

CLAYTON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes for June 14, 2024

The June 14, 2024 meeting of members of the Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission (CCHPC) was held at the home of Roger and Rosemary Thomas near Elkader in Clayton County, Iowa between 9:00 and 9:45 am. Attending on site were Chair Roger Thomas, Secretary Chris Schoen, Ellen Collins, Kathy Koether, Bob Meyer and Rita Dudley. Deputy Chair Brandie Backes was absent. Guests were Cathie Krausmann and Dave Dudley.

A motion was made to approve the agenda by Collins and seconded by Koether. The motion was passed unanimously. Minutes from the April 12, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Dudley made a motion to approve the minutes and Meyer seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

The current balance for the 2023-2024 fiscal year beginning in July is \$1745.60.

OLD BUSINESS

The rededication celebration for the Keystone Bridge was held on May 7, 2024 at 3 pm with a reception at The Collective art studio. Images of the bridge were on display. Kathy Koether said that there were no media reporters at the event. Roger Thomas noted that there was a good Youtube video of the celebration made by Gerald Borman. He also reported that the City of Elkader was given a preservation award in Des Moines on June 13th. The CCHPC has voted to contribute \$500.00 to the cost of making the video.

Ellen Collins said that nothing had been done regarding placing signs up at the graves of the founders of Elkader.

Collins reported that a sign had been erected by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) on Highway 13 directing visitors to the historic Mederville Bridge.

NEW BUSINESS

The Preserve Iowa Summit conference was held June 6-7 in Mount Pleasant. Bob Meyer and Chris Schoen attended as representatives of the CCHPC. Registration of Commissioners was \$100 as they are associated with a Certified Local Government (CLG) - Elkader. The CCHPC will reimburse attendees for mileage, lodging, and meals. Receipts must be submitted.

Bob Meyer reported on events and presentations he attended at the Preserve Iowa Summit, including the Second Baptist Church in Mount Pleasant, which was a stop on the Underground Railroad in the 1860s and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Other places relating to refugee slaves include the Quaker Museum and the Union Block, where Frederick Douglas spoke.

Meyer said that he went to the presentation on the lock and dam system on the lower Des Moines River at Bonaparte, Bentonsport, and Keosauqua in Van Buren County, Iowa. The system was built to allow steamboats to travel up and down the river while maintaining sufficient flow of the river to power multiple saw and grist mills.

Meyer also attended a presentation about the Masonic Block renovations in downtown McGregor by Duane Boelman and Brandi Crozier. Some 5 million dollars were invested to save and rehabilitate the structure, which now features 11 apartment rentals and 3 commercial spaces.

Both Meyer and Schoen attended the session on cemetery protection and grave marker restoration. Bill Reedy discussed laws and policies relating to identifying and preserving cemeteries. Since 1996, county supervisors are charged with cemetery protection and maintenance. Pioneer Cemetery Commission assists the county supervisors with preserving pioneer cemeteries and sections of large cemeteries that include burials at least 100 years old. Often

third parties are contracted to perform the maintenance activities. Burials that are determined to be older than 150 years ago are monitored and under the authority of the State Archaeologist. The State Association for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries (SAPIC) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that gives grants for cemetery protection.

Schoen attended two sessions relating to historic design guidelines to support compatibility of architecture within neighborhoods, commercial districts, or industrial districts. These can be used by historic preservation commissions, community planners, and zoning commissions even to setting regulatory standards and ordinances. The guidelines completed by the Guttenberg Historic Preservation Commission, of which Schoen is a member, were noted as a good example of such a document.

Schoen also attended the keynote speech and preservation awards ceremony. Dr. Brent Leggs, Senior Vice President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, spoke about the need to recognize and preserve more African-American and other minority historic sites to more fully develop the history of the United States. Jenna Pollock (Director of the Clayton County Conservation Board), Abbey Harkrader (CCCB), Dr. Kenneth Zichal (President of the Motor Mill Foundation), Jane Metcalf (a Director of the Motor Mill Foundation), and Schoen (Vice President of the Motor Mill Foundation) accepted an award from the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa for the renovation and reuse of the historic Motor Mill Inn as an Air B&B and welcome center for the Motor Mill Historic Site.

Schoen reported that attendance to the Junior Ranger Day activity on May 25th at Effigy Mounds National Monument was low. However, he spoke with several visitors to the park about Clayton County's many museums and historic sites.

The next scheduled meeting will be July 12, 2024 at 9:00 am at the Economic Development Office in Elkader, Iowa.

Dudley made a motion to adjourn at 9:54. Koether seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The commissioners toured the 14-sided "round" barn at the Clear Creek Farm which has been rehabilitated by Cathie and Brad Krausmann after the meeting. The barn has been cleaned of old hay and debris. New siding of 20-foot-long cedar boards and batten cover the exterior. Vertical framing 2x4 studs were set as replacements as needed. The concrete block foundation has been stabilized and repaired as needed. A new floor has been installed that highlights the 14-sides of the structure. Small square windows were installed at intervals around the side. Three new hinged barn doors were installed on the south half of the foundation level of this bank barn. New hinged barn doors were emplaced on the north side of the main floor. The work was done by local Amish contractors. It was funded in part by a \$10,000 grant from the Iowa Barn Foundation. A newspaper article was written about the renovations.

Respectfully submitted June 19, 2024

Chris Schoen, Secretary