



**CITY HALL**  
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March 4, 2015

Heritage Preservation Commissioners  
Winona, Minnesota 55987

Dear Commissioner:

The next meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission will be held on **Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room** of the Winona City Hall.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Minutes – February 11, 2015**
3. **Discussion – Education Program – Greg Gaut (Attached)**
4. **Other Business**
5. **Adjournment**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark K. Moeller".

Mark K. Moeller  
City Planner

## HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

**DATE:** February 11, 2015

**TIME:** 4:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Lynn Englund, Merle Hanson, Andy Bloedorn, Carolyn Larson, Wes Hamilton, and Kendall Larson

**ABSENT:** Mary Edel Beyer, Preston Lawing, and Erik Floan

**STAFF PRESENT:** Mark Moeller, City Planner and Myron White, Development Coordinator

**GUESTS:** Greg Gaut and Michael Koop

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### Call to Order

Chairperson Lynn Englund called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Andy Bloedorn made a motion to approve the minutes from January 14, 2015, and the motion was seconded by Wes Hamilton.

Merle Hanson made a motion and Wes Hamilton seconded to approve minutes from the December 10, 2014, October 22, 2014 and September 25, 2014 meetings with all members present voting aye.

### Continued Discussion-Preservation Education Plan Development

Lynn Englund referenced communications from Greg Gaut included in the packet which included information on grants for an improved web presence and information on the Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP).

Andy Bloedorn thought that improvements to the web site should be the top priority. He also thought outreach to property owners was critical at this juncture.

Kendall Larson thought the idea of a CAMP would be a good idea.

Mark Moeller mentioned that he had initiated membership to the National Alliance for Historic Preservation (which we had talked about during the January meeting).

Wes Hamilton talked about his interest in community outreach ideas and the importance of "localizing" historic preservation. He suggested assembling a program to tell stories to present to schools, service clubs, etc.

Mark Moeller suggested HBC might be a venue as well.

Merle Hanson expressed interest in outreach presentations.

Lynn Englund brought up the historic survey information and asked about its usefulness.

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Mark Moeller said he would make sure members got copies but cautioned that the survey information was 20 years old and there would be other historic properties that could be surveyed. He explained the last survey was done over a period of three years.

Lynn Englund mentioned that the Commission should seek to nominate historic sites and mentioned the building across the street from Kendall Lumber.

Mark Moeller stated that building was scheduled to be demolished by its owner.

Wes Hamilton asked if the HPC could intervene.

Mark Moeller questioned if there is a viable use for the structure, and mentioned that the City also had an Architectural Review Board.

Kendall asked to explore the Architectural Review Board and its mission and explore ways in which the HPC might provide input.

Kendall Larson asked if funding for web site improvements and CAMP would be different grant applications.

Mark Moeller replied that we could apply for both Legacy and CLG funding and that the Legacy grant had more flexibility in terms of timing.

Chairperson Englund asked for consensus with regard for the next steps.

Kendall Larson replied that both the web site and the CAMP should be priorities with the web site being the top priority.

Wes Hamilton wanted input on how the Commissioners might help.

Chairperson Englund asked for volunteers for sub-committees:

Web site development: Andy, Kendall  
Outreach: Wes  
Communication: Lynn and Carolyn

Wes Hamilton exclaimed that the HPC "Needs Energy".

**Next Meeting Scheduled: 4:00 P.M. Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>.**

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Carolyn Larson and seconded by Wes Hamilton to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with all present voting aye.

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Myron White  
Development Coordinator



Greg Gaut

Historic Preservation Consultant

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March 4, 2015

Dear HPC members,

I look forward to being with you again at your March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. I would like us to look both backward and forward at the meeting.

**First**, as promised, I have prepared for you a **timeline of Winona's preservation history** and I would like to start with a brief discussion of it.

I have traced the story back to 1956 even though the city did not create the HPC until 1989. It is crucial that every member of the HPC have some sense of the story of preservation in Winona, both its successes and setbacks (there are plenty of both!). Although I have been personally involved since 2000, and wrote two *Minnesota History* articles with Marsh Neff about earlier parts of Winona's preservation history, assembling these highlights in one place was a revelation to me. In any case, this is a small effort to fight the common problem of institutional amnesia.

**Second**, the time has come to move from brainstorming to concrete planning for the future, and I understand you started that process at the February meeting.

I would like you to review the **draft mission statement** to see it continues to state your evolving priorities. Then we need to have a discussion focused on developing a **consensus about your key priorities** for the next year or two. We need to talk concretely. What audiences are most important to reach? What formats should we choose? Who will do the work and how will be fund it?

By the way, I understand that you talked about forming **subcommittees** at the last meeting. This is an excellent idea. Small working groups with specific tasks and a responsibility to report back to the commission each month are a good way to get things done.

**Also, keep in mind our potential collaboration** partners as we go into the planning stage.

See you on Wednesday,

Greg

# History of the Preservation Movement in Winona

## Some highlights

*This timeline presents some highlights of Winona preservation history. Not all buildings which have been listed on the National Register are mentioned but I have tried to include all of the Heritage Preservation Commission's designations of local historic landmarks. It is always difficult to know when to start, but the events of 1956 seemed to spark the beginning of a preservation ethic in Winona. Remarkably, this was a decade before the National Historic Preservation Act.*

*Greg Gaut (March 2015)*

### 1950s

- Sept 1956 In response to a federal plan to upgrade the Post Office, the Chamber of Commerce begins a campaign to demolish the Post Office (1891) and County Courthouse (1889) and replace them with a modern building in Central Park.
- Oct 1956 Winona County Historical Society publishes an open letter in the *Winona Daily News* opposing the destruction of the post office. S. J. Krysko, representing the Chamber, publishes a reply.
- Feb 1957 In a straw ballot at a Chamber luncheon, 80 local business leaders endorse the Chamber's campaign. There is one "no" vote: Dr. Lewis Younger, WCHS president.
- Mar 1958 Led by the Chamber, forty local organizations vote to ask Sen Humphrey and other federal officials to support a new post office in Central Park. Writing as an individual, Lewis Younger publishes an impassioned letter "to fellow citizens" asking them to help preserve the Post Office and Central Park.
- Apr 1958 Federal authorities reverse course and announce support for a new post office.
- Nov 1958 Meanwhile, the county board puts a \$1 million bond referendum on the ballot to fund the building of a new courthouse. It is defeated with a 57% no vote.

### 1960s

- July 1960 City Council votes to approve the use of Central Park as site of new post office. When the city attorney advises that the city cannot sell a park which was part of the original plat of the city, they invite the federal government to use its power of eminent domain to "condemn" the park and reimburse the city for the loss of it.
- Nov 1960 The county board puts a \$1.1 million bond on the ballot to fund the building of a new courthouse. This second referendum is also defeated.

- July 1961 Committee to Save Central Park publishes full page ads in *Winona Daily News* with names of prominent Winonans who oppose the plan to build a new post office in Central Park.
- Sept 1962 On the day before a contractor began felling trees in Central Park to clear the way for the new post office, someone stables reprints of a *Readers Digest* article lamenting the loss of public parks and counselling public vigilance and resistance.
- Sept 1963 The new post office is dedicated.
- Oct 1963 The old post office is demolished; Northwest Banks builds the present building on the site. Today it is the Winona County Government Center.
- Spring 1967 WCHS publishes a booklet by William Wesley Peters, a leading Taliesen architect, calling for preservation of Winona's downtown especially the courthouse.
- Sept 1967 The county board puts \$1.3 million bond on the ballot to fund a new courthouse. There is intense campaigning on both sides of the issue. This third referendum is also defeated, but by a very small margin.

### 1970s

- Spring 1970 The county board decides to move forward with a new courthouse from existing funds without another bond referendum.
- Sept 1970 The Winona County Progress and Preservation Association (WCPPA), a new organization representing people of various ages and backgrounds but publically led by people in their 20s like Greg Bambenek, Pat Frisby and Ed Maus, begins a new campaign to save the courthouse. Among other things, they record a 45 rpm single entitled "Save the Lady."
- Dec 1970 Minnesota Historical Society expedites the listing of the courthouse on the National Register in an effort to help preserve it. It is the first Minnesota courthouse to be listed.
- 1971 As part of an "urban renewal" initiative, the Morgan Block (bounded by Center, Main, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) is razed.
- Jan 1971 WCPPA sues the county in Winona District Court attempting to stop the opening of contractor bids for the new courthouse. The suit fails.
- Jan 1971 The *Winona Daily News*, which had editorialized in favor of the Chamber's plan from the beginning, changes sides and supports renovation of the courthouse.

- Mar 1971 WCPA publishes a two page center fold ad in the *Winona Daily News* listing 1100 citizens opposed to a new courthouse.
- Dec 1971 In a major reversal, the county board puts a fourth bond measure on the ballot, this time to renovate the existing courthouse. To the surprise of activists on both sides of the issue, it passes with a 60% “yes” vote.
- 1974 As part of an “urban renewal” initiative, the Latsch Block (north of 2<sup>nd</sup> between Center and Main) is razed.
- 1974 The courthouse renovation is completed. The interior was gutted. Five floors of useable space are created where previously there had been two.
- 1976 As part of an “urban renewal” initiative, the Steak Shop Block (bounded by Johnson, Main, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) is razed.

### 1980s

- 1980 Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Depot, 2<sup>nd</sup> and Huff, razed.
- 1981 The steamboat *James P. Pearson* (the *Julius C. Wilkie*), which had been listed on the National Register, is destroyed by arson
- May 1985 After a series of studies, reports, and discussions about overcrowding at the library going back to 1977, the City Council votes to put a \$3.7 million bond referendum before the voters. The plan is to build a new library at the NE corner of Riverside and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. A Reuse Committee is appointed to consider the future of the 1899 library in the event the bond passes. The library had been placed on the National Register in 1977.
- Nov 1985 The bond is overwhelmingly defeated. The city council then moved on to consider expansion plans for the library, finally completed in 1989.
- May 1986 City Council votes for a Heritage Preservation Ordinance and refers the matter to the Planning Commission to work out the details. This begins a three year process in which no consensus can be reached on the Planning Commission about whether to include non-voluntary designations of historic landmarks. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) advises that they will not approve Certified Local Government status if designation is voluntary. Eventually the Planning Commission reports back a draft ordinance with mandatory designations and various procedural safeguards.
- 1988 Rockledge, the E. L. King House in Homer, is demolished. It had been listed on the National Register. The owners chose to raze it.
- 1988 The Stockton Mill, also on the National Register, is destroyed by arson.

May 1989 City council adopts the Heritage Preservation Ordinance creating the Heritage Preservation Commission. Mark Peterson is the first chair.

### 1990s

1990 Winona Opera House razed.

1991 Kresge Block razed.

1991 The HPC hires Gemini Research to prepare the *Winona Historic Contexts* report.

1991 SHPO prepares the nomination of the East Second Street Commercial Historic District to the National Register. It is listed January 25, 1991.

1992 The HPC hires Hess Roise & Co to prepare the *Historic Resources Survey of Central Portion of City of Winona* report.

1993 The HPC hires Hess Roise & Co to prepare the *Historic Resources Survey of - Eastern Portion of City of Winona* report.

1994 The HPC hires Hess Roise & Co to prepare *Historic Resources Survey of Western Portion of City of Winona* report.

1994 The HPC hires the consultant Barbara Kooiman from La Crosse to prepare the local designations of both a Windom Park Local Historic District and a Third Street Commercial Historic District.

1995 The HPC decides to move forward with the local designation of both districts.

1996 In the face of considerable public opposition expressed at a series of public hearings, the HPC decides to suspend consideration of the two districts.

1998 The SHPO prepares the nomination of the Winona Commercial Historic District (3<sup>rd</sup> Street) to National Register. It is listed on October 1, 1998.

1999 The HPC hires Hess Roise and Co. to prepare the National Register nomination for the Winona City Hall. It is listed on July 8, 1999.

### 2000s

Sept 2000 On Labor Day weekend, the courthouse floods when the suspended ceiling on the fourth floor fails and pulls down the sprinkler system. The *Winona Daily News*, the county administrator, and others argue for demolition of the water logged building. At the request of WCHS, State Historic Architect Charles Nelson leads a reuse study which recommends rehabilitation of the building.

- Oct 2000 The HPC holds a public forum attended by the county commissioners. A full house hears 25 citizens speak in favor renovating the courthouse.
- Feb 2001 The county commissioners hire a mediator to facilitate their tendentious debate about the future of the courthouse. In the end, they vote to renovate.
- Oct 2003 The renovated courthouse is rededicated.
- 2003 The developer Metroplains hires Hess Roise & Co. to prepare the National Register nominations for the Winona High School and Winona Middle School at 166 and 218 Broadway. This was done to achieve rehabilitation tax credits to finance the remodeling of the buildings as the Washington Crossing apartments. They are listed on January 2, 2004.
- 2004 The Winona HPC hires Dan Hoisington to prepare the local designations of a number of private residences:
- Peter Hallenbeck House, 376 W. Fifth
  - Ernest and Emma Breitlow House, 357 W. Wabasha
  - Leslie L. Brown House, 319 W. Wabasha
  - George and Elizabeth Whitman House, 351 W. Wabasha
  - Charles and Grace Youmans House, 227 Wilson
  - Fred and Frances Bell House, 255 Harriet
  - Emma Ball House, 409 W. Broadway
  - Conrad Bohn House, 420 Main Street
  - Hartmann House, 423 E. Fourth Street
  - East Side Fire Station, 601 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street
- 2004 Watkins Products acts to have its headquarter building at 150 Liberty Street listed on the National Register. It is listed December 4, 2004.
- 2006 The HPC hires Dan Hoisington to prepare the local designations of the following:
- Paul Watkins House, 175 E. Wabasha
  - Huff Lamberton House, 211 Huff
- April 2006 Merchants Bank announces its intention to raze eight storefronts adjacent to its 3<sup>rd</sup> street bank, all within the National Register Historic District, to enlarge its parking lot. The SHPO, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, and the HPC all oppose the plan. The *Winona Daily News* and the Chamber support it. The bank demolishes the buildings and replaces them with signage telling their stories.
- June 2006 Arson destroys the C.C. Beck House, an 1876 Italianate mansion on the Saint Mary's University campus. After Beck, Bishop Heffron led the Winona Diocese from this house. Later it became a university building. The fire ended a ten year campaign by students, faculty, staff and alumni to preserve the building.

- May 2006 The HPC holds a public forum on historic preservation in downtown Winona.
- 2007 The HPC hires Daniel Hoisington to prepare the local designation of the Downtown Historic District (including the properties in both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street National Register districts). The designation is completed with little dissent. Hoisington also prepares the *Historic District Design Guidelines*.
- 2009 In response to the school board's interest in closing one or more elementary schools in Winona, the HPC hires Dan Hoisington to evaluate four historic schools for eligibility for the National Register. This provokes a controversy.

### 2010s

- 2011 The East Second Street Commercial District is amended by Dan Hoisington to include the eastern half of the Winona & St. Peter Freight House.
- 2011 Hired by MDOT pursuant to Sec 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Landscape Research (Amy Lucas and Carol Zellie) complete a massive study of the area impacted by the proposed new interstate bridge. The report evaluates over 200 properties for historic significance and makes many recommendations. In particular, the consultants recommend the nomination of a Broadway Residential Historic District for the National Register. This work is a significant cache of research on central Winona.
- 2012 The HPC hires Landscape Research (Amy Lucas and Carol Zellie) to prepare the National Register nominations for Central, W-K, Madison, and Jefferson Elementary Schools. Members of the school board object, but eventually acquiesce. The four schools are listed on March 6, 2012.
- 2012 The HPC hires Greg Gaut to prepare the National Register nomination for the Milwaukee Road depot (currently the Amtrak Station). It is listed May 28, 2013.
- 2012 At the request of the homeowners, the HPC hires Greg Gaut to prepare the local designation of the Abner Hodgins House, 275 Harriet.
- 2013 Winona State University hires Greg Gaut to prepare the National Register nomination of College Hall (Somsen) and the Model School Building (Phelps Hall). They are listed on December 12, 2013.
- 2014 The HPC hires Greg Gaut complete the National Register nomination of the Laird Norton Co. Building at 5<sup>th</sup> and Johnson. It is listed on July 11, 2014.