

Historic Preservation Commission
July 8, 2024
City Hall, Edward & Martha Berry Conference Room

Attendance:

Members – Bill Walker, Mark Snider, Mary Anne Reeves, Meghan Jennings, Richard Vedder, Cyrus Moore and John Valentour

Guests – None.

Absent – Tim Anderson

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** – Mary Anne, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.
2. **Disposition of Minutes** from June 17 meeting.
 - Richard motioned to approve the June minutes.
 - Mary Anne seconded the motion.
 - All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed.
3. **Old Business**
 - Presbyterian Church Plaque
 - Mary Anne passed out her wording for the plaque for the Commission's review. She shared that Richard had previously shared comments via email.
 - Meghan shared a document of example language. She shared three options of language: simple, moderate, and detailed. She also shared that she had contacted Erie Landmark Company for a quote for the three different examples.
 - Richard and Mary Anne shared comments on whether or not the award should be still named the "Joanne Prisley Award."
 - The Commission discussed whether people will remember the name, "Prisley."
 - Cyrus commented that naming the award helps the name not be forgotten.
 - The Commission reviewed the simpler language that Meghan shared.
 - Cyrus commented that the Moderate version shared by Meghan is a good option. It keeps things simple but it maintains the historical significance.
 - Richard and Mark agreed with Cyrus.
 - Mark shared that he liked the simple option.
 - Richard shared that "Columbus, Ohio" could be removed.
 - John shared that "outstanding historic buildings in Athens, Ohio" could also be removed. He shared that it was redundant since the building is already given an award.
 - Richard shared that he was being convinced that the simple language may be best suited for the plaque.
 - Mary Anne asked the Commission if we should keep "Joanne Prisley Award."
 - The Commission agreed that it should be kept.
 - The Commission discussed going with the simpler language.
 - Mary Anne discussed waiting to approve the language until a quote is received from Erie Landmark Company.
 - Ohio History Connection's Ohio Open Doors Event

- Mary Anne shared that she was talking with a friend who encouraged the Commission to host an event. She mentioned that the Commission discussed potential events at the June meeting, including The Armory and a tour of the Packard Buildings.
- Mary Anne mentioned having Barb Powers coming down to visit for the tour since she's the expert on Packard.
- Meghan mentioned City Hall celebrating its 150th year this fall.
- Mark mentioned that the filing deadline for an event is August 1st which is before the next Commission meeting.
- The Commission discussed registering for an event and formal ideas.
- Meghan said she would follow up with the Commission throughout the month of July on the potential events at The Armory and City Hall.
- Discussion on Historic/Sensitive Investments and Possible Tax Abatements
 - Mary Anne stated that she felt the Commission should take a more active role. Mary Anne specifically expressed concerns about The Lostro Building and Carpenter Hall. She expressed concerns that many changes have been made to the buildings that haven't been reviewed by the Commission.
 - John mentioned that Carpenter Hall isn't located within the Historic District so they wouldn't have been notified when they filed applications.
 - Richard discussed The Lostro building and its construction progress.
 - John mentioned that the Commission had asked for the plans for The Lostro building.
 - Mary Anne mentioned getting more info on The Lostro building.
 - Meghan said she would ask David Riggs if there were any updated plans that were submitted by the owner.
 - John brought up the possible tax abatements. He discussed that he was previously a part of Community Design that had applied for grant money on top of offering tax abatements to incentivize better design.
 - Mark mentioned that that type of program would serve as a carrot instead of a stick. He then asked if Meghan had heard from Lisa Eliason on a potential tax abatement program.
 - Meghan reported that she had talked with Lisa Eliason and Andy Stone but hadn't heard back on whether the City has an appetite to create that type of program.
 - The Commission discussed how they could easily pursue grant funding but a tax abatement program would be more of an incentive.
 - Mary Anne mentioned that the City has issued other tax abatements for several properties across town.
 - The Commission discussed in detail the Station Street train depot property and its tax abatement and development history.
 - Richard mentioned inviting Mayor Patterson and Sam Crowl to a meeting to discuss a tax abatement program for historic properties.
 - Cyrus stated the Commission should first pursue the tax abatement program with the City, and if that falls through, pursue the grant-funded incentive program option.
 - Richard stated that he would reach out to Mayor Patterson and invite him, and any needed guests, to attend a meeting in July or August.
 - John asked Meghan to look for any city records on the Community Design group.

4. New Business

- There was no new business to discuss.

5. Announcements

- Cyrus announced that he started on the historical plaques which will be permanently displayed in the Armory. He stated that he would share with the Commission a paper that he has worked on for the Armory.
- John mentioned concerns about replacing the brick crosswalks with a stamped concrete. Specifically, he mentioned that if only the X of the intersection was replaced, he could imagine maintenance issues.
 - Richard mentioned that the Commission could ask the Mayor about this issue at the next meeting.
- Mary Anne announced that the next scheduled meeting is August 12, 2024.

6. Adjourn

- Richard motioned to adjourn at 6:24 p.m.
 - John seconded the motion.
- All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed.