



Charles City

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 5:30 pm, 401 North Main St.



Members Present: Chair Carol Frye, Jennifer Thiele, Laura Wallace, Christopher Anthony, Student Advisor Xander Graeser and Commission Secretary Mark Wicks. Also in attendance Mike Bauer and Bob Steenson from the Charles City Press. Not present: Mary Ann Townsend, Michael Barrigan City and representative Phoebe Pittman (ex-officio).

Meeting called to order by Chair Frye at 5:30 p.m. **Motion by Anthony and second by Thiele to approve the agenda. All approved.** Approval of the **Minutes from the November 30, 2021**, Commission meeting was **motioned by Thiele and seconded by Anthony. All approved.**

Public comment period: There were no public comments submitted

Resignation/Commission Openings

The Commission terms of **Anthony** and **Jennifer Lessin** expired on January 1, 2022. Anthony agreed to serve another 3-year term and will be re-appointed by the Mayor and City Council, however Lessin has opted to step down at this time. **Thiele**, whose term expires January 1, 2024, has also submitted her notice of resignation after accepting a new position at the Czech Museum in Cedar Rapids. **Motion by Anthony and second by Wallace to accept Thiele's resignation. All approved.** The Commission thanked both of them for their service and wished Thiele the best of luck in her new adventure.

What this means is we have two seats on the Commission that need to be filled. Wicks explained that is done by the Mayor, but the Commission is encouraged to provide recommendations to him. **Mike Bauer** and **Jason Webster** have both indicated interest, with the Commission fine with both of those suggestions. **Lanny Mincks**, who runs the Facebook page Now & Then was also suggested. Wicks will pass along to the Mayor.

Certified Local Government Annual Report

Each year Charles City has to submit a Certified Local Government (CLG) Annual Report to the State Historic Preservation Office detailing the activities of the Historic Preservation Commission. Wicks distributed copies of the report **draft to the Commission for review**, asking them to double-check their personal information and to let him know any changes or corrections by 4 p.m. on February 24th so he can get it sent to the State before the March 25th deadline. He noted that as part of the CLG requirement we have to make a public presentation to the City Council, which he did at the Feb. 16th Council meeting.

Main Street Bridge

The City Engineer contacted Wicks to let the Commission know there has been some preliminary discussion by the City about **possibly replacing the Main Street Bridge**, which is more than 100 years old. He wanted to make the Commission aware of that and will continue to communicate with us moving forward on any plans involving the bridge since it is on the National Register of Historic Places. Wicks noted replacement of the bridge would take it off the National Register. Frye commented that the railroad bridge that collapsed a couple of years ago was about the same type of construction and age as the Main Street Bridge, so she could understand how it might need to be replaced.

Wildwood Park

There was nothing new to report regarding what the City will do with the **Wildwood Park Clubhouse**, which is badly deteriorating, especially the foundation. The park is on the National Register of Historic Places and any significant alterations or removal of the Clubhouse would jeopardize that listing. We will continue to monitor the situation and stay in communication with the City. Wicks has been in touch with the State Historic Preservation Office and is looking into potential grants the City could tap into for repairs.

Commission Website

Anthony went over changes that he and Wicks had talked about for the **new Charles City Historical Preservation Commission website**. Those include moving the Menu Bar up top, adding a “Resources” tab and links to the State Historic Preservation and Preservation Iowa sites. We also need to re-write the “Save the Depo” section and add the Historic Walking Tour. Anthony said he also needs to finish off the Commission member bios on the site, but he has photos of everyone. He did ask members if they would please look over the site for any grammatical errors or other changes needed.

The site is currently set up on WIX and will soon be ready for a **domain name**. After some discussion the Commission agreed to go with historycharlescity.org. There was also discussion on whether to leave it as a limited free site on Wix or pay to have it hosted and more storage space/options available? ***Motion by Thiele and second by Wallace to go with historycharlescityia.org for the domain name and to purchase the WIX Pro hosting package at \$11.50 per month. All approved.***

Commission Logo

The proposed Commission Logo that Anthony designed was reviewed again with the revisions requested at the previous Commission meeting made. Everyone liked the three colored rings, but there was disagreement over whether or not to have the background inside the center circle and on the banner be sepia or black and white? Frye suggested looking at a version with a white background and another with a light gray background. It was also suggested that we put “Iowa” behind “Charles City” on the banner. ***Anthony will make those changes and bring it back for review again at the next meeting.***

Action Plan on Commission Goals

Wicks handed out copies of an Action Plan developed from the Commission’s earlier goal-setting session and the CLG Report with **suggested action steps and measurable outcomes** as a reminder and way for us to gauge our progress. Commission members agreed with plan as written.

Historic Preservation Awareness Month

May is National Historic Preservation Awareness Month and the Commission began discussing possible things it could do in conjunction with that? Wicks suggested not making any final decisions until the new Commission members are in place so they can be part of the effort. In addition to the usual **Mayoral Proclamation**, suggestions included: having **Graeser talk with the high school software class** to see if they might be willing to help with the **QR code idea**; doing some sort of **historic presentation or trivia at the local brewery** ... possibly Jeff Sisson talking about the lynching or other interesting tidbits; or offering a **series of 4 mini-puzzles** featuring historic scenes or structures. Unique Country Store offers custom-printed puzzles, which Anthony said could be sold as a fundraiser. **Wicks will get example and pricing to discuss next time.**

Other Business

- Wicks passed along **Jeff Sisson’s heart-felt thanks** to the Commission for the surprise presentation and gift of engraved coasters made in December in appreciation for all of his past service and contributions to the Commission.
- Commission members and anyone else interested were made aware that the **2022 Preserve Iowa Summit will be held in nearby Mason City June 2-4**. This is a great opportunity to take advantage of the information, resources and presentations of the annual Summit without having to travel far or stay overnight.

The **next meeting** was set for March 30, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at 401 North Main St.

Being no further business, the **meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m. following a motion by Anthony and second by Thiele. All Approved.**

- Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Wicks