

MINUTES of June 16, 2015
Heritage Preservation Commission
City of Albert Lea

The Albert Lea Heritage Preservation Commission called to order on Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at 5:49 p.m. by Vice Chair Brad Kirchner. The meeting location was the City Hall Council Chambers, 221 E Clark St, Albert Lea, MN.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tami Staker
Brad Kirchner (Vice Chair)
Larry Fisher
Lester Anderson
Larry Baker- Ex Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Robert Hoffman (Chair)
Tom Larson
Rick Buringa

STAFF PRESENT:

Doug Johnson, Building Official
Jennifer Nelson, Office Assistant
Rebecca Rowe, Economic Development Intern

OTHERS PRESENT:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:

A motion was made by Tami Staker to approve the agenda and minutes from April 15, 2015 and Larry Fisher seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously on a voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS: None

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Save the date for the 35th Annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference being held in Little Falls, Minnesota (Thursday & Friday) September 17-18, 2015. Please let staff know if you would be interested in attending this conference.

This would also be a great future opportunity for Albert Lea to host this event in the future. We will keep the conversation going regarding this event being held in Albert Lea.

Discussed the feedback received from the Historic Preservation Fair that was held on May 20th. Several citizens suggested this event be held on a Saturday next time. This was great community involvement and showcased a lot of projects that are happening in the downtown. A comment was made by vendors that it is difficult for them to attend during busy construction season and would be better to hold vendors portion in February. Still undecided if this would be an annual event, this would depend on if staff would have enough time to coordinate this event and number of volunteers available to commit time.

The tours may be something to continue with on a smaller scale. One of the goals is to complete a book with photos and history of all the contributing and non-contributing buildings located in the HP District. This would be a great foundation and allow easy access to information regarding the buildings for future tours and projects.

The HPC members were asked if they think a quarterly downtown newsletter would be an effective way to communicate with downtown business owners. There are several types of newsletters that are sent out and maybe social media would be a better avenue. Also having a few posters hung at City Hall and in the Kiosk areas around town would be another way to provide effective communication. Brad Kirchner mentioned in may be a good idea to showcase before and after façade projects.

Updates regarding the "Considering Main Street Program" were discussed. Tami Staker volunteered to be a representative of the HPC when attending the next "Main Street" meeting. There will be a meeting of 5-7 people interested in the program and to see if they want to continue perusing the program.

Doug Johnson updated the HPC on the status of the Freeborn Bank Building. Cohen-Esrey submitted their application for the housing tax credits in June and they will find out if they are awarded this round in October. Also the City Council changed the dynamic sign ordinance to allow for a change in message every 6 hours in the HP District. The recommendation by the HPC was for no change.

Doug advised the Inspection Department is in the process of notifying building owners to take down signs of businesses no longer existing.

Doug Johnson presented the "Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation".

The next scheduled HPC meeting is set for September 8, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Tami Staker and seconded by Lester Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Johnson, Building Official

Approved:

Heritage Preservation Vice Chair
Brad Kirchner