



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

City Council Chambers, 33 East Broadway Avenue Meridian, Idaho

Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 4:30 PM

MINUTES

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<u> x </u> Blaine Johnston, President	<u> </u> Vacant
<u> </u> Pam Jagosh	<u> x </u> Ken Freeze
<u> x </u> Jack Keller	<u> x </u> Debra Pitts
<u> x </u> Patrick Gittings, Vice President	

City staff present were Recreation Manager, Garrett White and City Attorney, Bill Nary.
Also present, Sheri Freemuth, Project Manager for J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc.

B. Johnston called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

Applications for HPC vacant seat are open until March 1, 2024.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

P. Gittings made motion to adopt agenda, seconded by J. Keller

All ayes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES [ACTION ITEM]

1. Approve: Minutes from the 1-25-24 Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission

K. Freeze made motion to approve minutes, seconded by J. Keller

All ayes

APPROVAL OF MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS [ACTION ITEM]

2. Approve: Monthly Financial Statement

G. White stated, per C. Schiffler's notes, there are no items for this month and TAG Historical Research's first invoice for \$1000 for their initial work on the historical walking tour guide will be processed soon.

J. Keller made motion to approve the monthly financial statements, seconded by P. Gittings

All ayes

OLD BUSINESS [ACTION ITEMS]

3. Discussion and Planning: May 2024 Preservation Month Activities

B. Johnston stated the Commission will host a walking tour on Saturday, May 18 in conjunction with the City's Unplug and Be Outside event but open to other activity ideas. The Meridian Library District (MLD) is looking in to hosting another tour as well. The Commission can put out sandwich board signs in front of historic Downtown Meridian buildings and will use social media to promote the historical walking tour app people can download. Unsure if the Statewide Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has announced a theme for this year. Need to finalize everything next month.

Commission Feedback

D. Pitts inquired as to how many tours were given last year. *Two – one through Downtown Meridian and one at the Speedway that was a fundraiser the public had to pay to attend. Is there enough need to host two tours this year? We could host one in the morning and one in the afternoon; on average it is about a two-hour walking tour. Will information be available so any Commissioner can give a tour? Yes, something can be put together so any Commissioner can run a tour. Who can give a tour of the museum in City Hall and could this be done during the week? Someone from MLD as this space belongs to them, so if someone from MLD is here, then yes, tours can be given. Is it possible for MLD to host one of their digital projects? They did one about two weeks ago but maybe they could do another one here during Preservation Month. Can we promote the app more? We should; will do another post on Facebook and Instagram but Commissioners are each encouraged to like and share posts. Any analytic data on the amount of app usage? C. Schiffler would have that information. Have commemorative coins from when the app was first released and originally had people answer questions based on the app and if they got so many correct they earned a coin so should re-promote this and people can earn a coin by just downloading the app.*

J. Keller asked if it was known when SHPO would provide a theme. *Probably next month if it has not already been announced.*

P. Gittings stated he thinks reaching out to MLD staff to try to coordinate and collaborate with MLD about giving tours of the museum in City Hall is a great idea. *Just need to coordinate through C. Schiffler so she has documentation. MLD does a digital drop every second Wednesday of the month and promotes these scanning sessions so definitely an opportunity here. Will talk to C. Schiffler to see if a few extra sessions can be coordinated as part of Preservation Month.*

4. Discuss and Recommend: Historic Research and Consulting or Other Projects for

FY24 and FY25: Review estimates and Proposals for 1. Graphic Redesign of Historic Walking Tour Brochure, 2. Purchase of Historic Signage Thermoplastic Decals for Walking Tour Stops 3. Landmarking Program Research

G. White stated bid options and proposals for the graphic redesign of the historic walking tour brochure can be found in the agenda packet with Option 1 costing \$2,550 and Option 2 costing \$1,950. The landmarking program bid proposal (see agenda packet) has also been provided and S. Freemuth, Senior Planner with J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc. is here if there are any questions about the proposal. The bid for the thermoplastic decals are about \$600 each.

S. Freemuth stated she has many years of experience in historic preservation work and historic preservation plans and prior to working for J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc. she worked for 10 years as the Pacific Northwest Field Officer for the National Trust for Historic Preservation; also worked for SAIC (now known as LEIDOS) which is an environmental consulting firm and has worked on the Meridian Comprehensive Plan; also worked for Ada County Development Services and started the Ada County Historic Preservation Council back in 1990; and worked for the City of San Diego as the Old Town Planner. S. Freemuth stated she has spoken with C. Schiffler about some opportunities that may be coming up in the next couple of years through the Certified Government grant program and so providing quote specifically on landmarking program project based on C. Schiffler's request. Proposing a four-phase project that would occur over four months and would include monthly meetings with the Commission and/or entities the Commission feels S. Freemuth needs to work with in the course of her landmarking research. The goal of the project is to provide the Commission with enough information to make an informed decision about whether or not the landmarking program is something it wants to undertake or not.

B. Johnston stated thermoplastic signs were probably installed 10 years ago and price has gone up \$600 each now. B. Johnston stated he walked around yesterday and looked at 11 or 12 and all but one are pretty faded and worn and need to be replaced but more money than the Commission can spend this year so need a budget item created for FY2025 to replace some, buy a few spares, plus a few more to be installed on homes that do not yet have one. 15 street decals would cost \$9000 so plan on this for FY2025.

B. Nary stated the Mayor's Office will ask if the requested funds are part of the work that the Commission is planning so funded by an existing line item or if it is work in addition to existing line items.

P. Gittings made motion to proceed with the Landmarking Program Research proposal not to exceed the cost \$4,974 as presented by J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc.; seconded by J. Keller

All ayes

Commission Feedback

P. Gittings stated his questions have been answered by S. Freemuth's presentation and his big question was if we knew of any other communities that were doing this but it looks like this is part of the research. *Yes, SHPO knows of all these communities*

so we would start with them. This local program seems like it would save time and cost for interested property owners who would like a historic designation rather than pursuing a listing on the National Historic Registry and would also allow the preservation of Meridian's history.

B. Johnston asked for confirmation that the information generated from this project could be used in the Historic Preservation Plan, or to create Historic Districts, or even create a "City landmark" for individual properties important to Meridian's history that may not be eligible for listing on the National Historic Registry. *Would not be able to identify those properties as part of this project but we could explain to the Commission what are the landmarking designation options. The National Register designation does not protect a property nor would the landmarking designation unless the Commission links the designation to a local ordinance that requires some type of review by the Commission before a property is demoed/altered. The memo would outline the ways to ensure properties do not just disappear before the Commission is allowed to think about it. Forming historic districts has its own science to it but not sure how to talk about landmarking without talking about historic districts. For example, could create a local historic district centered around the high school using the same landmarking tools but with a broader swath and the point is to discourage demolition but also to regulate height or setbacks or other things the zoning code is not up to snuff on because it does not recognize it as a historic district so would work hand-in-hand with the zoning district. A historic district gives the Commission a whole area to have jurisdiction over. The landmarking tool is like a flag to come to the Commission. Definitely would have to have public buy-in on a historic district. My understanding of this process is we would collect all the information and present to it to you potentially in front of an audience of people who would be concerned, like the people who have historic buildings, and then they could give you input in a nonconfrontational way because based on a memo not a final decision to change code, which I think is a smart way to do it.*

K. Freeze inquired if it would be in the scope of work to show where any of these designations would add value to the property. *I think we could look to see if that information is available. Have seen reports where designation does improve value. Cannot do any individual analysis but could speak to the economic value.* If some way we can show added value for this designation people would be more inclined to say this is a good thing. *Agreed.*

P. Gittings inquired if the thermoplastic signs for FY2025 would be a separate line item from the regular budget. *That is what we are planning on.*

D. Pitts inquired if the nice plaque in front of the Tolleth House is in addition to the thermoplastic decals. *In addition; not sure where those came from but something the Commission could look in to adding as I do like them and they look good. The Bell House also has one. The information on the sign is contained in the book or the app so some people will see it as duplication but others will see it as neat who do not have the book or use the app but are just walking by so something the Commission can think about. B. Nary stated plaques installed prior to his time so not sure if the ones in existence were funded by the Commission or the Historical Society that was in existence at the time.*

D. Pitts inquired as to the difference in the cost of printing the book versus the fold; stated while the book is beautiful she is afraid people are not saving the book so maybe too nice and seems the fold would be more economical. *That is what we are going to look at - what is the best option for us to do. We still have two or three boxes left of the book (300 or 400 copies).* The design cost was not too different but printing would be considerably different and if we can get people to the app, which more and more people are using apps today, then less expense, which is where the analytics come in.

P. Gittings stated he likes what D. Pitts is saying and thinks we could simplify the brochure, make it available online and on the app and create a paper brochure once we run out of books. We could pay someone for the design and then can print as needed. P. Gittings inquired if there is content in the book that needs to be updated. *Yes, and want to redesign the cover and use colors on the logo. The QR code in the book will bring up all the information in the book plus a video and the app.* P. Gittings suggested since we have so many books still to hold off on the re-design so they do not go to waste. Suggested once a script is created more tours can be given each year so more booklets can be passed out.

5. **Updates: Eggers Farmstead, Speedway Nomination, Historic Preservation Plan**

B. Johnston stated the developer, developing the Eggers Farmstead property, went before the Planning and Zoning Commission last week who are receptive and thoughtful of the idea that the City is losing our historic sites but also recognize that we cannot stop the growth and development. The developer did agree again that he will disassemble the double granary silo and store it somewhere on a short-term basis and create a monument. B. Johnston stated he does not like the monument design the developer has in mind but the developer is supposed to bring back a monument proposal. The subdivision plat and annexation are now headed to the Mayor and City Council for final approval.

B. Johnston stated the Speedway Nomination has been sent to the National Trust for final review but not sure of the status. G. White stated C. Schiffler is hoping to hear on the Speedway Nomination in mid-March.

Commission Feedback

K. Freeze stated he got an update from Kelly Moving and Rigging just a couple of days ago via email and they had gotten a report over to David Bailey on Sunday saying they could move the silo and he had given them a thumbs up and said he would be in touch with them in about a week. *I had not heard that so we will see what happens; please forward that email to me and C. Schiffler.*

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 28, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

J. Keller made motion to adjourn, seconded by P. Gittings

All ayes