

## **VILLAGE OF GRAFTON**

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**FEBRUARY 25, 2009**

The Historic Preservation Commission meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chair Zaun.

Commission members present: Chair Ralph Zaun, Trustee David Liss, Sheldon Sepstead, Norb Studelska, Sr., and Matt Zipter

Staff/Officials present: Mary Kay Buratto, AICP

Others present: Melissa Schmitz (111 W. Bridge Street) Angela Mack (1701 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue), David Eberhardt (1826 17th Avenue), Tom Ewing (1750 12th Avenue), and Reporter Laurie Arndt, New Graphic

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Trustee Liss, seconded by Commissioner Zipter to approve the 1-21-09 Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes, as presented.  
Approved unanimously.

#### **HEAR PERSONS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD**

None.

#### **UPDATE ON TEMPORARY HISTORY MUSEUM**

Chair Ralph Zaun asked that, in the future, this agenda item be referred to as a "Permanent" museum and reiterated Village President Brunquell's directive to the Commission in 2006 regarding the establishment of a museum of Grafton history. Chair Zaun stated that the Commission has looked long and hard for a suitable museum site so that artifacts could be collected and displayed and historic programs could be accommodated. Among the locations that were discussed at previous meetings was the original Grafton State Bank building on 12th Avenue.

Chair Zaun informed Commissioners that Tecumseh will be out of their facility in 3-4 months and will have no further use for the building. He stated his concern that the building will be vacant and become an eyesore and a site for potential vandalism. Chair Zaun offered to take Commissioners on a tour of the building. He also shared with Commissioners a sheet of paper comparing the Department of Public Works site with the new building addition with the Tecumseh site to show the potential for the Tecumseh site to be used for a museum and for a Department of Public Works facility. Chair Zaun has spoken with various Department Heads, as well as the School District, all of whom could use space in the Tecumseh building. It could provide healthy activities for youth. The Village has lots of needs for space that the Tecumseh building could provide. Chair Zaun mentioned that he is in contact with a business start-up interested in using a portion of the Tecumseh building as well.

Chair Zaun further stated that the Zaun Memorial Trust Fund would contribute \$50,000 annually to support a museum Director position. Finding the Tecumseh building has fulfilled our mission from the Village President, but Mr. Zaun expressed his frustration at the lack of interest in the logic of the site. He asked Commissioners to think about where the Commission goes from here, given that there isn't a groundswell of support for this idea of the Tecumseh building.

Trustee Liss informed Commissioners that the Department of Public Works had looked at the Tecumseh building for their expansion but that the cost of the work needed to make the space useable for the DPW was prohibitive.

Melissa Schmitz asked if it would be possible to have part of the building for a museum if the HPC could partner with one or more industrial users and maybe other Village Departments looking for additional space. Chair Zaun responded that we would need a revenue source to purchase the building and to make some upgrades and modifications.

Trustee Liss stated that the Village Board has asked to review information gathered on the costs of retrofitting the building for Public Works, use but that the Village will not purchase the property.

Angela Mack asked Chair Zaun if he had thought of a theme for the museum, to which he replied that at one time Grafton was a leading engine and motor manufacturer in the State of Wisconsin and that a collection of them is available for acquisition.

Commissioner Zipter asked Chair Zaun what he was seeking from the HPC in addition to an endorsement of the Tecumseh Products building as a museum site. Chair Zaun replied that he would like the HPC to produce a museum for Grafton. He further suggested that the HPC pass a resolution that it would like to see Grafton have a public museum and to petition the Village Board to provide space for a museum if it still wants one and for help to finance the Tecumseh Products site. Commissioners directed Planner Buratto to draft a resolution for their review and possible consideration.

Planner Buratto suggested that a feasibility study should be conducted first to determine the status of the building for long term uses that would be varied and its suitability for a museum and other uses. The feasibility study should also determine the cost of retrofitting the building for the various uses. The HPC would need to raise the money for this study because the Village Board has no money budgeted for a study of this kind for a museum for this fiscal year.

Commissioner Zipter stated that Chair Zaun may be correct with regard to the Department of Public Works site selection, but that this Commission is not the proper forum for such a discussion. Commissioner Sepstead agreed

### **UPDATE ON 501 c3 STATUS**

Planner Mary Kay Buratto updated Commissioners on her research into the creation of a 501c3 for a museum. She has obtained the documentation to begin working on the designation; however, she would like to have an attorney or accountant review the

documentation when it is finished and prior to submittal. She hopes to be able to work on the application over the next several weeks.

### **DISCUSS PLANS FOR 2009 WALK OF FAME CEREMONY**

Commissioners asked Planner Buratto of whom were the next two artists on the list of eligible Paramount recording artists. She deferred to Angela Mack, who formed a Committee several years ago of blues experts to review the list of artists and to rank a number of them for induction into the Walk of Fame. Angela Mack stated that all of the persons on the initial list have been nominated and their names are now engraved on the piano keys. A Committee needs to be brought together, with as many of the original members as possible, to rank the remaining artists and provide a recommendation to the HPC for the 2009 inductees.

Commissioners asked Ms. Mack to reform her Committee and to provide the HPC with the top two ranking musicians for consideration for 2009. Ms. Mack agreed to do so and to provide the members with two recommendations prior to the March 2009 HPC meeting.

### **REVIEW LIST OF CANDIDATE PROPERTIES FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION**

Chair Zaun suggested that the Tecumseh Products building be added to the list of Grafton's historic buildings and asked Planner Buratto to provide Commissioners with the nominating process for their review. Chair Zaun also suggested adding the Old Mill on 14th Avenue, but Commissioners remembered that the building is already on the list and in fact is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

Commissioner Zipter has a property in his neighborhood that he would like to formally nominate and he will bring that to a future meeting for consideration. Commissioners also suggested the Mandel property on 12th Avenue for consideration as well as Angela Mack's home, which was built by Chair Zaun's father.

Commissioners briefly discussed reviewing the Historic Preservation zoning ordinance to see if changes were needed to make it easier for property owners to agree to a historic designation.

### **DISCUSSION OF PROMOTING THE GREEN BAY TRAIL**

Commissioner Sepstead asked for this item to be placed on the agenda. He stated that 12th Avenue was the first Green Bay Ethnic Trail and so he is concerned that the Trail is not clearly identified once it enters Grafton from the north and south, especially because it changes its route from 12th Avenue to Wisconsin and then back again with no signage directing users to the right location. He indicated that the Paramount Plaza also interrupts the trail. Some consideration should be given to identifying the trail somewhere in the Plaza area.

Commissioner Sepstead believes that the HPC should be promoting this trail and would like this taken up at the next meeting.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Zaun distributed flyers advertising a performance of Bill Sargent's 21 piece band on March 21, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Grafton High School auditorium.

**SET DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the upper level Committee Room at Village Hall.

**ADJOURN**

Motion by Commissioner Zipter, seconded by Commissioner Sepstead, to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Approved unanimously.