

**Village of Mantua
Historic Landmarks Commission
Meeting: Saturday, March 29, 2014**

1. Call to Order

Chair Pollard called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

All commission members present. Also present, Mayor Linda Clark.

3. Approval of Minutes

Chair Pollard moved that the minutes (December, 2013) be amended to indicate that she attended a conference in Dayton (not Columbus). Ms. Henry seconded. All ayes.

Mr. Stamm inquired about the conference, and the Chair gave a brief report indicating that this particular conference focused more upon historic preservation in the context of economic development.

Chair Pollard inquired whether there were any additions to the agenda. None proposed.

Mr. Stamm moved to approve the minutes of the December, 2013 meeting, as amended. Ms. Henry seconded. All ayes.

4. Swearing-in / Renewing Members

Mayor Clark administered the oath of office to Hal Stamm and Helen Hazelett. Mr. Stamm and Ms. Hazelett sworn-in for additional terms.

There was a brief discussion regarding the fire in Garrettsville.

5. Secretary's Report and Discussion

Mr. Snopek briefly reported on his activities since the last meeting, and asked the Commission to review the "Process for Certification of Local Governments" (hereafter "PFC") as provided by OSHPO.

The Commission reviewed the PFC. Mr. Stamm suggested the DMRC might have some information on a preservation plan. Mr. Snopek indicated that the DMRC did not have a preservation plan – properly – in terms of what the OSHPO thinks of as a preservation plan.

The Commission discussed the evolving street corner post project. Mr. Stamm has voluntarily created a kind of proto-type of a street corner post, which has given him and the commission an idea of the time and cost involved in rehabilitating a post.

Commission members then began a broad general discussion of the value of historic districts. Mr. Stamm, Mr. Hummel, and Mr. Snopek expressed reservations regarding too much regulation.

Ms. Hazelett indicated that it was important to put into writing both the advantages and restrictions of historic preservation so that the public can clearly be informed. Ms. Hazelett suggested perhaps working on a brochure in an effort toward education of the public on these issues.

There was then some discussion on the potential for historic preservation to increase property values.

There was more discussion on the tragedy of the Garrettsville fire, which included general discussion on the importance and value of preserving the historic cores of communities.

Mr. Hummel reiterated his concern that we be very clear in communicating that there are potential disadvantages to historic preservation in the form of regulation. Mr. Snopek agreed indicating that it is important that what might be seen as "disadvantages" be clearly communicated to the public so that the commission has integrity in the public eye. Chair Pollard suggested the commission might get an article into Mantua Matters regarding the general benefits of historic preservation, and then maybe we could look to find a grant or a benefactor to start a little project.

The commission then returned to its discussion of the PFC. It was generally agreed – though there was no formal vote – to proceed with preparing a CLG application.

Mr. Ehlert suggested that the commission might consider forming a subcommittee to get some facts together (regarding historic preservation) and get a draft together of a brochure.

Mr. Stamm suggested that we are fortunate to have Chair Pollard's background in English, and perhaps we could take advantage of it to impose upon her to write an article.

There was some discussion on the need (or not) for a historic district. Mr. Snopek expressed his opposition to a historic district. Discussion continued.

Mr. Snopek stated his opinion on the limits of the commission's authority and reviewed the voluntary and step-by-step procedure required for a person to petition to have his

or her property registered as historic. Chair Pollard indicated that it would be helpful to have this procedure in writing in a sort of abbreviated – step-by-step document.

Chair Pollard briefly discussed the difficulty of the National Register process.

6. Old Business

Chair Pollard began a discussion on an inventory of historic buildings. There was a general discussion on what makes Mantua historic.

Mayor Clark asked to confirm that each commission member did have a copy of the historic preservation ordinance.

There was more discussion of historic districts. Mr. Snopek expressed his opposition to a “district” preferring to focus on individual property owners voluntarily registering their property. In the course of discussion it became apparent that Mr. Snopek misunderstood his fellow commissioners in as much as they were not referring to a “historic district” in the sense of a special, legally regulated area (as was Mr. Snopek’s concern). Rather, the commission members were referring to a general, non-legally-binding district, essentially calling attention to the concentration of historic buildings in the core of the Village.

Chair Pollard asked the commission to discuss, in general, what buildings, objects, and structures in the Village might be historic. Mr. Snopek suggested the sign posts. Ms. Pollard suggested the stone watering trough on High Street. Mr. Ehlert suggested the old livery, the old grainery, and the Mantua Station Brick Commercial District (“MSBCD”). Mr. Snopek stated that the MSBCD is on the National Register. Ms. Hazelett suggested the old post office. Mr. Stamm suggested that all of the old wetlands are, in a sense, historic. Chair Pollard ^{STATED THAT} asked about the dentist’s office ~~and whether it might have been~~ ^{had been} an old bank. Ms. Hazelett suggested the train depot. Chair Pollard suggested the service department building and the little building in the park.

Chair Pollard then indicated that it might be that this list of buildings and structures could be developed into an inventory, and that this would be a good start for the commission.

Chair Pollard inquired for input into an article for Mantua Matters, and indicated that the general idea would be to communicate the importance of keeping what is beautiful, charming, and historic.

Mr. Ehlert asked if perhaps the article should be more along the lines of asking the public for their input.

Mr. Hummel indicated that perhaps the list should be expanded in the area of "objects," such as statues, etc.

Discussion then returned to the street corner posts / street markers / corner posts. Chair Pollard indicated that Joyce Barrett stated to her that ODOT has four inches of regulations in regard to what you can and/or cannot do in replacing or restoring street signs. Also, there's a difference between replacing and repairing or restoring.

There was some discussion of the limits of what kind of fundraising the commission could do on a project upon which a commission member was working as a potential part (potentially "seen as" part) of his / her business – in the context of Ohio ethics law.

There was some discussion of Mr. Stamm's work on the corner post. It is the intent of the commission that this project be purely funded by private parties – not the commission. Mr. Stamm stated that this was always his intent.

Hal's research indicates that posts might be able to be made available for purchase by private parties – for example an individual or a group of neighbors that would like to restore their corner street post – at a cost of \$325. Perhaps the DMRC might be interested in piloting a restored post or two, or the DMRC working with private citizens.

Ms. Henry inquired whether the restored corner posts would then be private property. Mr. Stamm responded that, no, they would be Village property, but purchased privately. It is Mr. Stamm's hope that if a private party commissioned the restoration of a post that it could then be turned-over to the Village Service Department for installation.

Chair Pollard brought to the attention of the Commission that it was noon, and perhaps we should leave some items for discussion, next month. There was no objection.

Chair Pollard set meetings for 2014, as follows: June 28, September 27, and December 27.

The Chair informed the commission that she received a telephone call from Gloria Alger. Ms. Alger is interested in sharing her memories and knowledge of local history. Ms. Pollard will follow-up with Ms. Alger.

Mr. Snopek indicated that if it is Ms. Alger's intent to donate any old photos or documents that this is a better project for the Mantua Historical Society, which has space (unlike Village Hall) for storing such things.

Mr. Hummel queried whether any potential photos of Ms. Alger's might be helpful in completing an inventory.

Ms. Pollard expressed that perhaps it is best to turn them over to the Mantua Historical Society.

Ms. Pollard indicated that she would draft a copy of an article for Mantua Matters and circulate it to the commission members for input. Mayor Clark asked to be included on the distribution of the draft article.

7. **Adjourn**

Ms. Hazlett moved to adjourn. Ms. Henry seconded. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

APPROVED WITHOUT AMENDMENT:

1

CHAIR

SECRETARY

APPROVED AS AMENDED:

CHAIR

SECRETARY