of properties in historic neighborhoods.

Historic Preservation Commission Vacancies

Bob Kearney said additional seats are on hold by order of the Board of Aldermen based on thoughts of combining two boards. Paul Benson said the Commission has voted not to combine boards. The Commission also voted to permanently fix membership to seven instead of nine due to the limited number of qualified professionals to draw on. Also, the new Board Room dais at Town Hall will only seat seven, so all planning boards will have seven in number.

There was mention of Peter Sterling's four-year term ending in 2010. All other members' terms end in either 2011 or 2012. Paul asked Peter if he wanted to stand for reappointment and he agreed.

Peter Sterling asked would it be worth putting something in the Mountaineer about the type of credentials we are looking for. Paul asked Ginny to check on what advertising is done to recruit Historic Preservation Commission members and what credentials are deemed necessary to be on the Commission.

Also, there was the question of how a member gains reappointment. Sandra said she believes Phyllis contacts members at that time.

Bob Kearney mentioned the topic of conflict of interest. Paul Benson said if there is ever a conflict of interest, a commission member would not be allowed to participate in the discussion of an item they have a vested interest in; they would have to sit in the audience of the meeting rather than at the dais.

Bicentennial Celebration

There was much discussion regarding differing opinions on the founding of Waynesville. One date regarded as the founding of Waynesville is 1810, as the courthouse was established and Waynesville became the county seat. The other date, 1871, is also regarded as the founding of Waynesville as this is when Waynesville became incorporated.

Bob Kearney asked if the Commission has any responsibility to foster a community event celebrating the establishment of the county seat or do we simply encourage the historical society to commemorate this event. Peter Sterling mentioned the Aldermen have agreed not to celebrate the 1810 date. There was a discussion about the possibility of having a celebration in honor of this date and approaching the Aldermen about consideration of such an event. Sandra and Peter agreed to come up with some ideas of what we might present to the Aldermen to encourage them to designate a day as a celebration of the establishment of Waynesville as the county seat whether they were incorporated or not.

Outreach

Sandra Owen's concern was how to get information out that tells people practical things to do when they want to restore their homes. Paul Benson said, when he receives calls regarding this, he will give them the link to the State Historic Preservation website or will mail the information to them. Sandra felt it was important to gain information on how to get contractors who are qualified.

Bob Kearney mentioned the Hanna-Graham House as being one ideal for Preservation North Carolina to consider. There is a concern over its either being renovated into apartments or being knocked down. Bob Kearney and Bette Sprecher discussed contacting the owner before the sale of the property. Members explored steps that possibly could be taken to protect the house.

Members considered the fate of the stone house at the corner of Walnut and Boundary Streets. Paul mentioned National Register Districts do not have land use restrictions; you can only get land use control with locally designated districts.

Adjournment

With no other agenda items to discuss, Dave Felmet moved, seconded by Bette Sprecher, to adjourn the meeting at 3:14 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Ginny Boyer
Secretary

Nikki Owens
Chairman