

KENDALL COUNTY
Historic Preservation Commission
Kendall County Historic Courthouse
East Wing Conference Room (Hybrid Meeting)
109 W. Ridge Street, Yorkville, Illinois
6:30 p.m.
March 15, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jeff Wehrli called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Eric Bernacki (Secretary), Elizabeth Flowers (Vice-Chairwoman) (Attended Remotely Starting at 6:44 p.m.), Kristine Heiman (Attended Remotely Starting at 6:35 p.m.), and Jeff Wehrli (Chairman)

Absent: None

Also Present: Matt Asselmeier (Senior Planner), Scott Koeppel (County Administrator) (Attended Remotely) and Janine Farrell (Attended Remotely)

NEW BUSINESS

Meeting with Will County Land Use Department Regarding Certified Local Government Next Steps and Discussion of Next Steps Related to Certified Local Government Status Projects

Chairman Wehrli introduced Janine Farrell of the Will County Land Use Department and thanked her for attending the meeting.

Mr. Asselmeier asked what were the first projects that Will County did after they become a Certified Local Government. Ms. Farrell responded that Will County did a rural structural survey. It took twenty (20) years to complete that project which was completed two (2) years ago. The Will County Historic Preservation Commission was established in 1992. Will County applied for and received Certified Local Government grants to conduct each survey. The surveys averaged Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000).

Member Heiman started attending remotely at this time (6:35 p.m.)

Ms. Farrell said that Will County applied for a Certified Local Government grant this year to update their Preservation Plan which was originally completed in 1976 before the County obtained Certified Local Government status.

Mr. Asselmeier asked how Will County divided the County for the surveys. Ms. Farrell responded that they divided the County by township. The Commission prioritized the northern townships because those townships were under the most development pressures.

Mr. Asselmeier asked who came up with the survey documents. Ms. Farrell responded that the consultant Wiss Janney Elstner Associates, (WJE) to did the surveys and made the determination if a structure was a contributing structure.

Chairman Wehrli asked about the ease of updating the surveys. Ms. Farrell responded that keeping the surveys current has been difficult. Annexations and demolitions were difficult to track. Technology has improved to better track sites.

Member Bernacki asked if each grant was specific to an individual township. Ms. Farrell responded yes.

Mr. Asselmeier asked if WJE assisted Will County in writing the grants. Ms. Farrell responded Will County wrote the grants in-house. Will County tried to get cost estimates prior to writing the grant.

Mr. Asselmeier asked about survey costs. Ms. Farrell responded that the cheapest survey was around Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000). The most expensive was around Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000). The cost varied due to the size of the unincorporated area in each township.

Chairman Wehrli asked about input related to preservation of historic structures when development was occurring in terms of saving historic structures. Ms. Farrell responded that the County has the structures identified and can use the information when evaluating demolition permits and Section 106 reviews.

Mr. Asselmeier asked if they surveyed every structure in the township. Ms. Farrell responded that the surveys were segregated by age, the fifty (50) rule. They did not survey any site within a municipality. They did not survey rural subdivisions unless a former town was located within the subdivision.

Member Flowers started attending remotely at this time (6:44 p.m.).

Chairman Wehrli asked if every building was evaluated when surveying farmsteads. Ms. Farrell said they surveyed every structure on the farmstead.

Chairman Wehrli asked about barn styles. Ms. Farrell said fences were included, also old bridges. Barns were assigned in era and by condition. The survey consisted of inventory sheets and narrative portion. The narrative included chapters on schools, churches, etc. They also had tables on housing styles.

Chairman Wehrli asked if Will County had any districts. Ms. Farrell said none.

Mr. Asselmeier asked about the number locally designated historic structures. Ms. Farrell responded approximately fifty-eight (58). Within that number there may be additional structures.

Ms. Farrell noted that Will County has intergovernmental agreements with several municipalities.

Chairman Wehrli asked if any of the smaller municipalities reached out to the County for assistance in starting historic preservation. Ms. Farrell responded that Commissioners have assisted on those projects.

Mr. Asselmeier asked about the historic preservation. Ms. Farrell said the last plan was completed in 1976. The Commission is looking to create an app to support tours within the County. Ms. Farrell suggested working with the consultant to determine whether to do the surveys before the preservation plan.

Chairman Wehrli asked, when designating structures, do the homeowners reach out to the County or does the County contact homeowners. Ms. Farrell said it was a mix of both scenarios.

Mr. Asselmeier asked if Will County had any local incentives for landmarking structures. Ms. Farrell said no.

Mr. Asselmeier asked what Will County's pitch was to encourage landmarking. Ms. Farrell said the County appealed to people desiring to preserve structures for future generations instead of financial incentives.

Mr. Asselmeier asked if Will County pursued violations to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Ms. Farrell said they have had people do work without permits and they would go through the process after the fact.

Mr. Asselmeier asked if Will County did any education for property owners that previously did not have to obtain permits because their structures were agricultural related. Ms. Farrell responded that Will County files notice of dedication on the property which is usually found during a title search. Ms. Farrell will send letters to new owners.

Mr. Asselmeier if Will County would have done anything differently over the years. Ms. Farrell said having the surveys more accessible and web-based. Their database was not connected to the County's GIS.

Will County has landmarked cemeteries. The cemeteries were a mix of publically, privately, and religiously owned. Cemeteries can be active burial sites.

Mr. Asselmeier asked if Will County had any unique designations that people would not consider structures. Ms. Farrell responded one (1) monument and one (1) sign commemorating the location of a demolished building.

Member Heiman suggested landmarking the location where the Millbrook Bridge formerly stood. Discussion occurred regarding whether the Bridge was located inside the Village of Millbrook. The site could be landmarked.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Bernacki made a motion, seconded by Member Flowers, to approve the agenda.

The votes were as follows:

Yeas (4): Bernacki, Flowers, Heiman, and Wehrli

Nays (0): None

Absent (0): None

Abstain (0): None

The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Heiman made a motion, seconded by Member Flowers, to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2021, meeting and the February 10, 2021, historic organization meeting.

The votes were as follows:

Yeas (4): Bernacki, Flowers, Heiman, and Wehrli
Nays (0): None
Absent (0): None
Abstain (0): None

The motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Wehrli found the presentation from Will County very interesting. Mr. Asselmeier suggested getting samples of Will County's RFP/RFQ for the survey and a sample survey form. Discussion occurred regarding the previous surveys the Commission undertook. Discussion also occurred about integrating surveys into the County's GIS. The consensus of the Commission was to use surveys as the basis for a preservation plan. Discussion also occurred regarding financing the project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

NEW BUSINESS

February 10, 2021, Letter to Colleen Callahan from Megan J. Brown Regarding Kendall County's Certified Local Government Program Application

Mr. Asselmeier read the letter.

Approval to Request the Kendall County Board Chairman Sign and Submit a Letter Requesting Certification of Historic Preservation Ordinance for the Purposes of the Property Tax Freeze Assessment Program Through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Mr. Asselmeier explained the program. Mr. Asselmeier noted that County Assessor Andy Nicoletti had no concerns regarding the proposal.

Member Bernacki made a motion, seconded by Member Heiman, to initiate the request.

The votes were as follows:

Yeas (4): Bernacki, Flowers, Heiman, and Wehrli
Nays (0): None
Absent (0): None
Abstain (0): None

The motion carried.

This matter will go to the Kendall County Planning, Building and Zoning Committee on April 12, 2021.

Follow Up on February 10, 2021 Meeting with Historic Preservation Organizations

Chairman Wehrli thought the meeting was good and he thought the attendance was higher than expected. He was hoping to have an in-person meeting next year. He will discuss County records with Facilities Director Jim Smiley. The Commission will also monitor the codification process.

Discussion occurred regarding remote meetings in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Recognizing Joseph Platt Brown and Ashby Farms

Member Bernacki said that the tentative date for the plaque dedication is May 22, 2021. He will send an email to Commissioners when the date is finalized.

Discussion of Cemeteries

Chairman Wehrli reviewed the cemeteries on the GIS website.

Discussion occurred regarding Maramech Hill. The site is on private property.

Chairman Wehrli encouraged Commissioners to walk the cemeteries.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Asselmeier read an email from Jon Pressley regarding National Park Service grants. The County is not eligible for any of these grants at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Member Heiman made a motion, seconded by Member Bernacki, to adjourn.

The votes were as follows:

Yeas (4): Bernacki, Flowers, Heiman, and Wehrli

Nays (0): None

Absent (0): None

Abstain (0): None

The motion carried.

The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew H. Asselmeier, AICP, CFM
Senior Planner