

Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
Summary of Minutes
September 14, 2015

Members Present:

Mardene Hinton (chair), John Adams, Jane Johnson, Daron Kinzinger , and Jim Paul.

Also Present:

Michelle Sadler and Mr. Ken Itle.

Members Absent:

Terry Johnston, Neely Provost-Regas, Ron Shank, and Pat Wagner.

Quorum Present.

Ms. Hinton called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm in the second floor conference room of the Kankakee County Building.

Public Comments:

None.

Minutes:

Mr. Adams moved that the August 3, 2015 minutes be approved. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Staff Report:

Regarding the CLG Grant Status agenda item, Ms. Sadler stated that the county now has a contract with Mr. Ken Itle (of WJE) who will serve as consultant for the grant, and that the commission can now move forward.

Mr. Itle then interacted with the commissioners as he addressed the steps and timeline for the grant. He stated that in order to develop a comprehensive preservation plan for the county for the next 10 years, we need to write a shopping list of goals for the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission. He said that this preservation plan will be somewhat groundbreaking. The written history of the county should be seen as a baseline. It will define the historical context of landmarks—i.e., how specific properties are tied to the greater history of the county. He said that we must give the public an opportunity to share in this narrative report. He also stated that intergovernmental agreements and historical signage can fall under the general preservation plan. When asked what year should begin the significant history of the county, his answer was “1835 on for the history”. Mr. Itle emphasized that all commissioners must keep track of their volunteer time on the writing of the history (drafts and review time) and all other activities included in the grant. He said that a steering committee should keep track of what each volunteer is doing. Ms. Hinton stated that she had already invited Mr. Vic Johnson and Mr. Jack Klasey to sit on the steering committee, but that she and Ms. Sadler would serve as the steering committee members who monitor the volunteers. Mr. Itle recommended that Mr. Larry Williams, executive director of the Kankakee County Convention and Visitors Bureau, be invited to join the steering committee. Dr. Paul mentioned that at his meeting with Mr. Williams on June 17, 2015, Mr. Williams had stressed the importance of involving historical organizations in the tourism of the county.

When asked about the public meetings, Mr. Itle said that the point of those meetings should be “what are the top ten concerns, what do we want to accomplish, and what are our goals for the future (set up

goals)?” He suggested that the presentation in these public meetings should consist of 1) addressing these questions and 2) break out/brain storming sessions. He said that intergovernmental agreements could be one “wrinkle” that could be addressed, but that one important result should be forming liaisons to achieve our preservation plan goals. He recommended up to five public meetings in the evening or on Saturday morning—five meetings, one each in Kankakee, Manteno, Bourbonnais, Momence, and Herscher. Since the grant deadline is September 2016, he recommended that all research be done by the end of the year along with starting to draft the historical narrative of the county; and that the public meetings take place every month from January to May 2016. He said that the results of the meetings could be “distilled” in the summer of 2016. Mr. Itle stated that he would bill the county monthly for his consulting services, and that he would meet with the volunteers as needed.

To recap, Mr. Itle summarized that the grant work will involve two steps: 1) the research component in which the historical narratives are written; and 2) addressing the ten-year goals of the preservation plan and how to keep moving toward those goals. He concluded by explaining that the final grant product will be a narrative with pull out sections for follow up. Dr. Paul asked Ms. Sadler to provide Mr. Itle with the following digital documents: the Excel survey of county historical sites, the Rockville and Bourbonnais Townships Historical Places, the French-Canadian Heritage Corridor, and the summer issue of our newsletter *The Preservationist*.

Under the next agenda item, Intergovernmental Agreement Status—City of Kankakee, Ms. Sadler stated that all documents were signed. Ms. Hinton stated that she would follow up with Ms. Connie Licon to determine the procedure for pursuing landmark status of the Kankakee County Museum properties for which she had submitted Prequalification Nomination forms.

Under the KCHPC Ordinance agenda item, Ms. Hinton asked the commissioners to review the document one more time before the next meeting so that it is ready for county board approval.

Regarding the Web Site Status of the Following Additions: Two Landmarked Sites, Change Meeting Time, Add French-Canadian Corridor Document, Agendas, Minutes, and Newsletter agenda item, Ms. Sadler said that she had asked Mr. Delbert Skimmerhorn to do this work, and when he has time it will take only 5-10 minutes to complete this task.

Historic Landmark:

Under the Historic Landmark/Limestone Cemetery discussion/and or approval agenda item, the commission table this item until next month when a quorum will be present to address it. Since Ms. Hinton made the presentation requesting historic landmark status for the Limestone Cemetery (Hawkins Cemetery), her attendance could not contribute to a quorum. The Update on Kankakee County Museum agenda item was addressed above.

Intergovernmental Agreements with Villages/Municipalities:

Under this agenda item, Mr. Kinzinger presented a letter that he drafted to go to all county historical societies. After the commission suggested corrections, Ms. Johnson moved that the letter be sent to the historical societies (Kankakee, Bradley, Bourbonnais, Manteno, Herscher, Bonfield, Essex, Grant Park, Momence, Chebanse, and St. Anne) and municipalities. Dr. Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

There was nothing new to report on the Phil Angelo’s Historic Tourism Plan or the Architectural Review Committee. Under the Education Committee, no new e-mail addresses were added for the newsletter. Dr. Paul stated that he could not make electronic corrections to the French-Canadian Heritage Corridor rack card draft or even print a copy of his corrections. Ms. Hinton recommended that this discussion take place during an Education Committee meeting. Regarding the CLG Grant Progress, Ms. Hinton expressed a sense of urgency that the township histories be completed by next meeting or soon thereafter. The township histories assigned so far are: Mr. Johnston—Rockville and Pembroke, Dr. Paul—Bourbonnais, Mr. Adams—Aroma and Otto, Ms. Hinton—Limestone and Momence, Ms. Johnson—Ganeer and Yellowhead, Mr. Shank and Ms. Wagner—Norton and (Pilot?). Those townships yet to be assigned are Essex, Salina, St. Anne, Manteno, Sumner, and Kankakee. Ms. Hinton requested that all completed historical narratives be sent to her.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

None.

Next Meeting will be on October 5, 2015 at 4 pm.

Adjournment:

Mr. Kinzinger made a motion to adjourn at 5:18 pm. Mr. Adams seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Jim Paul, Secretary