



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION for Wash. Co. & City of Weiser

Monday, January 6th, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Washington County Court House Commissioner's

Chambers in Weiser, Idaho

County HP Commissioners: Tony Edmondson, Dennis Lance, Brenda Aldrich, Thel Pearson, Bryan Syme

City HP Commissioners: Tony Edmondson, Dennis Lance, Lynda Lance, Steve Clausen (absent), Cheri Clausen(absent)

Members of the public in attendance: Nina Hawkins, Jennifer Neider, Josh Dalton
Julie Chandler. Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Tony. He introduced our visitors and said that we have a City of Weiser and a Washington County Commissioner seat that both need to be filled. Jennifer Neider and Josh Dalton have both reached out with interest in participating in our work. Tonight, they are here to just get a feel for what we do and how we operate. If they like what they see, maybe they will be interested in joining.

Minutes: The minutes from October 7th, 2024 needed to be approved at this meeting. Lynda moved to approve the minutes and Dennis moved to second. Motion carried.

Tony had prepared a packet of information for the two interested visitors and also took a few minutes to review what it contained. It included information on the legalities of our Certified Local Government Commissions which allow us to pursue and accept grant money to complete projects within our Cities and County.

Report Items:

Sunnyside School National Register Status: Several years ago, our Washington County CLG applied for a grant to place Sunnyside School on the National Register. It was approved with match dollars from WAPC. We receive some funding yearly from the Washington County Commissioners. The cost of the project was \$5,000.00 and the process has taken about two years to complete. It was submitted in October, returned for some additional work and resubmitted on December 10th, and now we wait.

National Register Status does not restrict the owners of a property from doing anything to their property.

LOR Foundation: We have received a grant from the LOR Foundation to help purchase some missing reels of newspapers from the Signal American to digitize their papers from their beginning and make them available to the public. This project is stalled right now. Tony will meet with Jenn Huff (LOR) to discuss what might be done to get it moving.

America250 in Idaho WAPC Grant Status: Tony reported that WAPC received approval this past December for their America250 in Idaho Grant application in the full amount of \$25,000.00. This underwrites most of the cost for developing a Museum in the Street Project for the City of Weiser.

Dixie Creek Bridge Mitigation Project Status: The bridge has been removed and relocated to an adjacent private landowner. The replacement bridge is now in place. Jennifer Neider has a familial connection to the Old Dixie Creek Bridge. The Section 106 mitigation settlement for the loss of this bridge was \$80,000.00. \$60,000.00 of this was awarded to the Cambridge Museum. The reported that the new roof has been completed with that funding and that part of the mitigation is completed. Unfortunately, while working on the roof, a few other issues have been found. They will have to deal with those at a later date. The remaining \$20,000.00 of the settlement was designated to the City of Weiser for the preparation of a Preservation Plan. This is a work in progress.

Cove Bridge Mitigation project status: This project is nearing its completion with an \$60,000.00 mitigation amount. \$30,000.00 was used to create the Washington County Preservation Plan which is done. \$20,000.00 was used to complete 100 Reconnaissance Property Surveys which are also completed. The remaining \$10,000.00 was used to create an interpretive sign for Cove Bridge to recognize its historical significance. The sign is finished and will be placed on the site when the new bridge is completed.

Unity Bridge Mitigation Opportunity: Replacement of the Unity Bridge is about two years out. Section 106 mitigation is anticipated for this bridge as well. There is an adjacent property owner that has expressed interest in one part of the bridge to be moved onto his property. The ITD might be willing to negotiate mitigation monies to help move that section of the bridge. Therefore, we may or may not have the opportunity to access more mitigation monies from that project.

Weiser Historic District Status: To date, some boundaries have been looked at and considered. We invited members of SHPO to complete an onsite survey this past summer which confirmed the potential exists for a NR District. Buildings must be at least 50 years old to qualify for Historic status, so our district could include newer and older properties. One side benefit is that any properties that fall within a designated Historic District boundary qualify for a 20% tax credit on projects.

Cemetery Project Status: Thel shared that the Cambridge CLG has been working on the Cemetery Listings for quite some time. During discussions about priorities within the Washington County Preservation Plan, there was renewed interest in documenting other cemeteries in the county at large. Lisa McKnight invested many hours of labor in this project, covering a lot of cemeteries in the lower part of the county. They originally set out to establish where the old cemeteries were located and who's buried there. The cost of burials has become so high than now, many folks are being cremated or not buried in the traditional manner. They are not trying to reference modern listings because the local cemeteries have good records of their burials, but it is a huge project just the same. Thel added that they've included every cemetery and gravesite they have been able to locate. Tony added that the struggle now is what to do with the information they have collected, how to format it and where to store the data. Thel said that she has the original and there is a digital copy that she'll get for our Commission. Lots of the headstones are broken or missing, which makes it difficult or impossible to catalog them.

Billings Gymnasium and Boys & Girls Club: We just need to keep them in our radar. They know we're watching what they are doing to our old historic building. Recently there was an issue with the windows and trying to get them replaced.

Intermountain Institute Tour: This event was held in October, and it was a very successful event. Dan and Josh from SHPO came to give the tour. Josh shared that originally the site was intended to provide a much larger campus of buildings. Presently, just the five individual buildings fronting Paddock Avenue are on the National Register. The remaining campus and buildings are not. SHPO recommended that we resurvey the entire campus and update the original National Register Status and that we also consider creating the whole area as an Historic District. It is one of the few remaining campuses around the state with still standing out buildings.

Walter Johnson House follow up: Tony shared that Josh Dalton, our guest today, is a real fan of Walter Johnson. The house on West Park, where he lived for a very short time, is very small and modest. He played summer season ball here for two seasons as a member of the Weiser Kids and only lived here during those seasons. Tony shared that 30 years ago, he and John bought a convertible at an auction that had a plaque on the grille stating, "Walter Johnson Lincoln Mercury". They met the seller who confirmed he was "the" Walter Johnson's grandson. We need to find someone who can verify the address of the buyer of the West Park Street Property. Josh agreed that this was a need.

Institute Canal Co. – Orchid Award Recommendation: Petra McDaniel contacted Tony some years ago stating that the Old Pump House needed a new roof. We took the ball and got a grant with matching funds and put a new roof on the Pump House. It has been recommended by a member of Sicklerville that they would like to see it nominated for an Orchid Award.

SHPO Staff Changes: New SHPO Staff member, Alexis Matrone wants to come out and meet each of the local CLG's. We need to look at our calendar and schedule a date for her to visit the three in Washington County.

Introduction to ICRIS: Tony referred to the packet he had prepared and the new website through ICRIS. SHPO has developed the ICRIS system as the repository for all properties within the State of Idaho which have been surveyed at some point through the years. All information contained for these sites can be accessed through this system. It normally would cost several thousand

dollars to access this website, but as a local Historic organization, we have access to the site for free. Tony went ahead and set up an address in his name and anyone on our board who is interested in accessing the site can contact him for the login and password. Our HPP contractor has recommended that we access this website to make sure all the properties which we believe have been surveyed over the years is accounted for and correct. Over 30 years ago, we did hundreds of Reconnaissance Surveys. One copy of the work was put in the Weiser City Library (which has now been moved to the file in the storage room at the Depot) and another set was put in the Museum which may have been destroyed by the fire there several years ago. Julie will check with them to see if those records are still housed there. A third set was sent into SHPO and are now on this ICRIS site. We need to make sure they are there.

Idaho State Historic Preservation Plan: SHPO is now asking that all local CLG's have a Historic Preservation Plan, and the City of Weiser HPC is now working on one of their own. Washington County HPC finished for the county several years ago.

Action Items:

Weiser's Historic Preservation Plan: Our work on Weiser's Preservation Plan, which is being funded by \$20,000.00 from the Dixie Creek Bridge Mitigation began in December with the Online Survey. We are asking all interested Weiser Citizens and visitors to take the survey. We've passed out cards with the site and information. The portal is open through to the end of January. For the County survey, we got over 250 participants, even more than much larger Canyon County. The City CLG will meet to get this project moving. The consultant will bring back the results of the survey. Then we can decide on our priority projects to be incorporated into the Weiser Historic Preservation Plan.

CLG Grant Applications: The grant applications for this go-round are due January 31st. Last year we tried to do a National Register nomination for the Middle School Gymnasium, but it was declined due to funding shortfalls. However, it was complimented on being well written. It was asked if it was too soon to resubmit that same grant request? Or we could do a National Register Application for the Intermountain Institute Campus.

Jennifer asked why the trees across from the Institute had been removed and a fence built. Josh shared that the school sports program has gone up a level in the league and so they can now charge admission. The trees were mostly dead deemed a liability for the school district.. The money to complete the project on the sports field, however, did not go as far as they had hoped.

So...what do we want to do for our CLG project this year? After further discussion, it was decided to resubmit the Middle School Gymnasium Grant Proposal as a City CLG project. It was also decided that with so many irons in the fire right now, we will not submit a County Grant proposal this year.

Empty Seats in our Commissions: Tony asked our two guest to consider joining us to complete the final year of the seat vacated on the boards. Josh, if interested, would be best suited for the city CLG and Jennifer would fit best to fill the vacancy for the Midvale commissioner on the County seat. Nominations for the next year are coming up soon.

Josh asked if Monday was always the day of our meetings. Wednesdays at 4 p.m. would work better for him. As a trial lawyer, Mondays and Tuesdays are his trial days.

Election of Officers: Julie was asked to look up our last elected officers. This matter was tabled until our next meeting. The mentioned that the Cambridge CLG and museum board have lost several longtime members due to deaths recently.

Meeting Adjourned about 6:45 p.m.

Watch your emails for the meeting reminder.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Chandler, Secretary