

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 22, 2013

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Tuesday, January 22, 2013, at 5:15 p.m. in the city council chambers at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer and Julie Wolf. Others present included Michael Maharry and Jim Rudisill. Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular December 4, 2012 meeting. Pettit moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Wolf seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The commission first discussed Certified Local Government (CLG) activities, including the city's continuing effort to establish a historic property tax abatement plan.

Pettit reported the historic property abatement plan would focus on current and future historic districts and buildings, while a second program would focus on in-fills. Reischauer asked if on-site carriage house reconstruction would be considered in-fill.

Maharry pointed out the proposed abatement schedule for qualifying historic properties would be at 100% for five years, which he felt was a strong incentive for historic preservation.

The commission would continue to review and comment on the proposal, Reischauer said.

Rudisill next provided an update to the commission on Muscatine's 2012 CLG Annual Report. The deadline for the report is February 28, so final approval of the report will be on the February MHPC agenda. He asked all commission members to provide updates on training and any knowledge they may have concerning work done on any properties listed individually or as contributing buildings to a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

The commission next discussed issues related to historic districts and property.

The first issue was the status of the Alexander Clark NRHP Update Nomination. Rudisill said he had talked with Kent Sissel earlier and had also contacted state officials in an effort to determine the viability of moving forward with the nomination paperwork. Sissel had thought about attending the MHPC meeting to determine if the commission members wanted to continue developing the nomination or wanted to pursue possible links Clark may have had with the Underground Railroad. Federal and possibly state officials appear to favor pursuing Clark's Underground Railroad association, according to Sissel.

Maharry agreed it was also his understanding federal officials were interested in developing the Underground Railroad association.

Rudisill also reported Sissel wanted to talk to the commission about its interest in pursuing efforts to include Clark in the Museum of African-Americans in Washington D.C.

Rudisill said the state contacts he had talked to had indicated they had not heard recently from Sissel and did not offer any opinion on how the commission should move forward. The Historic Resources Development Program (HRDP) grant is scheduled to expire in May 2013.

Rudisill said he would continue to contact Sissel and request an update.

The next issue discussed was the status of the Fair Oaks/Colver Street Reconnaissance Survey Project.

Consultant Rebecca McCarley is continuing to work on the project. Former MHPC member Jo Ann Carlson and current commissioner Jim Schmidt are also providing some research help. Both are examining transfer books to develop a better ownership chronology for the properties located in each study area.

Pettit said the research would not be used directly in the current study, but would be important for a future NRHP nomination of either potential district. Pettit, who provided Carlson and Schmidt with the training to conduct the research, also suggested other MHPC members might find the training helpful. He offered to schedule another session, possibly on January 23.

The commission next discussed historic districts and properties.

Pettit said he had given a TV interview on the Jefferson School issue. He reminded the commission that one of his basic concerns was the school's purchase of properties across the street from the Jefferson School. The school purchased the properties to use for future parking. Pettit said the superintendent has pledged to relocate those buildings instead of demolishing them, but that would still impact historic homes on Mulberry Avenue by reducing their back yards. That could potentially lead to them becoming targets for demolition.

Maharry said a recommendation should be made to the school to establish a buffer zone between the Mulberry properties and any future parking lot. He also suggested the older of the homes across from Jefferson, which have already been acquired by the school, might be a good candidate for controlled deconstruction. He said under that process, the building could then later be reconstructed in another site. He said any salvage material could be taken to Iowa City for recycling.

Pettit said the new Jefferson School would be scheduled to open in 2016 and wondered if the Friends could take on any salvage project.

Pettit also reported on the tour of the Walnut Street Church building earlier in the month. The current owners are planning to demolish the building because of excessive deterioration. Reischauer said she had taken pictures of the building and would get them to Rudisill.

In other reports, Rudisill updated the commission on a Community Development Block Grant application the city would be submitting for downtown revitalization. Maharry said owners should be notified of the potential for historic tax credits.

Maharry also reported the 2012 tax credit application for the courthouse had not been funded, but likely would be in 2013

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| [For SHPO use only] | |
| Received | _____ |
| Approved/CLG in good standing | _____ |
| More information requested | _____ |
| Entered into database | _____/____ |

**IOWA CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT
2012 ANNUAL REPORT (January 2012-December 2012)**

NAME OF THE CITY, COUNTY, OR LAND USE DISTRICT: **MUSCATINE (CITY)**

Mailing Address of the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, or Land Use District Trustees
(PLEASE DO NOT GIVE MAILING ADDRESS OF STAFF OR COMMISSION
CONTACT):

Muscatine City Hall, 215 Sycamore; Muscatine, Iowa 52761

Phone Number: **563-264-1550**

Email: **mayor@muscatineiowa.gov**

Section I.
Locating Historic Properties
Identification, Evaluation, and Registration Activity

- CLG Standards found in CLG Agreement and National Historic Preservation Act
- ◆ The CLG shall maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic and prehistoric properties in a manner consistent with and approved by the STATE.
 - ◆ The CLG will review National Register nominations on any property that lies in the jurisdiction of the local historic preservation commission.

1. Please provide complete reports and site inventory forms from historic identification/survey, evaluation, and/or registration/nomination projects that the City, County, or Land Use District completed in 2012. Do not include projects that were funded with a CLG grant or mandated by the Section 106 review and compliance process. **NONE**

2. How many NRHP Properties in your City, County, or LUD were altered, moved, or demolished in 2012? Please describe the nature of the action **See Attached Sheet 1**

Please list in the space below those NRHP properties altered, moved or demolished:

3. In 2012, how many additional properties (landmarks, sites, zones, or districts) did your city place on its list of locally designated historic landmarks and/or historic districts? Please attach a copy of each designation nomination and ordinance. NA

4. In 2012, were there any actions to revise, amend, change, or de-list a locally designated property? If so, how many? Please attach documentation of the review and appeal process and decisions made by the historic preservation commission, planning and zone commission, city Council, District Court or other governmental agency or official involved with the process. NA

Section II Managing, Protecting, and Preserving Historic Properties

- ◆ The CLG will enforce all appropriate state and local ordinances for designating and protecting historic properties
- ◆ The CLG shall provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation programs

5. Did your city, county, LUD or its historic preservation commission undertake any of the following activities in 2012? Please think broadly about this question and include any activity (small or large) that facilitated historic preservation in your community.

a. Historic preservation planning. Examples include the development or revision of an preservation plan, development of a work plan for your commission, etc. (use additional pages if needed) See Attached Sheet 2

b. Provided technical assistance on historic preservation issues or projects. Examples include working with individual homeowners, business owners, institutions to identify appropriate treatments and find appropriate materials, research advice, etc. (use additional pages if needed) See Attached Sheet 2

c. Sponsored public educational programming in historic preservation. Examples include training sessions offered to the public, walking tours, open houses, lectures, Preservation Month activities, etc. (use additional pages if needed) See Attached Sheet 2

6. If the city or county amended its historic preservation ordinance or resolution or passed additional ordinances or resolutions that impact historic properties, please attach copies of the amendments and new ordinances or resolutions. **See Attached Resolution**

7. If new or revised design standards and/or guidelines were developed and adopted during 2012, please attach a copy. **NA**

8. Are there any particular issues, challenges, and/or successes your preservation commission has encountered or accomplished this year? **Assisted Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation with annual preservation award recognitions; continued collaboration with local property owner and State Historical Society of Iowa to update the Alexander Clark House's National Register of Historic Places nomination to reflect increased national significance; launched reconnaissance survey work in the Fair Oaks and Culver Street areas of the community.**

Section III Historic Preservation Program Administration

- The CLG will organize and maintain a historic preservation commission, which must meet at least three (3) times per year.
- The commission will be composed of community members with a demonstrated positive interest in historic preservation, or closely related fields, to the extent available in the community.
- The commission will comply with Iowa Code Chapter 21 (open meetings) in its operations.
- Commission members will participate in state sponsored or approved historic preservation training activities.

10. List dates of meetings held. **See Attached Sheet 3**

11. Please update the attached CLG Personnel Information Table (this must be completed).

12. Please attach biographical sketches or resumes of commissioners who were newly appointed in 2012 or 2013.

13. Please complete the 2012 Commission Training Table.

PLEASE SIGN and DATE

Signature of person who completed this report

Date

Signature of Mayor or Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

Date

SUBMIT PAPER/HARD COPY, ONE (1) COPY OF THE REPORT TO:

**Paula A. Mohr
State Historical Society of Iowa
600 East Locust St,
Des Moines IA 50319-0290
Paula.mohr@iowa.gov**

Thank you!

2012 Historic Preservation Training Table

In this table, provide information about the commissioners' involvement in historic preservation training, listing the name of the conference, workshop or meeting (including on-line training opportunities); the sponsoring organization; the location and date when the training occurred. Be sure to provide the names of commissioners, staff, and elected officials who attended.

Name of Training Session: **Legal Requirements** (IA Open Meetings Law) **Doing What is Right** (Board Duties/Responsibilities) **Enhancing Effectiveness** (Board Strategies/Teamwork)

Sponsoring organization: **Bi-State Regional Planning Commission/Institute of Public Affairs**

Location: **Muscatine Community College**

Date: **May 18, 2012**

Names of historic preservation commissioners, staff and elected officials who attended:
Jim Rudisill

Name of Training Session:

Sponsoring organization:

Location:

Date:

Names of historic preservation commissioners, staff and elected officials who attended:

Name of Training Session:

Sponsoring organization:

Location:

Date:

Names of historic preservation commissioners, staff and elected officials who attended:

Name of Training Session:

Sponsoring organization:

Location:

Date:

Names of historic preservation commissioners, staff and elected officials who attended:

Name of Training Session:

Sponsoring organization:

Location:

Date:

Names of historic preservation commissioners, staff and elected officials who attended:

2012-2013 CLG Personnel Table

A. Please list the names of the Historic Preservation Commissioners who served during 2012:

Ramiro Vazquez (resigned effective July 10, 2012 – seat eliminated by ordinance)

Jim Schmidt

JoAnn Carlson (term expired June 30, 2012, ineligible for re-appointment – seat eliminated by ordinance)

Jane Reischauer

Devin Pettit

Anna Mack

Gina Chesling (resigned effective February 27, 2012)

Julie Wolf (appointed March 1, 2012 to fill remainder of Gina Chesling term)

B. CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL 2012

Name of , Chairman of Board of Supervisors, President of LUD Trustees:

Mrs. Ms. Dr.

First Name: **DeWayne**

Initial: **M.**

Last Name: **Hopkins**

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL 2013 (note this is beginning January 2013)

Name of , Chairman of Board of Supervisors, President of LUD Trustees:

Mrs. Ms. Dr.

First Name: **DeWayne**

Initial: **M.**

Last Name: **Hopkins**

C. STAFF PERSON FOR THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Mrs. Ms. Dr.

First Name: **James**

Initial: **A.**

Last Name: **Rudisill**

Job Title: **Planning/CD Coordinator**

Mailing Address: **Muscatine City Hall; 215 Sycamore; Muscatine, IA 52761**

Phone Number: **563-264-1550 (Ext. 143)**

Email Address: **jrudisill@muscatineiowa.gov**

Please indicate if this person serves as the Contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission. Circle Yes No

2013 HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

Please complete the following and provide information about your new 2013 commission. Be sure to indicate how the individual wishes to be addressed (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.). Please provide a work (circle W) or a home (circle H) mailing address, work (circle W) or a home (circle H) phone number and work (circle W) or a home (circle H) email address. Please provide new or updated information on past and present: profession, employment, training, preservation skills including ownership of a historic property (Past or present: profession/employment, preservation skills, historic property owner). If the commissioner represents a locally designated district, provide the name of the district (Representative, Name of Historic District). Specify the month, day, and year that the commissioner's term will end (Term Ends). If a commission member serves as contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission, please mark the check off box below that individual's name.

CHAIRPERSON/COMMISSIONER

Mr. Mrs. ☒ Ms. Dr.

First Name: **Jane**

Initial:

Last Name: **Reischauer**

Mailing Address: **108 W. Fifth; Muscatine, IA 52761**

Home Phone Number: **563-264-8443**

Work Phone Number: **563-263-4000**

Email Address: **janereischauer@hotmail.com**

Past or Present profession/employment, preservation skills, historic property owner:
Previous member of the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission, restored and owns historic house where currently living.

Representative, Name of Local Historic District: **NA**

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Term Ends: | Month | Day | Year |
| | June | 30 | 2017 |

Please indicate if this person serves as the Contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission. Circle Yes ☒ No

VICE CHAIRPERSON/COMMISSIONER

☒ Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.

First Name: **Devin**

Initial:

Last Name: **Pettit**

Mailing Address: **618 Walnut; Muscatine, IA 52761**

Home Phone Number: **563-506-9165**

Work Phone Number: **Same**

Email Address: **devinpettit@aol.com**

Past or Present profession/employment, preservation skills, historic property owner:
Previous member of the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission, local historian

Representative, Name of Local Historic District: **NA**

Term Ends: Month Day Year
 June **30** **2016**

Please indicate if this person serves as the Contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission. Circle Yes ☒ No

COMMISSIONER

Mr. Mrs. ☒ Ms. Dr.

First Name: **Anna**

Initial:

Last Name: **Mack**

Mailing Address: **2240 Hickory Hills Road; Muscatine, IA 52761**

Home Phone Number: **563-264-0088**

Work Phone Number: **563-263-0433**

Email Address: **amack@machlink.com**

Past or Present profession/employment, preservation skills, historic property owner:
Licensed real estate broker; real estate agency owner; active in local civic organizations, including downtown preservation organization

Representative, Name of Historic District: **NA**

Term Ends: Month Day Year
 June **30** **2013**

Please indicate if this person serves as the Contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission. Circle Yes ☒ No

COMMISSIONER

Mr. Mrs. ☒ Ms. Dr.

First Name: **Julie**

Initial:

Last Name: **Wolf**

Mailing Address: **2708 Mulberry; Muscatine, IA 52761**

Home Phone Number: **563-263-9348**

Work Phone Number: **NA**

Email Address: **Julie.A.Wolf@hotmail.com**

Past or Present profession/employment, preservation skills, historic property owner:

Representative, Name of Local Historic District: **NA**

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Term Ends: | Month | Day | Year |
| | June | 30 | 2014 |

Please indicate if this person serves as the Contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission. Circle Yes No

COMMISSIONER

☒ Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.

First Name: **Jim**

Initial:

Last Name: **Schmidt**

Mailing Address: **313 W. Second Street; Muscatine, IA 52761**

Home Phone Number: **563-264-0872**

Work Phone Number: **563-571-0188**

Email Address: **schmidttdesign@machlink.com**

Past or Present profession/employment, preservation skills, historic property owner:
Residential construction contractor, historic property owner

Representative, Name of Historic District: **NA**

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Term Ends: | Month | Day | Year |
| | June | 30 | 2015 |

Please indicate if this person serves as the Contact with the State Historic Preservation Office for the Commission. Circle Yes ☒ No

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

APPLICANT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

NAME: (Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.) Mrs. Julie A. Wolf

ADDRESS: 2708 Strawberry Ave. Muscatine, IA 52761

PHONE NUMBER: WORK: N/A

HOME: 563-243-9848

EMAIL ADDRESS: Julie.A.Wolf@hotmail.com

INTEREST IN LOCAL HISTORY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION (Describe education, employment, memberships, publications, and/or other activities which indicate your interest in and commitment to historic preservation; or provide a statement detailing your interest in local history and commitment to historic preservation; use extra sheets if necessary)

EDUCATION: Central High, Davenport, IA 1969
BA - Univ. of IA (English Literature) 1973
minor in Social Work

EMPLOYMENT: Muscatine Community College, Learning Tree Preschool,
Director for 31 years. Retired.

INTEREST: I grew up in an old home, in an old part of Davenport. My
mother collected antiques her whole life and lived with it in at
a young age. I have always had an appreciation for
old homes and preserving the past.

While serving on the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission, I will work to have the Commission enforce the Historic Preservation Ordinance/Resolution; uphold the CLG Agreement with the State of Iowa, and work to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Signature: Julie A. Wolf

Date: 2/9/2013

**Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission
2012 Annual Report
ATTACHMENT SHEET 1
SECTION 1
Locating Historic Properties
Identification, Evaluation and Registration Activity**

2. Monitoring Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Please answer the following, making sure that you include the historic name and address for each property. If necessary, list on a separate sheet (s)

Downtown Commercial Historic District; Muscatine, Iowa: (70-01004): Exterior/interior work on several contributing buildings to this listed historic commercial district was completed in 2012. These included: Welch Apartments (Scott House), 220 Iowa Avenue (70-00464) – replace boards on deck and steps; Trinity Episcopal Church, 211 Walnut (70-00146) – remodel; Commercial Building, 222 Walnut (70-00621) – reroof; Gottbrecht Cigar Factory, 224 Walnut (70-00622) – reroof; Muscatine Journal Building (old), 214 Iowa Avenue (70-00460) – remodel storefront.

West Hill Historic District; Muscatine, Iowa (70-01005): Harriet Mulford House, 514 W. Third (70-01032) – remodel of interior apartment; James & Hannah Murphy House, 207 W. Fourth (70-01048) – reroof; John Sterneman House, 207 Broadway (70-01099) – remodel; Burnett House, 518 W. Third (70-00224) – resided; Swan-Beach House, 800 W. Third (70-01039) – reroof; Thomas & Georgianna Smith House, 416 W. Third (70-01028) – reroof; Olds-Munroe-Welker-Schomberg House, 417 W. Third (70-00222) – construct new garage; Henry Geiss House, 415 W. Second (70-01010) - remodel; William F. Johnson House, 608 W. Second (70-00189) – reroof; Spring-Dean House, 605 W. Third (70-00226) – new, bright orange, metal porch roof

**Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission
2012 Annual Report
ATTACHMENT SHEET 2
SECTION 2
Managing, Protecting, and Preserving Historic Properties**

5a: Historic Preservation Planning

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission continued to support efforts in 2012 to recognize the major civil rights and other contributions in the 19th century of Alexander G. Clark. The Alexander Clark Heritage District was established by the city in 2010; and the MHPC continued to pursue additional recognition of this significant city resident. An effort that was started in 2011 to establish Clark's Double Rental House at 203 W. Third (70-00203) as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and then later modified – at the request of the National Park Service – to create a revised National Register of Historic Places nomination for the property continued.

The MHPC launched a reconnaissance survey in two potential historic districts in Muscatine in 2012, despite not being selected for a Historic Resources Development Project (HRDP) grant. Funding for the two surveys came from local grants and other support.

The Muscatine (County) Historic Preservation Commission and the Muscatine (City) Historic Preservation Commission continued to coordinate activities through joint members of the two commissions. The two boards were both present during informational discussions by the Muscatine Board of Supervisors concerning the future of two county-owned buildings located within the city limits. The supervisors were discussing the future needs of the Old Jail (70-00246) and the Muscatine County New Jail and Sheriff's Office (70-00969), possible uses and potential for demolition. The two groups will continue to monitor the situation.

The city continued to contact the commission throughout 2012 whenever a demolition permit was issued. The commission would then review records and attempt to document as much of the building as possible before demolition occurred.

The commission continued joint discussions and planning with the Friends of Historic Preservation, which was created by the MHPC in 2007 to assist with fundraising and other activities related to historic preservation in the community.

The City of Muscatine also continued to involve the commission in two efforts that began in 2011. The commission provided assistance in updating the community's comprehensive plan, especially for areas and activities that would involve a significant number of historic properties. The second major involvement was the development of a historic property tax abatement program. City staff presented draft ideas of a potential program to the city council in late 2012. Discussions are expected to continue into 2013.

The commission also requested the city council to amend the city's historic preservation ordinance in 2012 to reduce the commission membership from seven to five and extend the original three-year terms to five-year terms. City staff and commission members felt these changes would improve recruitment of commission members. The city council approved the changes in late 2012.

5b: Technical Assistance Provided

There were no organized or specific technical assistance programs provided to the public in 2012. However, individual commission members and staff responded on a regular basis to questions and concerns directed specifically to them.

The commission did participate in several tours conducted of historic buildings. The tours were intended to familiarize commissioners to various historic property styles and conditions; and also provide them with an opportunity to provide information to the property owners, managers and/or realtors on proper historic preservation techniques and preservation opportunities.

The commission also continued to work with local historian Kent Sissel with his effort to recognize Muscatine's Alexander Clark, arguably Iowa's most important 19th-century, African-American civil rights leader. The main effort continued to be identifying Clark's house (owned by Sissel) on West Third as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). A previously approved Historic Resource Development Project (REAP) grant was amended in 2011 so a revised National Register of Historic Places nomination could be completed for the property. The commission also provided assistance to local planners interested in identifying community sites, including the Alexander Clark House, as having possible links to the Underground Railroad. Much of this effort is being coordinated through the Network to Freedom program. A film on Clark that was released in 2012 also received encouragement and support from the commission.

The commission also agreed to participate in a city effort to develop a local property tax abatement program for Muscatine's historic districts and individual properties listed on the National Register. The city council identified the development of such a program as a top/high priority objective in 2011 and presented a draft plan to the city council in late 2012.

5c: Educational Programming Provided

The commission supported programs on Muscatine's connections to the Underground Railroad and a film produced on the life of Alexander Clark. The MHPC also coordinated the funding and installation of nearly 20 historic district signs throughout the community. Those signs were placed in 2012.

The commission continued to review city demolition and permitting ordinances.

The MHPC and the Friends of Historic Preservation continued planning in 2012 to conduct joint activities and programs, especially relating to historic preservation month activities.

**Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission
2012 Annual Report
ATTACHMENT SHEET 3
SECTION 3
Historic Preservation Program Administration**

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission held five (5) regular monthly meetings in 2012. Seven (7) additional meetings were scheduled, but were not formally held because a quorum was not available. The table below lists the meeting dates and locations.

The minutes and agenda for each meeting held by the MHPC are included in the report after this page.

| Meeting | Date | Location |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Regular Monthly | January 18, 2012 | Muscatine City Hall |
| No formal meeting was held in February because a quorum was not present | | |
| Regular Monthly | March 21, 2012 | Muscatine City Hall |
| Regular Monthly | May 16, 2012 | Muscatine City Hall |
| Regular Monthly | June 20, 2012 | Muscatine City Hall |
| Regular Monthly | July 18, 2012 | Muscatine City Hall |
| No formal meeting was held in August because a quorum was not present | | |
| No formal meeting was held in September because a quorum was not present | | |
| No formal meeting was held in October because a quorum was not present | | |
| No formal meeting was held in November because of a change in meeting days | | |
| Regular Monthly | December 4, 2012 | Muscatine City Hall |

**Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission
2012 Annual Report
ATTACHMENT SHEET 3
SECTION 3
Historic Preservation Program Administration
2012 Minutes and Agendas**

**MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2012
5:15 P.M.
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – CITY HALL
215 SYCAMORE**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Agenda**
 - b. December 21, 2011 Minutes**
- 4. Certified Local Government (CLG) Activities**
 - a. Survey/Grant(s) Discussion**
 - b. Comprehensive Plan Review**
 - c. Property Tax Abatement Review**
 - d. Joint Activities With Muscatine City & County HPCs**
 - e. 2011 Annual Report**
- 5. Property/District Discussions**
 - a. Alexander Clark Heritage District (NRHP Update)**
 - b. Signage**
- 6. Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Muscatine City HPC**
 - b. Muscatine County HPC**
 - c. Friends of Historic Preservation**
 - d. Others**
- 7. Other Business**

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 18, 2012

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Wednesday, January 18, 2012, at 5:15 p.m. in the lower level conference room at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer, Gina Chesling and Jim Schmidt. Others present included Michael Maharry and Jim Rudisill. Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular December 21, 2011 meeting. Pettit requested an additional agenda item to discuss the Mississippi Corridor project. Following the review, Pettit moved to approve the consent agenda with agenda change; Schmidt seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The first agenda item was Certified Local Government (CLG) activities; and the first of those activities was a discussion on the status of the MHPC's planned reconnaissance surveys of four potential historic districts. At last month's meeting, the MHPC agreed to delay implementing the surveys until after it submits an additional funding request to the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) in May.

Rudisill said he had notified the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine and the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust (and the Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation), which have all approved pledges/grants of support for the project, of the delay. He said none of the funders had responded. Commission members agreed the lack of any response likely indicated the funders did not object to the delay and would not withdraw their original support.

There was a brief discussion on whether or not to conduct additional funding solicitation between now and May, since any SHSI grant could be less than the amount needed to complete all four reconnaissance surveys. Rudisill asked if property owner contacts might be helpful. Pettit said he was inclined to keep that funding option open for future historic district nominations.

In a related discussion, Maharry questioned why the four areas identified for reconnaissance surveys had been selected; and how consultant Rebecca McCarley had settled on her priorities. He suggested Iowa Avenue, or a portion of that street, should be considered a prime candidate. Commission members agreed Iowa Avenue was a strong survey candidate and indicated they were unsure why McCarley had not identified it as a higher priority. There was some speculation involving unified development or some combination of significance and feasibility (low-lying fruit), but there was no clear answer.

The next CLG discussion item was the status of the comprehensive plan update.

Rudisill said he had not been advised that city planner Andrew Fangman was ready to develop the historic preservation component of the plan. Pettit suggested if MHPC members had any recommendations for the plan to contact Fangman directly. He also reported the Muscatine Planning and Zoning Commission intended to begin tackling rezoning once the comp plan update was completed.

The commission next discussed the property tax abatement program draft distributed in November. At the discussion of the draft in December, Maharry had

suggested a two-tier abatement be developed. One tier would provide owners who follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards break; while the second would apply to those owners who only want to rehabilitate their property without worrying about the standards. Maharry termed it a fork in the road.

Tier 1 work would restore, rehabilitate or replace historic features in the most historically sensitive manner. Tier 2 would not be as sensitive, but even under Tier 2, the program would still require no demolition of historic features in order to be eligible for the abatement. Maharry said such activities as roof and foundation repairs would like fit into Tier 1 status regardless of any standards because those elements are hidden from view or have other issues that have already affected their historic integrity. He said the key goals for the program should be to enhance the historic nature of the property and rehabilitate deteriorated historic properties.

Schmidt said the commission would need to develop guidelines to follow when approving the abatements, especially if they did not follow the Secretary's standards.

Maharry also suggested an example showing the benefits of an abatement be developed to provide a better understanding of how the program would operate. Rudisill said he would develop a generic example of a possible savings for a property owner using the abatement program and a Tier 2 abatement percentage table.

A discussion on joint activities involving the Muscatine (City) and Muscatine (County) Historic Preservation Commissions were then discussed. Reischauer reported the county commission was working on establishing the county as a CLG. She said the plan is to have the designation by the spring of 2013.

Rudisill next reported on the 2011 Annual Report. He said much of the report was completed, but he continued to need the assistance of the commission to identify work completed in 2011 on historic properties either within a recognized national historic district or individually listed on the National Register. Commissioners indicated they would review the building permits list and list work they knew to have been completed on target properties. Rudisill said the deadline for submitting the report is in February.

The next agenda items were discussions involving historic properties and districts. The first of these items was an update on the revised nomination of the Alexander Clark House to the National Register of Historic Places. Rudisill said Kent Sissel had reported he is back in touch with the National Park Service (NPS) after losing contact with several of the NPS staff for the past several months.

Sissel had also reported Paul Finkelman would be in Japan for the next several weeks, but would be continuing to work on the Network to Freedom and the National Register nominations.

The remaining district discussion involved signage.

Reischauer reported no recent new activity on that issue. She will get updated designs and costs to Gary Carlson of HON. Carlson had earlier agreed to cover the costs of the signs.

Reischauer will also develop a proposal on sign size and other details and bring it

back to the MHPC for review before going to the city traffic committee for approval to post the signs.

Several miscellaneous reports were then given to the board.

Pettit reported the Downtown Action Alliance (DAA) is scheduled to meet next month to discuss future activities. He said Friends are the technical member of the DAA, but he did want the commission to be aware of the meeting and objectives.

Rudisill also asked if anyone had received the email from Paula Mohr describing two meetings on historic preservation efforts and local economic activity. None of the members recalled receiving the email and Rudisill said he would forward it to everyone.

Maharry then presented a report from the Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation. He said a sheriff's sale was scheduled for the Sawyer-Rehwaldt House at 609 W. Second on January 31, 2012.

Maharry also reported the Friends are seeking tax help to file a 2011 tax return. The organization must file a tax return to receive the \$30,400 historic tax credit donated to Friends by Tom and Cindy Kautz. Maharry said the organization had not been able to locate anyone yet. Reischauer suggested Maharry contact local tax attorney Jim Nepple, a former member of the Muscatine (city) Historic Preservation Commission and a current member of the county HPC.

Discussions and planning also need to begin for May Preservation Month activities, Maharry said. He also reported a local realtor had told him house showings were up, so that could point to increase market activity. He said his own property at 417 W. Third had recently been approved for a variance by the Muscatine Planning & Zoning Commission. With the variance, a prospective owner would be able to operate a bed and breakfast business on the property. Maharry said the prospective buyer must still sell a house in Colorado before purchasing the Muscatine property.

Maharry also reported he had recently been asked to serve on a state committee that is researching the development of a comprehensive plan for historic preservation.

In a final discussion item, Pettit notified the commission of an upcoming city council agenda item concerning the Mississippi Corridor Study. Pettit said the study must be amended to include development of a 4(f) statement. The statement is necessary for the former Puritan Ice/Testrake property on Green/Grandview. Proposed development at the Hershey Avenue/Green Street Intersection (Carver Corners) is expected to impact the buildings, which have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A 4(f) statement is required to examine potential alternatives to the development to determine if there is any feasible option to removing the buildings.

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Wednesday,

February 15, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

**MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012
5:15 P.M.
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – CITY HALL
215 SYCAMORE**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Agenda**
 - b. January 18, 2012 Minutes**
- 4. Certified Local Government (CLG) Activities**
 - a. Property Tax Abatement Review**
 - b. Comprehensive Plan Review**
 - c. Preservation Month Activities (Muscatine City & County HPCs)**
 - d. Membership**
- 5. Property/District Discussions**
 - a. Alexander Clark Heritage District (NRHP Update)**
 - b. Signage**
 - c. 2012 HRDP Application/Project Discussion**
- 6. Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Muscatine City HPC**
 - b. Muscatine County HPC**
 - c. Friends of Historic Preservation**
 - d. Others**
- 7. Other Business**

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MARCH 21, 2012**

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Wednesday, March 21, 2012, at 5:20 p.m. in the lower level conference room at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer, Julie Wolf and Jim Schmidt. Others present included Michael Maharry and Steven Boka. Anna Mack arrived at 5:40 p.m.

Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular January 18, 2011 meeting. Pettit moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Schmidt seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The Commission reviewed and discussed the comprehensive plan update process, 2012 Preservation Month activities and 2012 Preservation Award candidates.

Reischauer reported the historic district signs and locations have been approved by the city traffic committee and by the city council on March 15.

The commission discussed the Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) process and schedule for submission.

Michael Maharry reported on the recent county discussion concerning the historic jail. Maharry said the Muscatine Board of Supervisors will not sell the building, but did acknowledge the use of tax credits for improvements to the building was a possibility. There was also discussion regarding the use of tax credit for the Muscatine Court House improvements.

The commission discussed the current commission make-up and Boka suggested that Jim Rudisill update the contact information for distribution at the next meeting.

Boka suggested the commission may want to take advantage of the city website by creating a link to commission events, current activities, awards, projects and even an area dedicated to "questions & answers".

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

**MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2012**

5:15 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL

*******NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING LOCATION*****
215 SYCAMORE**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Agenda**
 - b. March 21, 2012 Minutes**
- 4. Certified Local Government (CLG) Activities**
 - a. Property Tax Abatement Review**
 - b. Comprehensive Plan Review**
 - c. Preservation Month Activities (Muscatine City & County HPCs)**
 - d. Membership/Resignation (Ramiro Vazquez)**
 - e. City Website Information**
- 5. Property/District Discussions**
 - a. Alexander Clark Heritage District (NRHP Update)**
 - b. Signage**
 - c. 2012 HRDP Application/Project Discussion**
- 6. Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Muscatine City HPC**
 - b. Muscatine County HPC**
 - c. Friends of Historic Preservation**
 - d. Others**
- 7. Other Business**

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MAY 16, 2012

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Wednesday, May 16, 2012, at 5:15 p.m. in the city council chambers at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer, Julie Wolf, Jim Schmidt and Anna Mack. Others present included Michael Maharry and Jim Rudisill.

Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular March 21, 2011 meeting. There had not been an April meeting because a quorum was not present. Pettit moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Mack seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The first order of business under the CLG section of the meeting was a discussion of the proposed tax abatement program for historic buildings. Reischauer recalled from earlier meetings when Steve Boka discussed the program with the commission that he favored removing commercial buildings and only applying the program to owner-occupied buildings.

Rudisill also pointed out the current proposal included provisions for review of the application and the property site by the commission. He questioned whether the review requirement would be a potential handicap for a future commission because of the potential time commitment.

Wolf said she suspected that not many applications would actually be filed, which would reduce the amount of time commissioners actually spent on the reviews.

There was also some confusion over which final draft had actually been last distributed. Pettit provided a copy that he said Rudisill had distributed earlier, but it differed from a copy that Rudisill had in the abatement folder.

Rudisill said he would review his electronic files and forward the latest copy of the tax abatement program to commission members.

The commission next discussed the proposed comprehensive plan status.

Pettit reported he understood reviews of the various plan sections would begin in June or July.

Reischauer said she had learned some communities were turning to downzoning in an effort to preserve historic areas. She said that effort could help to preserve historic homes and prevent them from converting to multi-family housing.

Rudisill also reported he had provided city planner Andrew Fangman with a copy of the 2006 West Hill Historic District nomination recommendations, which Fangman had indicated would help form the foundation of the plan's historic preservation sections.

The status of the Historic Preservation Month activities was the next discussion item. Pettit moved to approve the list of awards presented by the Friends of Historic Preservation; Schmidt seconded; motion passed, all ayes. Commission members said they were not sure if additional activities were planned by Friends for the rest of the month. Rudisill also reported Mayor Hopkins had issued a proclamation declaring May as National Historic Preservation Month in Muscatine.

The next CLG discussion item was MHPC membership.

Rudisill reported Ramiro Vazquez had contacted him and intended to submit his resignation from the MHPC. Rudisill said he had not yet received any official resignation letter from Vazquez.

Rudisill also said Jo Ann Carlson and Jim Schmidt's terms on the commission would expire on June 30, 2012. Carlson is completing her second term and is not eligible to be reappointed to another term. Schmidt is completing his first term and is eligible for reappointment. Schmidt said he would be willing to serve again, which means if Vazquez resigns only two vacancies will be open.

Mack said her husband had expressed an interest in serving on the commission and Rudisill said he would forward a city appointment form to her.

The final CLG discussion issue was the city's website and possible uses of it for linking historic preservation topics. Reischauer explained Boka had brought this issue up at the March meeting, suggesting there could be a wide range of sites linked to the city's webpage. He had also pointed out the website could be a useful tool for promoting local city historic preservation programming.

Commissioners were encouraged to review the city's website and forward suggestions for possible links or information ideas to Rudisill.

The commission next discussed several historic district or property issues. The first of these was an update on the commission's two Historic Resources Development Program (HRDP) grant programs or applications.

Rudisill reported he had not received any communications from Kent Sissel concerning the status of the 2011 HRDP project to update the National Register of Historic District nomination for the Alexander Clark House. Rudisill suggested the project had developed a number of twists and turns that could mean further delays in completing the nomination. He said he would wait to hear from Sissel and keep the commission advised.

The second HRDP project to be discussed was the 2012 application to fund four reconnaissance surveys in Muscatine. Rudisill reported the application had been submitted. A response is expected sometime in June. Commission members requested Rudisill to email them a copy of the application.

The next agenda item was a discussion on signage.

Rudisill reported the order for the additional signs had been faxed to Iowa Prison Industries, but he had not heard anything since then.

The commission next received reports from commission members and visitors.

Reischauer reported she had received a report from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on a study completed for the Mississippi River Corridor project involving the area around the Carver Corners (Green & Hershey). Reischauer had sent the report to Rudisill and requested he forward it to all commissioners.

Maharry reported on his recent historic preservation conference trip. He met individuals there whose counties have implemented the state's mandatory historic

property tax abatement program for counties. He pointed out that program does require adhering to the Secretary of Interior Standards to qualify for the abatement, a provision that is included in the city's proposed tax abatement proposal, but can be waived under certain conditions. He said he would email a copy of the Linn County Supervisors priority identification listings, a requirement of the state law, to Rudisill.

Maharry also reported learning of a preservation program involving historic preservationist Bob Yapp. According to Maharry, conference sponsors said they had sent a local resident to travel with Yapp and receive training on preservation of historic windows. The trainee had then returned home and was providing local workshops on what he had learned.

Maharry thought the idea was good and suggested it might be worthwhile to offer a scholarship to maintain this training conduit. He also said the training could expand to other critical historic features.

The keynote speaker at the conference, Donavan Rypkema, was also outstanding and provided an effect and precise explanation of the economic benefits of historic preservation, Maharry said. A YouTube presentation of Rypkema is available on the Internet.

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:05 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

**MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2012
5:15 P.M.
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – CITY HALL
215 SYCAMORE**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Agenda**
 - b. May 16, 2012 Minutes**
- 4. Certified Local Government (CLG) Activities**
 - a. Property Tax Abatement Review**
 - b. Comprehensive Plan Review**
 - c. Membership**
- 5. Property/District Discussions**
 - a. Alexander Clark Heritage District (NRHP Update)**
 - b. Signage**
 - c. 2012 HRDP Application Status**
- 6. Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Muscatine City HPC**
 - b. Muscatine County HPC**
 - c. Friends of Historic Preservation**
 - d. Others**
- 7. Other Business**

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JUNE 20, 2012

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, at 5:45 p.m. in the city council chambers at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer, Julie Wolf and Anna Mack. Others present included Michael Maharry and Jim Rudisill. Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular May 16, 2012 meeting. Mack moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Pettit seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The commission's first issue was a discussion of the proposed tax abatement program for historic buildings under the Certified Local Government category. Rudisill updated the council on a recent meeting he held with Muscatine County Assessor Dale McCrea, Muscatine Auditor Leslie Soule and deputy auditor Betty Wamback on the proposed abatement program.

McCrea reported he had reviewed the proposed program and pointed out the county did not have any capabilities of separating just the city taxes from any abatement. Both he and Soule said the computer program used by the county would abate all the taxes on any approved property under the program.

An alternative to abating all the taxes would be to initiate a rebate program that would require the city to pay back to the approved property owners the portion of city taxes they would be eligible to receive under the abatement program.

Rudisill said he had talked to Muscatine Community Development Director Steve Boka about that option, but Boka did not favor it. Commissioners said they also favored keeping the tax abatement policy intact, pointing out there likely would not be a large number of applicants.

The commission also discussed the May 15 deadline to submit pre-applications to the city. The applications do not need to be forwarded to the assessor until February 1. Collecting applications in May would mean a nearly 18-month gap between the application submittals and actual tax payment. Commission members agreed an initial December 31 date was more feasible.

There was also discussion on the abatement program language concerning adherence to the Secretary of Interior standards. Maharry had earlier provided the language used by counties currently participating in the mandatory state historic property tax abatement program. Maharry said after reading the language in the city's abatement program, he felt it contained the same requirement. There was also agreement among the commission members that guidelines would need to be developed to assist future commissions with determining eligibility and other parts of the program.

After additional discussion, Rudisill was directed to update the latest version of the document and provide it to commission members for final review. A vote on the program and recommendation to the city council will then be added to the commission's July meeting agenda.

The commission next discussed the proposed comprehensive plan status.

Muscatine City Planner Andrew Fangman has started holding town meetings in the various planning districts to explain the comprehensive planning process, answer questions and recruit volunteers wishing to participate in committees and other groups.

Meetings that could directly impact the Downtown Commercial Historic District and West Hill Historic Districts will be held soon; and commissioners agreed those meetings would offer opportunities to support historic preservation efforts in the comp plan.

The final CLG-related agenda item concerned commission membership.

Rudisill reported Dan Mack had submitted his application, which would be part of the city council's June 21 agenda. He also reminded the commission of Ramiro Vazquez's intent to resign from the commission, but said he had not received any official resignation letter. Rudisill had attempted to call Vazquez prior to the meeting, but had to leave a message.

Historic district or property issues were then discussed.

Rudisill said he and Kent Sissel had not communicated on the Alexander Clark-HRDP grant for some time. He will wait until either Sissel contacts him with information on the report's status; or the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) requests an update.

The commission next discussed the status of the historic district signs.

Rudisill reported he did not know if the city's public works department had started to install the signs, but all the signs had been delivered. He also reported supervisor Randy Howell had reported getting the posts ready and utilities located.

Rudisill also was unsure on the status of the HNI reimbursement. He said he would talk with Muscatine Finance Director Nancy Lueck and ask if the bill has been paid and reimbursed.

The final historic district/property discussion was the status of the city's 2013 Historic Resources and Development Program (HRDP) application. Rudisill said there had not been any release of awards by the SHSI as of the meeting. Pettit said a review of the 2012 award notification showed they had been announced shortly after the June MHPC meeting, so he expected this year's awards to be announced within a day or two. Rudisill said he would continue to monitor the SHSI website and report any notification to the commission.

Commission members agreed to delay any discussion on possible survey options, until they learn if the city's application has received any funding.

The commission next received reports from commission members and visitors.

Maharry reported the Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation, Inc. will have its five year anniversary this fall. He said some type of celebration will be held to help the group reset, re-advertise and re-promote itself.

Wolf also announced the Colver Street Broom Factory had recently been sold.

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:25 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Wednesday, July 18, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

**MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2012
5:15 P.M.
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – CITY HALL
215 SYCAMORE**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Agenda**
 - b. June 20, 2012 Minutes**
- 4. Certified Local Government (CLG) Activities**
 - a. Property Tax Abatement Review - Action**
 - b. Comprehensive Plan Update**
 - c. Membership/Resignation**
- 5. Property/District Discussions**
 - a. Alexander Clark Heritage District (NRHP Update)**
 - b. Signage**
 - c. 2012 HRDP Application/Future Surveys**
- 6. Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Muscatine City HPC**
 - b. Muscatine County HPC**
 - c. Friends of Historic Preservation**
 - d. Others**
- 7. Other Business**

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
JULY 18, 2012

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Wednesday, July 18, 2012, at 5:45 p.m. in the city council chambers at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer, Julie Wolf and Jim Schmidt. Others present included Jim Rudisill. Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular June 20, 2012 meeting. Pettit moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Wolf seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The first discussion issue under the Certified Local Government category was on the proposed property tax abatement program for historic buildings. Rudisill reported on a new idea presented by Muscatine City Administrator Gregg Mandsager that would replace the 10-year, 80-20%, graduated tax abatement table for historic buildings with one that would offer a three-year, 100% abatement schedule. Rudisill said Mandsager felt more people might apply if they could see a quicker turnaround on their renovation costs.

Mandsager had also suggested the three-year, 100% schedule could apply to new homes in both historic districts and other development areas as a way to increase construction on in-fill lots throughout the community.

Commission members indicated some uncertainty over Mandsager's new construction proposal within historic districts and requested Rudisill to ask Mandsager to attend the next meeting to provide more background on his suggestion.

Generally the consensus of the commission was to support the three-year, 100% abatement schedule, although Schmidt did suggest allowing residents to pick which schedule they wished to follow. However, several questions were raised over the possibility of providing an abatement for new construction within a historic district.

Both Reischauer and Schmidt wondered what stake the commission would have in non-historic new construction in a historic district. Several commissioners said they opposed providing any support for incentives that might be offered to demolish any building in a historic district in order to build something new. Wolf also suggested any new building should be sympathetic to the historic district's existing architecture to receive any property tax abatement. She also questioned whether any abatement should even be offered for new construction within a historic district.

Reischauer said the new construction proposal might offer an opportunity for the city to implement a two-tier abatement policy. One tier would provide a schedule for new construction, while the second tier would offer an abatement policy that would offer incentives that favored the preservation of the existing architecture.

Reischauer asked the commission members to continue reviewing the proposed abatement programs and provide Rudisill with any comments.

The commission then discussed the next comprehensive planning meeting to be held August 14 at the Zion Lutheran Church. The meeting will focus on development proposals for the River Center Planning District. Reischauer and Pettit both indicated they planned to attend.

The next discussion issue was the commission membership.

Rudisill reported that Ramiro Vazquez had submitted his formal resignation. Rudisill said there were no applications to fill the current two vacancies on the commission.

Reischauer directed Rudisill to contact Iowa State CLG Coordinator Paula Mohr to determine if the commission membership could be reduced.

The commission next discussed issues related to historic districts and property. Rudisill said Kent Sissel had contacted him earlier to report on the project's status. Sissel had reported some reservations about continuing with the project because of family issues, but was continuing to talk to state, federal and local supporters. Sissel had not reported any new completed work.

The signage of historic districts was then discussed.

Reischauer said she would send a thank-you to HNI for its contribution towards the signs. Rudisill said he would provide Reischauer with an MHPC letterhead.

The commission then discussed its failed Historic Resources Development Program grant application to fund four reconnaissance surveys in the community. Reischauer said the commission needed to discuss its options and request the continued support from its funders: Carver Charitable Trust, Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine and Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation.

Reischauer said she favored asking the funders to support formal reconnaissance surveys of Fair Oaks and Colver Street, since they both were restricted developments that were completed about the same time. If all the funding support is not reauthorized, the commission will need to determine the next direction, most likely to completing a reconnaissance survey of just Fair Oaks.

Reischauer then moved to seek approval from the funders to support a reconnaissance survey of Fair Oaks and Colver Street; and if the funders decline, to seek support for just a Fair Oaks reconnaissance survey; Schmidt seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

Reports were then presented.

Reischauer said Muscatine County might be looking again to rid itself of the old sheriff's office. She said Jim Nepple had been working on a contract for tax credits on the building. She said the Friends were seeking to have any tax credit funds go to the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine for future historic preservation of county buildings.

Pettit also reported control of the church at Sixth and Walnut had apparently been transferred to Tom Meeker.

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:30 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Wednesday, August

15, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair

**MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2012
5:15 P.M.
LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – CITY HALL
215 SYCAMORE**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Agenda**
 - b. July 18, 2012 Minutes**
- 3. Election of Officers**
- 4. Certified Local Government (CLG) Activities**
 - a. Historic Property Tax Abatement**
 - b. Comprehensive Plan Update**
 - c. Historic Preservation Ordinance Amendment/Membership**
 - d. Meeting Schedule**
 - e. 2012 Annual Report**
- 5. Property/District Discussions**
 - a. Alexander Clark Heritage District (NRHP Update)**
 - b. Fair Oaks/Colver Street Survey**
 - c. Historic Districts/Properties Report**
- 6. Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Muscatine City HPC**
 - b. Muscatine County HPC**
 - c. Friends of Historic Preservation**
 - d. Others**
- 7. Other Business**

OFFICIAL MINUTES
MUSCATINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
DECEMBER 4, 2012

The Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) met in regular session on Tuesday, December 4, 2012, at 5:15 p.m. in the city council chambers at Muscatine City Hall. Members present included Devin Pettit, Jane Reischauer, Julie Wolf and Jim Schmidt. Others present included Jim Rudisill. Following the roll, the commission reviewed the consent agenda, including the distributed agenda and the minutes of the regular July 18, 2012 meeting. Pettit moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Wolf seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The commission's first business was election of officers for 2012-13. Pettit moved to elect Reischauer as chair; Wolf seconded; motion passed, all ayes. Reischauer moved to elect Pettit as vice-chair; Wolf seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The commission then discussed Certified Local Government (CLG) activities.

The first discussion item was the pending property tax abatement program the city council is considering. Rudisill updated the commission on the latest plan that will be presented to the council by city staff.

It would provide a specific abatement of property taxes to owners of contributing properties located within recognized historic districts in addition to properties individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) around the community. A different schedule of abatement would be offered to non-contributing properties within the historic districts. The specific abatement amounts and schedules have not been determined.

The commission would continue to have a role in the abatement application process, but that responsibility has not yet been determined.

The next CLG discussion issue was an update on the city's comprehensive planning process. Rudisill said he did not have any new information on that and would drop it from the agenda until more specific information was available.

The commission next received an update on the recent modification of the Muscatine Historic Preservation Ordinance. Under the amendment approved by the city council earlier in the year, the commission membership was reduced from seven to five. Commission terms have also been staggered so one commission vacancy would occur each year. In order for the staggered terms to go into effect, the current terms of Reischauer and Pettit would be extended. The final change, although existing city policy already required this, would be that all commission members be residents of Muscatine.

The next issue discussed was the commission's meeting schedule.

Following discussion, Schmidt moved to hold commission meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:15 p.m. in the lower level conference room of city hall; Wolf seconded; motion passed, all ayes.

The final CLG activity discussed was the 2012 Annual Report.

Rudisill advised the commission members the deadline for the report would be February 28, 2013. He requested each commission member provide information on any training they took in 2012 and also a list of any historic properties they noticed had

undergone a substantial amount of alteration or repair in 2012.

The commission next discussed issues related to historic districts and property.

The first issue was the status of the Alexander Clark NRHP Update Nomination. Rudisill said he had not recently heard anything from Kent Sissel. The last contact was several months ago when Sissel said he was still discussing the nomination with state and federal officials. Rudisill said the Historic Resources Development Program (HRDP) grant funding the project would expire in May 2013. He said he was not optimistic the nomination would be completed by then; or even if it will ever be completed.

Rudisill said he would contact Sissel and request an update.

The next issue discussed was the status of the Fair Oaks/Colver Street Reconnaissance Survey Project. Consultant Rebecca McCarley has started some work, but is still finishing up a project in Burlington and would not be devoting more time to the Muscatine surveys until that was over.

In the meantime, she had inquired into the availability of volunteers to work on some property research she said would improve the final survey products. Pettit said he was busy and would be unable to help much. Schmidt said his wife might be available for typing; and he was also willing to help. Schmidt said he would contact McCarley.

Pettit also said he would contact former MHPC member JoAnn Carlson about volunteering.

The final historic property/district discussion focused on the possible loss of the Jefferson School building and the houses across the street the school is purchasing. The school cannot meet current standards and the cost of retrofitting the building would be high. Pettit said his concern was over the future of the houses on Mulberry the school district is acquiring, possibly as parking areas for any future development.

There were no reports presented.

The meeting then adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 5:15 p.m. in the Muscatine City Hall lower level conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair