

The Mantua Village Historic Landmarks Commission
June 13, 2015
Mantua Village Council Chambers

Chair Nick Ehlert called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

Present: Nick Ehlert, Eric Hummel, Hal Stamm, Carole Pollard. Also present: Mayor Linda Clark.

Carole Pollard was appointed acting secretary in Renee Henry's absence.

Eric Hummel moved to excuse Renee Henry, seconded by Hal Stamm.
Motion passed unanimously.

Aaron Snopek and Helen Hazlett were absent.

The minutes were reviewed, and Eric Hummel had two questions. One was about the Vice Chair, and the other was whether the binder was complete.

Nick Ehlert thought that since Carole Pollard is past chair, he and she could stay and review the binder to see that all signatures are in place.

Eric Hummel moved to approve the minutes as reviewed; Hal Stamm seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The minutes were signed.

Eric's question about the Vice Chair position was addressed under old business by Chair Nick Ehlert, who asked Hal Stamm if he wanted to stay in that position. Hal was unsure. There was some discussion about this and that Hal would be unable to attend the next regular meeting, scheduled for September 12. That date may be changed, since it falls on the weekend of the Potato Festival. Since there are only two more meetings required this year, Hal agreed to stay through the year.

Nick Ehlert suggested reviewing the Rules of Procedure. Carole Pollard suggested that since basically we have not enacted much business, if we review the Rules of Procedure in September, we can think about them. Hal can review them and send his questions and issues to us.

Carole Pollard presented forms relevant to the Landmark Commission's mission from Terri Vechery, Nathan Bevil (Ohio Historic Preservation Office) and Ron Lowe (Aurora Landmarks Commission) both suggested looking at Mantua Village Ordinance 159.10: the designation of listed properties.

Mayor Linda Clark suggested that the Ohio Historic Inventory was a good place to start: 39 buildings in the Village are listed on the Inventory. Hal Stamm and Eric Hummel had suggested in the organizational meeting in 2013 that we inventory what we have. Terri Vechery presented the Ohio Historic Inventory.

Carole Pollard suggested getting new good copies to review because of the poor quality of the old copies. Then re-inventory everything and get it into good shape and understand what is required for the designation because the people who apply will be using these forms.

Eric Hummel pointed out that many of the people in the original 39 properties are no longer alive. Cleaning this list up would give us a beginning on the data base suggested by Ron Lowe.

Carole Pollard observed that this meeting actually begins the real work we were commissioned to do.

Mayor Clark said it was a good place to start—getting good copies.

Carole Pollard thought that it might be possible to get better copies now by going online.

Nick Ehlert mentioned commercial buildings, and Carole Pollard referred to the National Register application that had been found and sent to the commission members.

The owners of commercial properties who stated their support of developing a landmarks commission should be contacted. Since the date of the next Landmarks Commission falls upon a day of the Potato Festival, there was discussion about changing the meeting date and writing a letter to the interested property owners. Council needs to be notified about what we are doing.

Carole Pollard pointed out that there are two things on our plates. Now we can start with the designations: the small thing. Let the people who signed letters of support know we are ready to begin.

The commercial properties can get historic preservation tax credits if the program is retained. The assumption is that the original signers are willing to deal with the restrictions and limitations in order to get 45% tax credits. Carole has a copy of the publication How to Fill In the Ohio Historic Inventory.

A list of current owners of properties is needed. Hal Stamm offered to get a current tax map of owners of the properties listed on the Ohio Historic Inventory.

Eric Hummel and Hal Stamm discussed getting not only a tax map, but also aerial photographs, which will show the current condition of the properties. Hal asked Eric to check on the satellite, and he would make a current list of the properties. They looked at the Ohio Historic Inventory forms to determine how to handle the information.

Nick Ehlert asked for a motion.

Hal Stamm: I move that Carole Pollard write a letter to the people in the commercial district who have shown interest in being part of the Mantua Historic District.

Eric seconded. Ayes were unanimous.

Then a suggestion was made to modify the wording as follows: . . . to have their properties designated as historically locally significant.

Hal made a motion to accept the changes, seconded by Eric.

This is the revised motion:

That Carole Pollard write a letter to the people in the commercial district who have shown interest

in having their properties designated as historically locally significant.

Vote: Unanimous aye.

Eric Hummel and Hal Stamm have volunteered to begin getting a current data base for the residential properties that are listed in the Ohio Historic Inventory.

Carole Pollard will write a letter to these people to be reviewed at our next meeting.

Nick Ehlert suggested sending a draft via e-mail for review, the letter to be sent before the September meeting, inviting those owners to the September meeting.

Mayor Clark recommended including Solicitor Michele Stuck in the recipients of the draft letter.

Mayor Clark also recommended making sure Council is informed that a letter will be done. She did not see that it will have to be approved by Council.

Hal Stamm said that the next thing would be setting up what we consider to be historically appropriate. We will need a preservation plan. We can begin with the people who own commercial properties. The publication about filling in the Ohio Historic Inventory will be helpful, since most of it is about architectural styles. The starting point Nathan Bevil mentioned was a windshield survey.

Nick Ehlert discussed the training, which he was unable to attend but listened to on the recording of that meeting. He commented on some of the things he has heard about preservation in Hudson, which concentrates on the exterior appearance. Their requirements for adhering to historic standards appear particularly rigorous. Nathan Bevil seemed to be saying that everything has to be original, which becomes very expensive. For example, old siding that has been repainted will begin to peel quickly. Would it be better to use vinyl siding?

Eric Hummel commented that questions about siding are very pertinent.

Nick Ehlert then reviewed what we have considered.

One question is how we educate residents. Carole Pollard stated that we have the commercial properties, a small thing to begin with. Then the benefit to residential property owners is that historic districts hold their value better. In fact, Hal Stamm and Eric Hummel had voiced reservations about the restrictions.

Carole reviewed the names of the people who supported the idea of the CLG with specific letters of support. There are about four. She mentioned that in Kent only three buildings are listed. There is resistance to such a program which seems to be part of the territory.

People may be interested to know that their properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Nick Ehlert added that another point of interest is that the value of historic properties is 18% higher.

There was additional discussion about how historic districts are designated and that it can be difficult because of a single resistant owner.

Hal recommended finding out if people want to do this. Then we can set up rules. He thought it would be a good idea to ask Aurora and Hudson what their rules are. Hal also thought, since Eric is on the Ravenna Landmarks Commission, that we should look at their rules. Hal thought that the letter to commercial property owners was the right direction, as was the intention of going to Landmarks Commission meetings in Aurora, Hudson, and Ravenna and getting their rules.

Eric: Something in Ravenna is interesting. They have a problem with devaluating property values. They were keeping track of rentals vs. owner-occupied. There has been a big movement towards discouraging rentals. Some of these huge houses are not going to be single-family houses. A vehicle to adapt them to multi-family use should be worked out. Instead of pushing it away, embrace what is really going on so they can be utilized.

Eric continued: We have to be very careful about writing these rules.

Mayor Clark added that Planning has been discussing whether we should have annual inspections of rental properties so we don't end up having what amounts to slum areas. Windham actually has annual inspections of their rental properties and charges \$125 to \$150 to inspect them. That is a lot of money for multiple-unit owners .

Eric thought that was a good job for the fire department.

Nick Ehlert asked if there was any other new business.

Eric recommended distributing e-mails and the letter intended for the commercial property owners.

Eric Hummel moved to adjourn, seconded by Hal Stamm.

Approval: Unanimous. Adjournment was a 11:45 a.m.

Minutes approved as presented.

Nicholas Ehlert, Chair

Minutes approved as corrected.

Nicholas Ehlert, Chair

Corrections made by _____
Renee Henry, Secretary