

**TOWN OF NEWBURGH
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES JANUARY 14, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Cox; Brent Grafe; Jim Renne; Steve Shoemaker; Troy Wells, David Wills

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT:

ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENT: Stacie Krieger, Town Council Liaison; Chris Wischer, Attorney; Tavi Wydicks, Acting Zoning Administrator

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cox called the meeting to order. Mr. Wischer explained that Mr. Renne was appointed at the January 13, 2016 Council meeting to fill the final open HPC seat.

MINUTES

Mr. Shoemaker moved to adopt the minutes as presented. Mr. Wells seconded and the motion carried.

REPORTS

Town Council Liaison

Mrs. Krieger stated that she is the new Town Council Liaison for HPC. Mrs. Krieger stated that Town Council did discuss the small brick house on Jennings Street that is on the agenda at last night's meeting.

Staff

Ms. Wydicks stated that there has been seven staff issued COA's since the July meeting. Ms. Wydicks stated that the plans for 101 State Street were submitted to the State on January 9, 2016, but at this time, she has not received the Construction Design Release. Ms. Wydicks stated that the July minutes approved at tonight's meeting show the approval of the COA for 101 State Street, but the approval excludes the windows. Ms. Wydicks stated that the quote she received from N.M. Bunge, who is doing the repair to the wall, does not include the work for the windows. Ms. Wydicks asked the commission if she is okay to issue the permit without the approval of the window plans once she receives the release or does the commission want to approve the window plans before any permits are issued. Mr. Cox stated that the window plan needs to be approved first. Ms. Wydicks stated that she left a message for Jeremy and Beth Martin asking if a different contractor was doing the windows but she has not received a response.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion – Small Brick House on Jennings Street

Mrs. Krieger stated that Council had a member of the audience address them and asked for Council's blessing, and that if they raised the funds and did all of the research on the house if the Council would allow the house to be moved to Town property. Mrs. Krieger stated that Council did give their blessing, but a location was not decided and they Council did not attach any funds to this project. Mr. Renne stated that Jim Moore spoke to Mr. Titzer regarding the house and Mr. Renne shared the history that Mr. Titzer provided. Mr. Renne stated that the Simpson family turned the house into a museum, and Mr. Shoemaker stated that it has never been open to the public. Mr. Renne stated that Ms. Simpson said that it was certified as a valid, registered Indiana museum. Mr. Renne stated that if the house is found to be worth saving, he received confirmation today from Indiana Landmarks that they are willing to act as the 501c3 for fundraising. Mr. Cox stated that he believes that the key is to buy some time to figure out the best way to proceed. Mr. Wischer explained the roles of the commission and the restrictions covered by state statutes. Mr. Wischer explained the process required to create a district and interim protection. Mr. Wischer stated that a public hearing would be required and the commission agreed to hold the public hearing at the next meeting on February 11, 2016. The commission discussed age requirements for historic buildings. Mr. Shoemaker stated that in his last conversation with Ms. Simpson she stated that nothing was going to happen for three to four months, so there was no rush. Mr. Wischer stated that the ideal situation would be to work out an arrangement with Mrs. Bussing. Mr. Wills stated that he is reluctant to create a district for the house because once the property is a district,

it is a district, and could create some undue hardship. Mr. Wills asked if the commission approves all demolition permits, and Mr. Wischer responded and said that the way the ordinance reads the commission receives 48 hour notice if demolition which is to give the commission time to take action. Ken Oliver, 7B State Street, asked if any part of the area surrounding the house is designated historic. Mr. Cox responded and stated that there is not, but it has been part of the commission's ongoing conversation, and the commission would like to expand the district. Mr. Cox stated that there are approximately ten to twelve notable buildings, and this house was one of them, that the commission wants to bring into the district. Mr. Wills asked what the real possibility of Indiana Landmarks coming on board to help with fundraising and Mr. Renne clarified that they are willing to be the 501c3, but that is all. Mr. Wischer stated that if the Town puts the house in a district the Town controls the maps and boundaries, which allows the Town to limit the area around the building that is considered in district. Mr. Wischer stated that the Town engineers have not looked into moving the house, but there were estimates received. Ken Oliver, 7B State Street, discussed the condition and the materials of the structure. Mr. Shoemaker recommended that someone from the commission speak to Ms. Simpson and/or Ms. Bussing to see what their thoughts are. Mr. Renne stated that he tried to contact Ms. Simpson today, but she was not available.

Mr. Wills moved to hold a public hearing at the February 11, 2016 meeting. Mr. Wells seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Mr. Wischer stated that a record needs to be made stating why the building is historic and worth saving and this information needs to be presented at the public meeting. Mr. Wischer stated that the criteria in the statute that the Historic Preservation Commission must follow is buildings, structures, and sites classified as historic must possess identified historic or architectural merit of a degree warranting the preservation. Mr. Wills stated that up until this point, every property that the Town has brought in to a district was recognized in the State interim report and Mr. Wischer stated that he agrees. Mr.

Shoemaker clarified that this property is in the interim report, but it is classified as contributing, and to date all of the properties brought in have been notable or outstanding.

Mr. Wischer stated that the build date does not matter; it is the architectural or historical significance that matters. Ken Oliver, 7B State Street, discussed the history of the building.

Discussion – Expanding the Historic District

Mr. Cox stated that one and a half to two years ago, he and Mr. Shoemaker started looking at expanding the district. Mr. Wills stated that several years ago, the Town added about ten properties to the historic district as scattered sites. Mr. Wills stated that the HPC held ten different public hearings, all in the same day, and there was very little remonstrance. Mr. Wills stated that the commission did a very good job of explaining what it means to be part of a district and the additions went very well. Mr. Will stated that HPC used the interim report as a guideline. Mr. Cox stated that the commission is looking at expanding the district, not just adding scattered sites. Mr. Wischer stated that the Town can designate historic and non-historic buildings within a district and there are subtle differences on how the commission would treat the historic versus the non-historic buildings. Mr. Wischer stated that one factor to think about is when you do a scattered site, that one site is subject to all of the HPC rules and regulations, and everything surrounding that property is not, which could be viewed as unfair. Mr. Wischer stated that with a district, everyone in that district is subject to the same rules and regulations, and has the same protections, which could increase property values of those in the district. Mr. Grafe stated that he has noticed a lot of the green plaque homes are not in the historic district and questioned if those homes would be pulled in. Mr. Cox responded and said that for the most part, yes. Mr. Wischer stated that per the state statute, a district can be done in two phases. Mr. Wischer stated that in phase one, you create the district, and during the first phase which is a three year period properties are only subject to COA for demolitions, moving of a building, and new construction. Mr. Wischer stated that the district is final after the three years, unless a certain percentage of the owners within the district file an objection with the Town, then it is no longer a district. The commission discussed the process for adding districts. Mr. Wills stated when the Town did this previously; the Town sent a letter to the property owners to notify

them of what the Town was trying to do. Mr. Cox and Mr. Shoemaker agreed to work on the map of the proposed district additions and present the map to the commission at the next meeting for discussion. Mr. Wills reminded the commission that the Town has to have a reason to bring these properties into the district. The commission discussed the requirements for adding properties to the district. Mr. Cox stated that he would like to see adding to the district as part of the agenda for 2016.

Discussion – Local Survey

Mr. Cox stated that Certified Local Government audit said that the commission needs to have a process for maintaining the local survey. Mr. Wischer stated that he believes that a combination of this commission and staff keep the local survey up to date. Mr. Cox explained the local survey that was completed in 2009. Mr. Renne stated that the University of Evansville has a very active art history program, including museum studies, and he said that he would reach out to them.

Discussion – Leveraging the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology

Mr. Cox stated that he would like to find ways to better leverage the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology and their resources. Mr. Cox stated that he plans to reach out to Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology and Indiana Landmarks to see what resources are available.

Discussion – National Register

Mr. Cox stated that he does not recall the Town ever naming properties for the National Register. Mr. Cox stated that he reached out to both the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology and Indiana Landmarks and asked what the benefit of the National Register was and what he found was that it makes properties available for funding or grants or assistance. Mr. Cox stated that he plans to look into this more. Mr. Wills suggested requesting Dennis Au, Evansville’s Historic Preservation Officer, to speak to the commission about this process.

Discussion – Continuing Education Requirement

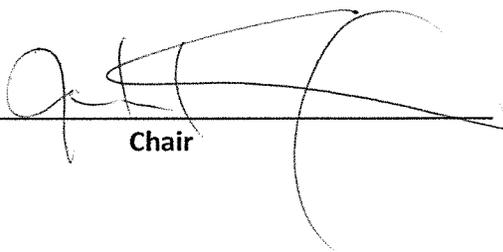
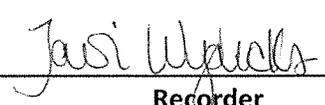
Mr. Cox reviewed the continuing education requirements. Ms. Wydicks stated that the Town receives two free registrations to the Indiana Statewide Preservation Conference, which will be held in Vincennes this year, April 27 – 29. Ms. Wydicks stated that the free registrations include food vouchers and half of the hotel expense. Mr. Cox stated that the majority of the commission is expected to complete continuing education every year. Mr. Cox stated that maybe having Mr. Au speak to the commission could count towards continuing education. Ms. Wydicks stated that in the Town’s response to the audit, the Town stated that they would hold a retreat or some kind of meeting with a guest speaker. Ms. Wydicks stated that if the commission was to hold a special meeting with Mr. Au as the guest speaker, the meeting could count for that requirement. The commission discussed what has been done in previous years. Ms. Wydicks stated that the conference was the only educational opportunity listed on the website to date. Mr. Cox asked the commission if anyone was interested in attending the conference in Vincennes and Mr. Renne stated that he would be.

Elections

Mr. Wischer stated that it is a new year, and a chairman and vice chairman need to be elected. The positions remained the same, with Jeff Cox as chairman and Steve Shoemaker as vice chairman. Mr. Wills moved to have the chairman and vice chairman remain the same. Mr. Wells seconded the motion and the motion carried.

ADJOURN

Mr. Shoemaker moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wells seconded the motion and the motion carried.

 **Chair**  **Recorder**