

CLAYTON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes for September 8, 2023

The September 8, 2023 meeting of members of the Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission (CCHPC) was held at the George Maier Rural Heritage Center and Museum in Elkader, Iowa between 9:00 and 10:25 am. Attending were Chair Roger Thomas, Deputy Chair Brandie Backes via telephone, Secretary Chris Schoen, Ellen Collins, Kathy Koether, Lee Lenth, and Rita Dudley. No guests were present.

After the meeting was called to order by Thomas, a motion was made to approve the agenda by Lenth and seconded by Dudley. The motion was passed unanimously. Minutes from the June 9, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Collins made a motion to approve the minutes and Lenth seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

The current balance for the 2023-2024 fiscal year beginning in July is \$2050.

OLD BUSINESS

Ellen Collins reported that concrete has been poured on the deck of the Keystone Bridge in Elkader. The concrete for the walkway still needs to be poured and a railing built. The reopening of the bridge is planned for December 2023 and a rededication on May 7, 2024 to mark the 105th anniversary of its construction. The City is planning to create a video about the reconstruction activities. Request are being made for photographs, paintings, and illustrations of the bridge to exhibit at the Collective Art Gallery in Elkader in March through May 2024. City Councilman, Tony Hauber is seeking fund-raising ideas to help pay for the costs of the work. New structural issues were discovered as the reconstruction work was being done which added significant costs to the project. Collins gave him ideas for fund-raising that were successful for funding the Clayton County Courthouse Clock Tower restoration.

Thomas said that he had spoken with the Iowa DOT archaeologist, Brennan Dolan, about the Keystone Bridge at the Iowa Preservation Summit in June 2023. Dolan said that the Iowa DOT believes that this bridge is the oldest restored stone arch bridge in Iowa. It also is thought to be the longest double arch stone bridge in the region.

Thomas noted that the CCHPC had previously offered a donation towards recording the bridge restoration work. Jared Boardman was suggested by Thomas to do a video. Dudley suggested the CCHPC offer matching funds for the video. Koether proposed approaching Iowa Public Television to do the video as one of their projects.

Koether reported that the Iowa State Historic Preservation office indicated that they needed more information about what social impacts the Giard Church had before 1950 as part of their historic preservation grant application. Ronnie Harris is arranging for a headstone for Basil Giard's grave in Prairie du Chien and was working on a historical marker about him for Giard. A shelter house is being erected at Giard for picnics. Thomas suggested that the Iowa DOT be contacted regarding signage directing people to the historic site.

Dudley reported that the Immanuel Church at Littleport has been repainted. The funding campaign for a new roof is going well. The congregation is planning to place new plexiglass over the stained glassed windows to protect them. Apparently, the stained glass in the windows are unusual as they are a combination to true stained glass and painted glass. They are not certain who made the windows. Thomas suggested that the installers might know.

NEW BUSINESS

Backes reported stacks of timbers for laying temporary roads for heavy machinery were observed by the Cardinal-Hickory Transmission Line substation on County Highway C9Y and Ertham Road. Thomas noted that some of the big towers had been realigned due to changes. He also reported that SHPO still considers the cultural resource investigations to have been inadequate. Schoen stated that he had reviewed the copy of the letter sent by National

Park Service Historic Preservation Archaeologist, John Eddins, to Thomas regarding Phase II evaluations at two historic farmstead sites affected by the project. Eddins noted that while the 30-day review and comment period had passed, he wanted to go on record to say that he would have preferred to have seen a few more test excavations done at each site, but that he accepted the conclusions that the sites were not significant (that is, not able to contribute important new information about the history or architecture of the farm buildings) based on the expert opinion of the archaeological consultant.

Dudley stated that Dave Beck provided a genealogical presentation about Elkport-Garber. Dudley asked whether there was some way to put all of this information together. Collins said that the Vorwald book does this. Thomas added that *Echos of the Past* about the towns of Clayton County also provided relevant information. The Grout Museum in Waterloo has recordings of reminiscences of early settlers. Thomas said that the Maier Rural Heritage Center and Museum has space for a display about this topic.

Thomas reported that the Egin Historical Society is currently seeking funding for the planned Tribes of the Turkey River Interpretive Center to be located on the second floor of the Elgin Museum. It is being created with the Meskwaki Nation of Tama and the Office of the State Archeologist to honor Native American history along the Turkey River.

Schoen reported that the Guttenberg Historic Preservation Commission (GHPC) had recently issued the *Illustrated Design Guidelines for Front Street (River Park Dr) Historic District in Guttenberg, Iowa* to property owners within the district. The informational booklet was written by Rebecca McCarley and funded by a Certified Local Government grant awarded in 2022 to the GHPC. Two copies were given to the CCHPC. Interested persons can use copies available at the Guttenberg Public Library, City of Guttenberg, or purchased from the City for \$10.00.

Schoen and Lenth reported that the Motor Mill Inn reopening was held in August and that renovation work was expected to be finished by the end of September. The main floor will be a visitors' office, gathering space, and store. The second and third floors, accessed by a separate entrance, will be available to rent for overnight lodging and other activities beginning in November through the Clayton County Conservation Boards website.

Lenth and Schoen reported that now that the Inn project was complete, the Clayton County Conservation Board and Motor Mill Foundation were returning their attention to putting a new roof on the stable at the Motor Mill Historic Site to make this space is available for events. Historic photographs suggest that the original gable roof had cedar shingles. However, when the structure was redesigned around 1940 to have a gambrel roof for hay storage, the new roof was asphalt shingles and corrugated metal. Discussions by Schoen with Allison Archambo of the Iowa SHPO on site led to a decision to use metal sheeting for longevity as that would not be inconsistent with the metal roofing used for the extant gambrel configuration.

Thomas stated that Annie Palas told him there was a keystone arch bridge over a drainage on 125th Street between Dogwood and Dove Roads in Monona Township. Lenth said that he was aware of the single arch bridge, which is south of Luana. Lenth also noted that there was a stone culvert on the Dean Refle farm. Thomas said that the Iowa DOT has been taking out these old stone bridges (which they refer to as "culverts" rather than "bridges") and replacing them with concrete culverts. Dudley and Thomas suggested making a new, more comprehensive catalog of historic bridges in Clayton County.

There were no committee reports or other open comments.

The next scheduled meeting will be November 10, 2023 at 9:00 am at the Economic Development Office in Elkader, Iowa. Dudley made a motion to adjourn at 10:25. Koether seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted September 26, 2023
Chris Schoen, Secretary