

McGregor Historic Preservation Commission
Monthly Meeting ~ May 13, 2021

The McGregor Historic Preservation Commission met via Zoom and in person at McGregor City Hall. Members attending were City Representative Duane Boelman, Bob Clark, Joseph Brooks, Dave Kneer, Sheila Oberreuter, Maureen Wild, City Council Liaison Rogeta Halverson, Commission Adviser Michelle Pettit, and guest Maria Brummel.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04p.m.

Methodist Church

Visitor Maria Brummel came to the meeting to discuss the importance of the Methodist Church as a historic structure. Her husband has been a church member since 1976. When their children returned for a visit the family discussed potential uses of the building (Uses mentioned included: for conferences, community events and meetings; for family holidays, parties, reunions, and weddings; as a performance center; for community events; for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other organizational meetings.) The church is handicapped accessible on the ground floor; the roof is fairly new. Maria noted that Gary Bowden is a good resource for information about the building.

Joe Brooks stated he contacted the Deputy Supervisor in Des Moines regarding the McGregor Methodist Church. The Deputy Supervisor gave Joe two contact names. Joe emailed both contacts two weeks ago and has not heard back from either of them. Craig Strutt opened the church for Joe to look around inside. Joe said we need to prevent the church from deteriorating. He didn't think there was histoplasmosis danger in the building, however authorities could come in to assess. Joe mentioned the church building would be ideal for conferences and meals could be prepared and served downstairs. He also suggested the church could contain a museum of its history. Joe suggested an association could be set up with a Board of Directors.

Dave Kneer said the Methodist Church should be nominated as one of Iowa's Most Endangered Properties. Duane Boelman stated for the current year nominations are closed. (Nominations for next year are due by December 7, 2021) Michelle suggested possibly doing a petition showing people locally support saving the church building. Members discussed about finding out who the contact is for purchasing the Giard Methodist Church. Knowing who that is may provide a way to get an answer about purchasing the McGregor Methodist Church.

Previous Minutes

Dave motioned, Joe seconded to approve the minutes of 11/12/2020 and 04/09/2021. Approved.

Welcome Sheila Oberreuter

The commission welcomed new member Sheila Oberreuter. Sheila is a museum technician at Effigy Mounds National Monument, and an archaeologist by training.

Commission Officers

Duane brought up the need to appoint a president and review commission officers. He noted that according to the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa (SHPO) that he cannot serve as president. Duane will check with SHPO regarding requirements on officers and review the resolution. This will be on our next month's agenda.

Preservation Month and 175th Anniversary Activities

Joe, Duane, Michelle and Joan met and discussed activities. Duane provided a summary from the meeting including activities planned as well as those still in planning stages, beginning with Mayor Troester's Proclamation that was made last month. The subcommittee will have another meeting. Maureen said she'd like to join the subcommittee.

Hardware Store and Alexander Hotel

Duane announced that Jenifer Collins Westphal and her husband Jeff, daughter and son-in-law of longtime residents Herb Collins and Joanne (Collins) Stewart, purchased the Hardware Store (former Sullivan Opera House) and the Alexander Hotel. They are gifting the buildings to a new non-profit that is being set up. Plans are for the first floor of the Hardware Store to be used for the McGregor Historical Museum. The hotel will likely still function as a hotel after work is done on it.

Preserve Iowa Summit

Duane mentioned there will be permanent links to the Preserve Iowa Summit. Everyone registered can watch the clips at any time. A majority of commission members are already registered.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15p.m.

Michelle Pettit, Secretary