

CITY OF WILDWOOD
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MEETING OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WILDWOOD CITY HALL
16860 MAIN STREET
WILDWOOD, MISSOURI 63040
AND VIA ZOOM
March 23, 2023

I. Welcome and Roll Call

- Meeting:** Thursday, March 23, 2023, hosted at Wildwood City Hall, in City Council Chambers, and via Zoom, at 6:30 p.m.
- Attending:** Commissioners Hrubes, Scott, and Hammond, Vice Chair Bachert, Secretary Rowton, Council Liaisons Rambaud and Nyhan, Alternate Quarternik, Student Route 66 Taskforce Liaison Myers, and Chair Stevens
- Absent:** Alternate Adams, Commissioner Hensic, and Commission Liaison Broyles
- Staff:** Planner Robyn Keefe, Senior Planner Travis Newberry, and Director Joe Vujnich

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Scott led the Pledge of Allegiance at the request of Chair Stevens.

III. Opening Remarks by Chair

None.

IV. Approval of the Historic Preservation Commission's Minutes from its February 23, 2023 Meeting

Minutes were approved by general consent.

V. Public Comment

None.

VI. Old Business

A. Ready for Action – Six (6) Items

1. Student Route 66 Taskforce Update (**Wards – All**)

The Student Route 66 Taskforce Route 66 Month Promo Video was played for the Commission. Nolan Myers then provided an update, which noted the students had been busy filming videos for promotion of the events. Planner Keefe stated the Route 66 Month Official Guides were now available with all of the clues. She requested

that Commissioners wear their Route 66 t-shirts, as frequently as possible, in the upcoming month, for promotion and a show of spirit.

2. Wildwood History Book – Photo Essay Draft (**Wards – All**)

Planner Keefe presented, noting the draft photo essay was before the Commission tonight in its final layout for review. Chair Stevens said, “great job.” Planner Keefe noted Commission Members would have the next week to submit their comments. Commissioner Scott confirmed the size of the book was as presented (8.5” by 11”). Planner Keefe clarified to the Commission the book would be available in multiple formats, including paperback, hardcover, and e-book. She noted the project team was still trying very hard to meet the September 2023 deadline for book completion.

3. Madison Valley (formally Old Slave Road) Memorial Plaque Update (**Ward One**)

Planner Keefe presented, noting she had contacted Engraphix Architectural Signage for cost estimates. Because the fabricator for past markers was no longer with the company, the cost estimates were delayed, while the team went out to inspect the installed markers. She noted she had requested a variety of estimates, considering one-sided versus two-sided, and the potential for an etching. She would forward this information to Commissioners once it was received.

Next, Planner Keefe shared the comments from the Department of Public Works, noting the yellow flag location was considered an ideal location pending further investigation, and also locations within Babler State Park. The Park Superintendent had been contacted with the request, and once confirmed, one way or the other, a site visit would be organized with Commissioners.

Finally, Planner Keefe presented potential language to the Commission for the marker noting that, with the etching and all the verbiage, the content as presented was likely to be a two-sided marker. She noted that, while there was a significant history surrounding Elijah Madison, the Department had to edit it to key events in order to reduce the word count.

Chair Stevens asked if the Commission was going to zero in on Elijah Madison or also focus on other Black people in the area. Planner Keefe noted she tried to include mention of the larger history in the last line of the proposed text, where it said “Madison’s brother, Stapleton, also fought in the USCT, as did many other African Americans in this area.” Chair Stevens suggested certain individuals be named as part of the text, as a tribute to the community as a whole. Planner Keefe stated she had made that note and would see what she could do to incorporate the suggestion in the next iteration.

Commissioner Rowton suggested the focus be refined, with less about Elijah Madison, and focused more broadly on the community, with a line that talks about him, and the road named in his honor.

Council Liaison Rambaud agreed with the shift in focus. He noted it was an “unenviable job” to condense this history down to what could fit on the marker. He noted he liked the references to just how tough their service was, but that he would hate to “whitewash” the history by focusing on just one person.

The Commissioners discussed the recent history of “Old Slave Road,” given it was named so in the 1970s. Commissioner Scott noted there was no road there prior to that time. Commissioners began discussing the

larger history of the area, asking questions that Planner Keefe noted she could not confirm, given she was not a "historian" of the area or expert on the topic.

Commissioner Scott also advocated for a focus on the last two (2) paragraphs and requested additional verbiage regarding the community as a whole.

Planner Keefe suggested that she take this feedback and provide the Commission with a few different versions that it could compare at the next meeting.

Commissioner Hammond asked about timelines, particularly the restriction on the Commission's review period, given the mandated deadline for the marker to be installed by the end of the year. Planner Keefe noted the review period was expected to be several months. Engraphix had not imposed a deadline yet, but had indicated installing the marker at the end of the year would not be an issue.

Commissioner Rowton asked if the depiction was necessary, if changing the description to focus more on the community. Planner Keefe affirmed it would be dropped, given the direction from the Commission.

4. Update on Potential Project for Westland Acres (**Ward Two**)

Director Vujnich presented, noting the next step was to reach out to the Westland Acres Community's representatives to determine if there was interest in holding a small meeting, with representatives from HPC and the equivalent over at the City of Chesterfield. He noted there was a draft letter to community members included in the agenda packet.

Chair Stevens noted she shared a book with Planner Keefe about the history of Westland Acres. Planner Keefe noted, after reading the title pages, that it looked to be a combination of efforts with researchers and members of the community in the 1980s and early 1990s. Director Vujnich noted the Department had its own copy, given to it by a developer. Director Vujnich stated that, in addition to the history of the community, it was also important to document the land itself, given it was not likely to stay unchanged, given the development pressures around it. It was discussed that it was important not to "reinvent the wheel."

Commissioner Hrubes made a motion to accept the Department recommendations, as outlined in the memorandum, and to give the Chair the authority to appoint HPC representatives to this effort. Vice Chair Bachert seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. Essen Log Cabin Update (**Ward – All**)

Director Vujnich presented, noting the consultant had provided an updated proposal, with the additional component of services proposed by SWT Design. It was discussed that, out of consideration for cost, the SWT Design component be dropped, given that another consultant (Human Nature) was working with the City on the Village Green site design as a whole.

Commissioner Scott noted he was in favor of the proposal submitted by Patterhn-Ives and did not have an issue with removing the services offered by SWT Design.

Director Vujnich apologized for not providing the latest landscape plan for the Village Green, from Civil Design, Inc. (CDI).

Alternate Quarternik asked about the number of trees slated to be removed. Director Vujnich noted most of the trees slated to be removed were less desirable trees. He stated the City would plan for native trees with possibly a nicer aesthetic. Alternate Quarternik noted planting larger trees would cost exorbitant amounts, and saving trees could potentially provide buffering and shading, for less money.

Council Liaison Rambaud asked about the process for reviewing an extensive landscaping plan that is so important to the City. He noted the landscaping around the log cabin, including the proposed garden, was likely to not be much. He noted that most of the plants noted on the landscape plan were native, which was good. However, he questioned the Cultivars, given their invasive spread. He noted it was worth reviewing with an arborist. He deferred to the Commission's interest in recreating a historical landscape, though he noted he did not believe most visitors to the cabin would know the difference.

Director Vujnich noted that Human Nature had been very good at its work, but welcomed Dr. Rambaud's comments, given his expertise, which exceeds the Department's on the topic of landscaping. Dr. Rambaud noted he would be happy to participate in discussions with the landscape architects.

Commissioner Scott agreed with Dr. Rambaud that historically representative landscaping was not important. He noted a local garden club or the Wildwood Farms Community Garden might sponsor a small kitchen garden, with period correct vegetables. Dr. Rambaud noted the deer probably weren't as much of a problem at that time. He noted this project was an opportunity to educate people on how people used to deal with wildlife in their gardening efforts.

Director Vujnich invited Dr. Rambaud and Commissioner Scott to the next meeting with Human Nature and CDI. Director Vujnich noted the meeting would occur in the next few weeks.

Commissioner Hammond made the motion to endorse the Patterhn-Ives proposal, without the services offered by SWT Design. Commissioner Scott seconded. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

6. 2023 Work Program Update **(Wards – All)**

Planner Keefe noted there were no specific updates, but the Department was open to questions.

- B. Not Ready for Action – Three (3) Items
 - 1. Update on Kohn Park Sign **(Ward One)**
 - 2. Historic Route 66 Revitalization Initiative Work Program Update **(Wards – All)**
 - 3. Route 66 Roadside Park Update **(Wards – All)**

VII. New Business

A. Ready for Action – Two (2) Items

- 1. Historic Survey of Properties for 2023 and 2024 **(Wards – All)**

Planner Keefe presented, noting the Department was recommending that forty-three (43) properties be added to the inventory, built from 1948-1950, thereby updating the inventory through 2025.

Vice Chair Bachert motioned to move forward with inventorying forty-three (43) properties and amending the Commission's 2023 Work Plan to reflect such. Commissioner Hammond seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous voice vote.

Planner Keefe noted the Department had reached out to several firms for the work and asked if the Commission had a preference. She clarified that the cost was small enough that a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was not required. No preferences were communicated.

2. Champions of History Nomination – Memorial Tribute Program (**Wards All**)

Director Vujnich presented on this item, noting that Secretary Rowton had suggested nominating Paul Wojciechowski for recognition via the Memorial Tribute Program, and so the Department had reviewed that nomination. He noted that Mr. Wojciechowski had served on the Commission for over six (6) years, including its Chair for four (4) of those years, and had championed the Route 66 Roadside Park, generating much of the enthusiasm for it in existence today. He met all the requirements for the Champion of Conservancy level.

Commissioner Hrubes motioned to nominate Mr. Wojciechowski as a Champion of Conservancy in the Memorial Tribute Program. Secretary Rowton seconded the nomination.

Commissioner Hammond asked if the Commission could do more. He suggested a memorial in the form of a bicycle rack for the Route 66 Roadside Park. He agreed the brick at Old Pond School would also be nice, but that the Commission should do more. Commissioner Scott asked if the person awarded would receive a brick or a tree dedication or both. Director Vujnich affirmed the person would receive both. Director Vujnich noted the Department would investigate a bicycle rack in lieu of a brick. Alternate Quarternik noted the plaque should indicate how instrumental Mr. Wojciechowski was in championing the park project.

Director Vujnich noted for the time being it might be prudent to move forward on the items listed, given the park project was under review due to its cost, but that it would be noted for the record that, if and when the park project moved forward, a memorial in the park would be considered as well.

Dr. Rambaud noted he did not know Mr. Wojciechowski, but stated his family might also appreciate a Mayoral Proclamation.

Director Vujnich noted Mr. Wojciechowski was considered under the public category, and a proclamation was included as part of that category. He noted Mayor Bowlin had wanted to do something for Mr. Wojciechowski as well, and a Proclamation might be just the thing.

A vote was taken, and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Steven brought up Judy Sahm as the impetus for the Memorial Tribute Program and asked if she couldn't also be considered for a nomination. Director Vujnich noted her many contributions and suggested the Department would conduct some research and provide a profile for the Commission's consideration.

B. Not Ready for Action – Two (2) Items

1. Discussion Regarding the Age Threshold Used to Determine Qualification as Historic **(Wards – All)**
2. Overview of Maintenance Bids for Old Pond School **(Ward One)**

VIII. Review of Proposed Zoning/Plats/Site Development Plans/Demolition Requests – No Items

IX. Other Matters for Consideration – One (1) Item

A. Special Presentation

Chair Stevens first presented, noting that the O’Fallon Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution (DAR) had applied to the national chapter nominating the Wildwood Historic Preservation Commission for a Historic Preservation Award, which has since been granted. Therefore, the Commission has been honored with a national award, the first given out by this Chapter. She noted the Wildwood Points of Interest Map and Historic Marker Program had been instrumental to this recognition, and the President of the DAR had taken her mother on several of the driving tours. The Commission’s Officers were invited to attend the Award Ceremony on April 15th.

It was then presented to the Commission that it was Commissioner Scott’s final meeting, given he had met his six (6) year term limit. Chair Stevens stated he would be missed. Commissioner Scott said he’d likely be sitting out in the audience. Chair Stevens noted his public comment at the beginning of meetings would be appreciated. A short video prepared by Planner Keefe was played in his honor, recognizing his role in many different activities of the Commission, as a friend, mentor, architect, and Officer.

Commissioner Scott thanked the Commission Members, noting he’d learned a lot. Secretary Bachert commented he had taught a lot, too.

Mr. Scott suggested the DAR President and her mother participate in the Route 66 Scavenger Hunt.

X. Upcoming Meeting Date – April 27, 2023 (Thursday)

XI. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Steve Scott of the Historic Preservation Commission was bequeathed the gavel, courtesy of the Chair, and adjourned his final meeting at 7:55 p.m., which was reluctantly done by unanimous voice vote of the Commission.