

FERGUS FALLS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 2, 2022

The Fergus Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 12:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Members present were: Chair Chris Schuelke, Ed Strand, Tom Hintgen, and R.C. Drews. Absent were Gordon Hydukovich and Lois Josefson. Staff present were Karin Flom, Klara Beck, and Jill Hanson.

Declare Quorum / Open Meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM

Approval of Minutes

Chair Chris Schuelke opened a discussion of the minutes from December 1, 2021. It was moved by Ed Strand and seconded by Tom Hintgen to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously.

Update on HPC Sponsored Tour for Fergus Falls 150th Anniversary Celebration

Chair Schuelke handed out a list of the events and activities scheduled for the Fergus Falls 150th Anniversary Celebration. Chair Schuelke explained that the bus tour will take place on May 14, 2022. Chair Schuelke proposed a shortened tour. Instead of being an all-day tour there would be one morning tour and one afternoon tour. This way there would not be a need to do a box lunch. The HPC members felt the shorter tours would be better. Chair Schuelke stated that the 150th Committee found a double decker bus to rent. Members provided suggestions to Chair Schuelke on who to contact regarding a driver.

The HPC discussed the expenses related to the tour (\$45/hour for the bus) and the potential cost of the tour (a nominal fee, perhaps \$10). HPC discussed the need to have people register and pay in advance. City staff said they could assist with the registration process.

Staff Liaison Change & Introduction

Chair Schuelke explained that Karin Flom, City Planner, would be the new staff liaison for the HPC. Klara Beck stated that she would still attend meetings. Chair Schuelke thanked Klara for her work.

Term Limits

Staff distributed a handout about members' terms. One seat is vacant and three other terms expired on December 31, 2021. City staff clarified for members that the HPC ordinance says terms are for two years but there is nothing official about term limits. Chair Schuelke mentioned that Jona Brown is interested in the vacant seat. Staff stated that the appointments are recommended by the Mayor. If members would like to recommend someone to the mayor, they can either contact him directly or staff can pass on recommendations on their behalf. Klara mentioned that she hoped that the 150th celebration would create interest in serving on the HPC. The HPC wanted to recommend reappointment of the three members whose terms expired on December 31, 2021.

2022 Priorities: Downtown Historic District Designation, Design Guidelines, Local Historic Designations

Chair Schuelke discussed three priorities for the HPC in 2022:

(1) The Downtown Riverfront Council is interested in pursuing a historic district designation for downtown. The next step would be to get a quote from Ralph Anderson to work on the application.

(2) Karin explained the proposed design guidelines priority. If the downtown is designated as a historic district, design guidelines could support the historic preservation goals. She explained that design guidelines could be voluntary or mandatory. Klara mentioned that City staff could prepare guides for business owners that could give them ideas when they are thinking about exterior updates.

(3) Regarding local historic designations, Chair Schuelke suggested HPC and staff work with Michael Koop/SHPO to better understand the required process. The HPC discussed communicating small-community concerns to SHPO like not being able to pay for the preparation of in-depth applications about properties for local designations. It was mentioned that the HPC could think about a few properties to propose for local designation and send them to SHPO first to get their feedback.

Staff Updates

Karin Flom updated the HPC that Craig Gantner was previously the Planning Commission's ex-officio but a new liaison would be selected at the February Planning Commission meeting

Chair Schuelke mentioned that 150th Anniversary Memorial Coins have been created. R.C. Drews showed the HPC a sample of the coins. Some coins will be part of a give-away with the remainder being available for purchase by the public.

The meeting adjourned at 12:48 PM.

Next regular meeting will be March 2, 2022 at noon.


Chair

FERGUS FALLS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 6, 2022

The Fergus Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 12:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Members present were: Chair Chris Schuelke, Ed Strand, Tom Hintgen, Gordon Hydukovich, Jona Brown, Lois Josefson, R.C. Drews, and Nate Kunde (ex-officio). Staff present were Karin Flom, Klara Beck, and Jill Hanson.

Declare Quorum / Open Meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Chris Schuelke opened a discussion of the minutes from February 2, 2022. It was moved by Tom Hintgen and seconded by Ed Strand to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously.

Introductions were done for Jona Brown and Nate Kunde.

Update on HPC Sponsored Tour for Fergus Falls 150th Anniversary Celebration

Chair Schuelke explained that the HPC bus tour would take place on May 14, 2022 with one morning tour and one afternoon tour. Chair Schuelke mentioned that with the help of Councilmen Hicks we were able to rent the historic double decker bus from Wahpeton. Matt Anderson will be the driver for the bus, and he will bring the bus to Fergus Falls the day before the tour. There was some discussion about the height of the bus being 13' 6" but that should not be a problem because of the tour route.

Chair Schuelke stated that the morning tour would run from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and the afternoon tour would run from 12:45 PM to 5:00 PM. The tours would start on the RTC grounds in front of the Tower and end at the same location. Chair Schuelke listed the sites on the tour: State Hospital, Hillcrest, Mason House, Brown House, Mason House, Barrow's House, Courthouse, City Hall, Federal Building, River Inn, NP Depot, Honeycutt House, Clement House, Wright House, Kaddatz Hotel, Red River Mill, and Barnard Mortuary. Chair Schuelke explained that most of the sites are on the national register and the others are historic properties.

There was some discussion about per registration for the tour and how the City could assist with the process. Karin Flom explained how the City would work with a third party to do the registration and there is a fee charged by the third party. The City needs to know how the HPC wants to handle the fee. The options are charging a higher price for the tour tickets to cover the fee, or the City absorbs the cost of the fees for the tour. Karin stated that based on the suggested price of tickets at \$20 each the fees would be \$1.72 per ticket. Chair Schuelke stated that the expenses related to the tour is \$45/hour for the bus, and the bus holds around 55 passengers. Based on that the HPC thought they would charge \$20 per ticket and have the fees offset against the price per ticket. It was noted that the tours would take place rain, shine, or snow.

There was some discussion about the upper level of the bus versus the lower level for the tour, and determining which level a rider would get. R.C. Drew mentioned charging a higher fee to ride on the upper level. It was suggested a fee of \$25 could be charged for the upper level and \$20 for the lower level. Lois Josefson stated we need to look at the audio system on the bus to make sure the upper level would be able to hear the audio for the tour before we look at increasing the ticket price for that level. Chair Schuelke was going to look into the audio system for the bus and see if the HPC needed to come up with a different audio option.

Downtown Historic District Designation

Chair Schuelke explained that the Downtown Riverfront Council is interested in pursuing a historic district designation for downtown. The next step would be to get a quote from Ralph Anderson to work on the application. Karin explained that Chair Schuelke, Klara, and she have spoken to Ralph Anderson about the historic district survey. Ralph Anderson had some question about the boundary for the historic downtown district. Karin stated that we need a boundary for Ralph so he can determine a price for the survey of a historic district. It was felt that with the support of the Downtown Riverfront Council this would be a good time to retry establishing historic district designation for the downtown. Lois Josefson asked about the boundaries and the criteria for the district.

There was some discussion about the cost, and Karin mentioned that SHPO is opening a second round of grants, and staff could follow up on this if the HPC wished. There was some discussion about a match, it was noted that the match would not have to be cash it could be an in-kind match.

2021 Local Historic Designations Update

Chair Schuelke stated that staff is working with Michael Koop/SHPO to better understand the required process for local historic designations. Karin Flom summarized the SHPO process and how our recent local designations were not approved by SHPO. Karin stated that SHPO gave us some explains of what they are looking for and how they are looking for a lot more detail on our local designation applications. Karin explained that the NP Depot had a National Registration and that information could be used for our local designation. Lois stated that she felt that the local designation should not require the same level backup as the national registration, and we should try talking to SHPO again. Chair Schuelke mentioned that the SHPO office is currently shorthanded with the unexpected passing of Dennis Gardener. There was some discussion about looking at the notes we received from SHPO on the original local registrations that were rejected to see what needs to be corrected.

150th Anniversary Events

There was some discussion about the skit for the commemorative Fergus Falls 150th City Council Meeting. Also, the Coffee Klatch that the OTCHS is doing. Chair Schuelke mentioned that this Friday morning's Coffee Klutch would have a presentation by David Nycklemoe.

Chair Schuelke mentioned that if anyone is interested in a list of special events and community celebrations for the 150th anniversary, they could visit: www.FergusFalls150.com

The meeting adjourned at 12:44 PM.

Next regular meeting will be May 4, 2022 at noon.



Chair

FERGUS FALLS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 4, 2022

The Fergus Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, May 4, 2022, at 9:00 AM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Members present were: Chair Chris Schuelke, Tom Hintgen, Lois Josefson, R.C. Drews, and Jona Brown. Absent were Ed Strand, Gordon Hydukovich and Nate Kunde (ex-officio). Staff present were Karin Flom and Jill Hanson.

Declare Quorum / Open Meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Chris Schuelke opened a discussion of the minutes from April 6, 2022. It was moved by Tom Hintgen and seconded by Jona Brown to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously.

CLG Grant Application - Downtown Historic District

Karin Flom explained how the HPC has been exploring a downtown historic district. The next step would be to evaluate the properties downtown to determine if a historic district is present. Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has opened a second round of grants for Certified Local Governments (CLG). The CLG funds could be used to do this evaluation.

The HPC reviewed and discussed some maps of options for the evaluation area. Lois Josefson stated that she felt because the HPC has already done historical studies on this area we should not need to do an evaluation of the downtown historic district. There was some discussion about the differences between a local and national historic district designation, what the nomination process is for the National Register, and whether or not a community could appeal a SHPO's decision to the National Register. It was suggested that the HPC could speak Jordan Rasmusson our District Representative on concerns about the number of steps and costs associated with the local historic designation process.

Chair Schuelke stated that if the HPC would like staff to apply for the grant they should make that recommendation today so it could be presented to the City Council at their next meeting. The HPC supported using the map that covered a larger area of the downtown included as "Option B" in the packet.

A motion was made by Tom Hintgen to recommend the City Council authorize staff to submit a Certified Local Government grant application to the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office for the purposes of evaluating the downtown as a potential historic district. It was seconded by Jona Brown. Passed unanimously.

Update on HPC Sponsored Tour for Fergus Falls 150th Anniversary Celebration

Chair Schuelke stated that the HPC bus tour would take place on May 14, 2022 with one morning tour and one afternoon tour. Chair Schuelke mentioned that both tours were fully booked, and there are some people on the waiting list.

Chair Schuelke informed the HPC of a few historic presentations for the 150th Anniversary. On May 6, there would be presentation at Fergus Brewing at 5:30 PM, and on June 2, there would be a Downtown tour at 7:00 PM. It was mentioned the 150th anniversary coins are almost gone and more have had ordered.

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 AM.

Next regular meeting will be June 1, 2022 at noon.


Chair

FERGUS FALLS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
August 3, 2022

The Fergus Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, August 3, 2022, at 12:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Members present: Chair Chris Schuelke, Tom Hintgen, Ed Strand, R.C. Drews, Jona Brown, and Nate Kunde (ex-officio). Absent were Gordon Hydukovich and Lois Josefson. Staff present were Klara Beck and Jill Hanson.

Declare Quorum / Open Meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 12:01 PM. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Chris Schuelke opened a discussion of the minutes from May 4, 2022. It was moved by Ed Strand and seconded by Jona Brown to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously.

2022 SHPO Conference in Duluth – September 14-16, 2022

Chair Schuelke opened a discussion on the 2022 SHPO Conference taking place September 14, 2022 thru September 16, 2022 in Duluth. Chair Schuelke mentioned it is important to have representation at the conference to help keep our CLG status, because when we apply for CLG grants our status is considered. Chair Schuelke stated that he will be going to the conference. Klara Beck and Jona Brown both mentioned that they were considering going to the SHPO conference. It was mentioned there are grants available for the conference from SHPO on a first come basis, but that you do have to attend both days of the conference to qualify.

Update on HPC Sponsored Tour for Fergus Falls 150th Anniversary

Chair Schuelke stated that the HPC bus tours took place on May 14, 2022 with one morning tour and one afternoon tour. Both tours were fully booked. It was a good activity for the HPC and everyone on the tours seemed to enjoy them. There was some discussion about the a few issues with the speaker system on the bus. Chair Schuelke spoke when the bus stopped at sites. Jona Brown was thanked for letting the bus drive up to her historic home and for speaking about it. Chair Schuelke mentioned that most of the 150th Anniversary events have gone well.

Update on CLG Grant Application - Downtown Historic District

Chair Schuelke mentioned the HPC has been exploring a downtown historic district and how the next step would be to evaluate the properties downtown to determine if a historic district is present. Rolf Anderson was in Fergus Falls in June and Chair Schuelke talked to him about possibly doing the evaluation, but first the HPC would need to get funding to do the evaluation. The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has grants for Certified Local Governments (CLG). The CLG funds could be used to do this evaluation.

Klara Beck explained how the City Council would need to authorize staff to submit a Certified Local Government grant application to the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office for the purposes of evaluating the downtown as a potential historic district. A request to apply for the CLG grant was presented to the City Council earlier this year, but the Council did not approve that request. Council had questions about what a historic district would mean and how it would affect downtown business owners. It was suggested at the Council meeting that the HPC provide education to Council about the benefits of a Historic Downtown District. Ed Strand suggested having someone talk to the business owners downtown to see if they would support a Historic Downtown District. It was noted that the Downtown Riverfront Council had already discussed sending members to talk to downtown businesses about a historic district.

Local Designation Discussion

Chair Schuelke mentioned bringing Michael Koop from SHPO up to address the HPC about local designations and bringing him to the City Council to provide information on a downtown historic district and what it means for businesses and the opportunities it could provide.

Tom Hintgen said he'd noted activity at the historic Red River Mill. Nate Kunde (PC ex-officio) mentioned that the owner's request for a rezone and CUP for hotel use had gone through the Planning Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 PM.

Next regular meeting will be September 7, 2022 at noon.

Chris Schuelke
Chair

FERGUS FALLS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
September 7, 2022

The Fergus Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on Wednesday, September 7, 2022, at 12:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Members present were: Chair Chris Schuelke, Tom Hintgen, Ed Strand, Gordon Hydukovich, Lois Josefson, R.C. Drews, and Nate Kunde (ex-officio). Staff present Jill Hanson.

Declare Quorum / Open Meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Chris Schuelke opened a discussion of the minutes from August 3, 2022. It was moved by Ed Strand and seconded by Tom Hintgen to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Phase III RTC Work

Chair Schuelke explained that Klara Beck was unable to attend the HPC meeting today, but she provided him with an email with some updates. Klara stated in her email that the City Engineer Brian Yavarow reported that “the 90% review (3rd of series) by SHPO should be concluded around September 22. Klara will have Stantec come to the City Council prior to advertising for bids.” Lois Josefson asked if there was anyone currently looking at developing the site and if not, how we should be looking for someone to develop it. Chair Schuelke replied that the school district has back off on the idea of building a school on the site for now. There was some discussion about how the Minnesota State Legislature adjourned without passing an extension for the Minnesota Historic Tax Credit program and how the program has ended.

Downtown Historic Designation Update

Chair Schuelke stated that Rolf Anderson and he walked the downtown historic district this summer to evaluate the properties downtown to determine if a historic district designation would be possible. The HPC would need the support of the City Council to move forward with the designation of a historic district. Chair Schuelke explained that Michael Koop and his colleague Ginny Way, SHPO’s National Register staffer, will be coming to Fergus Falls to speak with the HPC about local designations and with Council about National Register districts. Please save October 3rd in your calendars for a special session of the HPC in order to take advantage of Michael and Ginny's visit. That evening they will go before the City Council and talk about what a Historic District could mean for Fergus Falls.

Chair Schuelke mentioned that Klara Beck and he were attending the SHPO Conference in Duluth in September, and he could talk to Michael Koop prior to his visit in October.

2023 Membership

Chair Schuelke explained that he is an ex-officio Chair of the HPC due to his role with the museum. As the two newest members, Jona Brown and R.C. Drews’ terms carry over into 2023. Everyone else's term has an expiration date of December 31, 2022. We therefore have until Thursday, December 1, 2022 for the Mayor to approve a list of names for 2023's HPC. Chair Schuelke asked the HPC members to start thinking about who may replace them on the board or if you'd like to put your name forth for reappointment. According to City Code, you can serve two terms consecutively before a break of two years.

R.C. Drews offered his resignation from the board and deferred to the board’s discretion whether his resignation should be effective immediately or at the end of the year. Chair Schuelke requested that R.C remain on the board until the end of the year, and R.C. agreed to stay on the board until the end of the year.

Chair Schuelke mentioned Richard Smestad as a possible member of the HPC, noting that he is the owner of several historic building in Fergus Falls. Gordon mentioned that the HPC needs members with certain qualifications to keep their CLG status with the State of MN. There was some discussion about term limits and what qualifications are need for some of the HPC members.

PC Update

Ed Strand asked Nate Kunde (PC ex-officio) for an update on the Planning Commission. Nate Kunde responded that the Planning Commission has been discussing updates to the City Zoning Code relating to sale of CBD

products and manufacturing of CBD products. Tom Hintgen asked about the plans for historic Red River Mill. Nate Kunde (PC ex-officio) mentioned that the owner plans to make it into a Boutique Hotel.

The meeting adjourned at 12:38 PM.

Next meeting will be October 3, 2022.

Chris Schuelke
Chair

FERGUS FALLS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
October 3, 2022

The Fergus Falls Heritage Preservation Commission met on Monday, October 3, 2022, at 3:05 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall for a special meeting with SHPO Representatives. Members present were: Chair Chris Schuelke, Tom Hintgen, Gordon Hydukovich, Lois Josefson, Jona Brown, and R.C. Drews. Absent were: Ed Strand and Nate Kunde (ex-officio). Staff present Klara Beck and Jill Hanson. Laurie Mullen joined the meeting at 3:23.

Local Historic Designation Discussion with Michael Koop and Ginny Way

Klara Beck started the meeting with introductions for Michael Koop and Ginny Way from SHPO. Klara explained that this meeting is to make sure that the HPC is processing Local Historic Designations according to the SHPO State guidelines.

Michael Koop stated that he and Ginny Way are here to talk about local historic designation with the HCP. In May 2021 there were some emails exchanged about three local designations submitted to SHPO by the HPC. Michael explained how there was a procedural error with the designations. The local designation must be sent to SHPO for review and comment prior to being presented to the City Council for a voting and approval. The designations were not sent to SHPO prior to going to the City Council for approval, therefore the designations of those landmarks would be void.

Klara Beck explained that she spoke to the City Attorney, and he felt that the City should not have to do another public hearing for the designations. Once the designations are reviewed by SHPO and the input is provided the HPC could make changes to the document if needed, then represent them to the City Council for a vote and approval.

Michael Koop stated that, when a local designation form is complete, the SHPO letter of comment is brief, summarizes the important points, and likely confirms their support of the landmark designation. Michael stated that applications need to have some good quality historic photos. Also, the designation needs to indicate under what criteria the property is considered significant, and then the narrative statement regarding the proposed designation needs to support the criteria. Michael explained that none of the three properties submitted included the criteria narrative statement. Also, they did not include high quality current photos of the buildings. Michael stated that the Fergus Falls city ordinance states the criteria needs to be included in the designation application, and the State guidelines carry the same requirement. Michael suggested the HPC could hire someone to do the designations with a grant from SHPO. Michael, also, confirmed that the HPC members could do the designation applications if ~~you~~ they wished, but the applications would need to meet the SHPO State guidelines.

Klara Beck asked if SHPO keeps copy of the documents submitted. Ginny Way replied the documents submitted are logged into the SHPO inventory. SHPO is working on digital records. There was some discussion about how final drafts of local historic designations should be sent to SHPO for receipt of their comment letter prior to being sent to the City Council for designation. It was confirmed that the SHPO letters of comment on Local Designation matters are not binding by law, but rather advisory only. A City Council of a Certified Local Government (CLG), such as Fergus Falls, can reject a SHPO recommendation to not locally designate a property and go forward to approve the Local Designation in question. Likewise, the SHPO cannot force the City to Locally Designate a property that it would recommend for designation. However, the procedural process of presenting the recommended local designation to SHPO prior to submission to the City Council for action on the designation is required. There was discussion about the City Ordinance and practice over the years, about how Fergus Falls did not become a CLG until the 1980s and about how the City Ordinance might have changed since that time.

It was noted that if a National Designation was done on a property, you could use that information in the local designation process. Michael suggested working on local historic designation for buildings that everyone agrees are historic and the property owners are interested in being on the register. Tom Hintgen had some questions about how to hire a consultant to do a designation, what the process is to apply for a grant, and the timeline when doing so.

There was discussion about designated properties and the process to modify properties that have been designated.

Lois Josefson mentioned that the owners of the Victor Lundeen's building were concerned about what would happen if they wanted to change their buildings. There was some discussion about the City's ordinance and what the Council can and can't do when regulating. Michael explained that once a property is designated there are steps in the City Ordinance to follow if a remodeling request is received. During the discussion, Lois Josefson asked about making some changes to the City ordinance in regard to requests for modifications to designated properties. It was noted that certain changes to the ordinance could result in the City losing its CLG status. Additionally, there was discussion about being able to locally acknowledge properties of historical import to the City and citizens and doing so outside the purview of the SHPO review requirement and the subsequent property regulatory framework that is present with Local Designation in a CLG City. It was noted that there are pathways that can be utilized to achieve this end.

Lois Josefson read the duties of the HPC from the City Ordinance and noted the resource role that SHPO plays in that regard for State of MN Historic properties and as it pertains to CLG Cities. She asked if SHPO could provide a guidebook relating to the restoration of historic properties that could be shared with historic property owners. Ginny Way suggested checking the National Park Service website for guidance on restoration of historic properties. She mentioned that SHPO does have historic architects if people have questions.

R.C. Drews asked for classification from SHPO on what needs to be changed on the local applications. Michael Koop stated they need a narrative statement regarding the proposed designation needs to support the criteria selected for the application, and some high quality current photos of the buildings. Michael explained that SHPO would still need to be review the final drafts and sign off on them before they were presented to the City Council for approval.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

Next meeting will be November 2, 2022 at noon.


Chair