



CITY OF MUSCATINE
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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FAIR OAKS HISTORIC DISTRICT MOVES FORWARD

Public invited to Sept 24 meeting at Musser Library to discuss Fair Oaks neighborhood

MUSCATINE, Iowa - The process to recognize the historic Fair Oaks neighborhood in Muscatine is nearing completion after a year of research and development. The National Register nomination for the Fair Oaks Historic District will be officially reviewed at the State Nomination Review Committee meeting in October in Des Moines.

In advance of the state meeting, the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission invites any interested residents to a public meeting on the proposed Fair Oaks Historic District to be held on Tuesday, September 24, at 6:30 p.m. in the third floor meeting room at the Musser Public Library (408 E. 2nd Street, Muscatine). Property owners and other interested residents are encouraged to attend to learn more about nominating the potential historic district to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the benefits of owning a property listed on the NRHP. This meeting will serve as an opportunity to answer questions as well as an opportunity to gauge public support for the proposed nomination.

The proposed Fair Oaks Historic District is roughly bounded by Park Avenue, Washington Street, Park Drive, and Hillcrest Avenue. The potential historic district includes 135 properties

on residential blocks within the neighborhood with 232 total resources including 183 contributing resources and 49 non-contributing resources. Additional history on the development of the neighborhood will be presented at the meeting. A map of the proposed historic district will also be available at the meeting.

The City of Muscatine received a Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) grant in June 2018 from the State Historical Society of Iowa to research and develop a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the potential historic district. Project consultant Rebecca Lawin McCarley of SPARK Consulting was then hired in July 2018 to complete the project. This project was a continuation of work started in 2012-13 when the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission worked with McCarley to complete a basic architectural and historical survey of properties in the Fair Oaks neighborhood. Volunteers with the Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission and with Friends of Muscatine Historic Preservation assisted with the research on each of the 135 properties in the neighborhood for the nomination project.

The Fair Oaks Historic District would be the third historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Muscatine. The Downtown Commercial Historic District was listed on the NRHP in 2005, and the West Hill Historic District was listed in 2008. Additionally, a number of individual buildings are listed on the National Register. Buildings listed as contributing within a historic district enjoy the same benefits as buildings individually listed on the National Register. McCarley notes that no additional restrictions are placed on property owners who have buildings listed in a historic district.

All property owners within the proposed historic district have the opportunity to indicate if they support the district nomination prior to the SNRC meeting in October by commenting at the public meeting and/or officially in writing to the State Historic Preservation Office. If recommended for listing at the October SNRC meeting, the nomination will then be forwarded to the National Park Service for formal listing, likely later in 2019.



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After the public meeting at 6:30 on the National Register of Historic Places and the Fair Oaks Historic District, building owners and any other interested residents are encouraged to attend “Historic Tax Credits 101” at 7:30 p.m. to learn more about the financial incentive programs available to building owners of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. McCarley will present information on the state historic tax credit program, federal historic tax credit program, and other financial incentives available to properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

For additional information, contact Rebecca Lawin McCarley at 319-200-9767 or Jodi Royal-Goodwin at 563-262-4141.