

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 11, 2009

The Van Buren Historic District held its monthly meeting Thursday, June 11, 2009 at 5:30 P.M. in the City Council Room of the Municipal Complex. The following items were on the agenda:

1. Approval of minutes from last meeting
2. COA by Jody Rhoads for signage in front of 615 Main Street
3. Term renewal for Jody Rhoads
4. Any other business that comes before this commission

PRESENT: Vickie Davis, Chairperson
 Dwight Hopkins, Vice Chair
 John Symonds
 Paul Gibson
 Jody Rhoads
 Randy Smith
 Lizzie Boone

ABSENT: Cami Brown, Recording Secretary

Vickie Davis called this meeting to order at 5:37 PM. Mrs. Davis welcomed visitor Lizzie Boone, who was present to observe the Historic District Commission.

First order of business was to approve minutes of last meeting. Jody Rhoads made a motion to accept the minutes as written, with Paul Gibson giving the motion a second, and the motion carried with a unanimous vote.

The next item for consideration was a COA by Jody Rhoads for signage at 615 Main Street. This signage would hang in front of the building, and would reflect the names of all the businesses at this location. Brackets are already approved and hanging from a previous sign that was approved by HDC. John Symonds made a motion that this sign does not significantly affect the surrounding property. Dwight Hopkins gave the motion a second and the motion carried with a vote of four, and with Jody Rhoads abstaining from the vote. After some discussion, a motion was made by Paul Gibson to approve this COA with the amendments added to the COA. These amendments consisted of colors for the signage. This motion was given a second by John Symonds and the motion carried with a vote of four, and with Jody Rhoads abstaining from the vote.

Next item for consideration was a term renewal for Jody Rhoads. A motion was made by John Symonds to recommend Jody Rhoads for another term as a commissioner for the Historic District. This motion was seconded by Dwight Hopkins, and the motion carried with a vote of four and Jody Rhoads abstaining from the vote.

Chairperson Vickie Davis announced that the Fairview Cemetery Board President Verna Moore came to Mayor Bob Freeman and told him she felt that the cemetery board had fulfilled their duties, and that with the cemetery in the Historic District, and with the city taking care of the mowing, etc., and with the liaison Randy Smith in place, it was time for the board to disband. Mrs. Davis informed the commission Mayor Freeman would be taking this to City Council for approval of not filling the positions on the board at this time, but not disbanding the board. This action would put the commission directly over the cemetery. Mayor Freeman commented the city would continue maintenance on the cemetery, and he would be meeting with Randy Smith about this development. Randy Smith commented that he met with Mayor Freeman and that there would be someone, as the Mayor is on the hunt for someone, to take care of the plots that are left to be sold. John Symonds commented that since the cemetery is now in the Historic District the commission is in the process of inserting guidelines for maintaining historic monuments. John went on to comment he had sent out drafts for comments and he had received comments back from Dwight Hopkins, Vickie Davis and liaison Randy Smith. He went on to say the commission hired Sandra Taylor-Smith to write these guidelines, and John wants to get the comments on one draft copy and get it back to Sandra for her to do a final draft. After review, the commission will hold a public hearing, and then move forward with a recommendation to City Council. John handed draft copies with all collected comments on them, and asked the other commissioners to review, and get comments back to him in time for this to be sent back to Sandra Taylor-Smith and hopefully by August meeting have a final draft back, and then for the September meeting issue the public notification, and move forward with the recommendation. Vickie Davis commented there is a chemical mixture that is mixed by Jack Bernard to kill grass and weeds that is being used around the monuments in Fairview Cemetery, and she wasn't sure if this was appropriate. She commented the intention was to keep the mowers away from the monuments. Randy Smith commented that no chemicals should be sprayed near the monuments, as they are porous and absorb them. Dwight Hopkins commented the guidelines had a section about herbicides. In the design guidelines John Symonds read a portion that was from the Secretary of Interior Standards that states chemical and physical treatments such as sandblasting shall not be used. After discussion it was agreed there needed to be something in the maintenance portion of the guidelines to cover this. Dwight commented they might want to put the book Grave Concerns as an addendum to the guidelines to refer to. John Symonds thought it would be good to specify that chemicals can not be sprayed within 3 feet or 5 feet of a monument, allowing spraying to take place, but protecting the monuments.

Vickie Davis commented there was an individual in Van Buren in possession of panels that are identical to the fence around the cemetery, and that the city was going to approach this individual and ask that if they ever decide to part with these panels that the city get first shot at purchasing them. Mrs. Davis also commented it would be in the best

interest of preservation of the cemetery to get a casting of the finial on the fence made in case we need to do replacements in the future. After further discussion, Mrs. Davis asked the commission if there was anything else that needed to be discussed on this matter, and it was agreed there was not.

Vickie Davis commented on the progress at Drennen-Scott House after taking a tour of it prior to an A & P Commission meeting earlier in the week. Mrs. Davis commented the house looks wonderful, and they are looking forward to opening the house.

Dwight Hopkins commented that is was about a year ago that the commission made a list of things they needed to accomplish. On this list was getting the cemetery guidelines, the brochure completed, the code of ethics in place, and the last thing he knew of was review of the present guidelines for Main Street. He commented with most of the list out of the way, and if the commission was in agreement, Dwight would move forward with beginning a review of the guidelines and bring something to the next meeting on this. Mr. Hopkins stated he would like to divide this up into sections and work through it. The commission would like to finish up this list, as the focus is going to be the citywide preservation plans.

The commission had Liz Boone introduced herself, and explained she was working on a project for Girl Scouts, and she has chosen the buildings in our Historic District as her topic. The commission gave her a little bit of history of Main Street and how the commission came to be. The commissioners also offered to help Miss Boone with her project.

With no more business to discuss, Paul Gibson made a motion to adjourn, Jody Rhoads seconded the motion and this meeting was adjourned.

Vickie Davis, Chairperson

Cami L. Brown, Recording Sec.