

**CITY OF NEWPORT
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MAY 11, 2016
REGULAR MEETING**

The May 11, 2016 regular meeting of the Newport Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) was called to order by Chairperson Linda Michie at 5:05 p.m. in the council chamber of the Newport City Hall. This was the commission's annual meeting (postponed from January 13, 2016.)

Roll Call

The following members were present: Linda Michie (chair), Fred Leimbeck, and Mary Ann Newman.

Members JoAnn Bailey and Beverly Bartl were absent (excused).

Also present: Bill Sumner (council liaison) and Robert Vogel (consultant).

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the March 9, 2016 regular meeting (the commission's annual meeting) were reviewed and approved as mailed.

CLG grant application

Consultant Vogel reported that the city had been awarded a \$6000 Certified Local Government grant for revising the comprehensive heritage preservation plan. The project will be carried out between October, 2016 and July, 2017.

Red Rock Saloon sign

Consultant Vogel provided the commission with the preliminary results of his evaluation of the historic preservation value of the neon sign located on the roof of the Opinion Brewing Co., 374 21st Street. Vogel stated that the present building was constructed in 1955 as the replacement for original Red Rock Country Club, which had been destroyed by a fire. The preservation value of the existing building and the rooftop neon sign are the product of their historical association with the Red Rock Country Club, the forerunner of the Red Rock Saloon, which was established in 1942. As such, the sign and the building reflect the broad pattern of historical development of the Red Rock commercial district and the social life of the neighborhood. The building is also noteworthy as one of the oldest commercial structures still standing in the Red Rock district. The neon sign is a familiar community landmark and represents a rare preserved specimen of mid-1950s vintage outdoor advertising. More research is needed to better document the Red Rock Country Club/Red Rock Saloon and the physical history of the neon sign. Staff will also reach out to the State Historic Preservation Office for their input on the property's National

Register eligibility.

Mill Pond site

There was discussion of the disposition of the city-owned lots recently acquired from the Johnson estate, including the site of the old Loren Johnson house at 331 7th Street. The possibility of relocating a historic house (the Hill-Gibson House) from Cottage Grove onto one of the lots was also discussed. The city has proposed to market three of the Johnson lots for residential development while retaining the remainder of the Johnson property for conservancy open space. No action was taken.

2016 goals and objectives

A motion was made by Newman, seconded by Leimbeck, to adopt the following goals and objectives for 2016:

1. Sponsor public education activities for Preservation Month (May).
2. Sponsor public education activities for Pioneer Day (August).
3. Sponsor bi-monthly public history lectures at the Newport Library and Community Center.
4. Nominate properties for designation as Newport Heritage Landmarks.
5. Provide city officials and the public with information, education and training in historic preservation.
6. Revise and update the Newport heritage resources inventory.
7. Update and expand the historic preservation content on the city's website.
8. Work with the Park Board and other stakeholders to develop long-range plans for public use of the historic Mill Pond site.

The motion passed unanimously, with all voting in favor.

Haugen Award

Chairperson Michie and Consultant Vogel advised the commission that because no nominations had been received, they were recommending that the Betty Haugen Memorial Heritage Preservation Award not be given out in 2016.

Preservation training workshop

There was discussion of the need to provide city officials, including members of other advisory commissions and the city staff, with training in historic preservation. The consensus of the commission was to offer a training workshop during Preservation Month in 2017.

Preservation services for property owners

There was discussion of ways for the HPC to provide the owners of historic buildings with information and technical assistance. Commission members suggested an informational workshop or open house at the library. There was also agreement that an expanded presence on the city website would also be beneficial.

Miscellaneous updates

Newman provided an update on the work accomplished at recent meetings of the Red Rock Corridor Commission and the Washington County historic courthouse advisory committee.

Chairperson Michie reported on recent activities involving the Friends of Historic Fort Snelling, including plans for the new visitor center and celebration of the fort's bicentennial (1820-2020).

Councilman Sumner noted that the Dairy Girl Network's national convention convention would take place in Minneapolis (November 1-3, 2016). The Network supports women in the dairy industry and might be interested in learning more about Newport resident Lucy Keeny Irish (born 1811, died 1894), Minnesota's pioneer dairywoman. Consultant Vogel will reach out to the Dairy Girl Network.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert C. Vogel, Preservation Planning Consultant