

DIXON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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Minutes of the Commission meeting of November 18, 2013

1. Call to order. The meeting was called to order in the Community Room of the Public Safety Building at 135p.

Secretary's note: This meeting was held away from Council Chambers due to the unavailability of said Chambers, as well as the availability of digital projection equipment. In the humble opinion of the Secretary, the equipment setup is among the best that Dixon has to offer. Thanks to Lieutenant Sibley for his assistance in the use of the equipment.

2. Roll call. Commissioners present were Linda Brantley, James Higby, Greg Langan, and Duane Paulsen. Commissioner John McLane was absent. Also in attendance were James Burke, Mayor of Dixon; Josh Albrecht, Dixon Main Street; Colleen Brechon, Dixon City Commissioner; David Nord, Dixon's new City Administrator; Pat Gorman, President of Lee County Historical Society; Scott Brown, Project Manager, Wendler Engineering Services; Jeff Reis and Geoff Smith, Engineers, Willett, Hofmann & Associates; and Matt Mencarini, Reporter, Sauk Valley Media.

3. Approval of minutes. Minutes of the meeting of April 8, 2013 have been distributed electronically, and printed copies have been distributed to all persons present at today's meeting. **Greg Langan moved, and Linda Brantley seconded, that the minutes be approved as printed and read. Voting Aye: Brantley, Higby, Langan, and Paulsen. Voting Nay: None. Motion carried.**

4. Notices and communications.

Several items were included in the Commissioners' meeting agenda packet:

- a. a report on City Council action since our last meeting; Council had approved the Commission's request that Officer term limits be removed.
- b. a panel from the Dorochoff survey pertinent to property at 318 West First Street; an application for façade modification may be forthcoming. Several Commissioners have made a preliminary site visit and discussed some of the details. Commission Chair John McLane will contact the property owners and advise them of related architectural issues, as well as the making of a proper application.
- c. Secretary Higby reported some continuing problems with the Commission's email account and asked Mayor Burke to find out if the Commission is required by the Illinois Open Meetings Act to use a City email client, or if it is allowed to use a private account. City Administrator Nord added that he would inquire of Allen Philhower, the City's IT person, as to what might be done to resolve the issues.

5. Public comment. There were no comments by the public.

6. Old business.

- a. Commissioners commented on the progress of renovations at 216 West First Street. Commissioner Langan gave a positive evaluation of what has been accomplished with the second story windows and the steps leading into the building from First Street.
- b. Commissioners commented favorably on their presentation at the May 15, 2013 "Lunch and Learn"

which was held at the Post House. Again, Commissioner Langan was pleased that the task of presenting our mission was divided up among them, each Commissioner presenting one aspect of what we do. The Commission has made several contacts with property owners and is advised to continue in its pursuit of increased public awareness.

7. New business.

- a. **Greg Langan moved, and Duane Paulsen seconded, that the present Commission Officers - John McLane, Chair; Duane Paulsen, Vice-Chair; and James Higby, Secretary - be re-elected to those respective offices. Voting aye: Langan, Paulsen, Brantley, and Higby. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.**
- b. Although it was not formally moved, due to the absence of John McLane, his scheduled presentation on a possible project titled "City Map for Self-Guided Tour of Dixon Historic Buildings was tabled *de facto*.
- c. Commissioners were treated to a fine Power Point presentation and discussion of the forthcoming Streetscaping project by Scott Brown and Jeff Smith. Commissioners were each given a folio-sized aerial view of Downtown Dixon, with the areas each engineering firm would supervise highlighted in color. Brown and Smith are enthusiastic about the project, and the Commissioners, as well as others who were present, obviously share their enthusiasm. They promise that disruption to the downtown business and traffic flow will be kept to a minimum. The Commission understands that it will play a significant role in the planning of the project.
- d. James Higby, a volunteer with Lee County Historical Society, as well as being a member of the Commission, gave an abbreviated presentation on the topic of Sanborn Maps. Higby shared digitally projected images of three of the map sheets from the July, 1885 visit to Dixon by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. Attendees were able to thereby take a virtual tour of Downtown Dixon, first west of Galena Avenue, then east of Galena. It is remarkable how many businesses and how much activity there was in a Dixon which, according to the cover sheet, sported a population of 4800. Information available on the Sanborn maps includes the size, orientation, construction, use, and occupation of many of the buildings. The Commission will likely draw upon that information in its recommendations of the location of, and information presented on, historical markers.

- 8. Adjournment. Linda Brantley moved, and James Higby seconded, a motion to adjourn.** Due to the lateness of the hour, as well as other pending obligations of several of the attendees, no formal vote to adjourn was taken. Nevertheless, Vice-Chair Paulsen declared the meeting adjourned at 350p.

Respectfully submitted by James Higby, Secretary
Dixon Historic Preservation Commission