

**AURORA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, September 8, 2020**  
**6:30 p.m.**



**Webex Virtual Meeting**  
**Aurora, CO**

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**Present:** Chair Gordon Tucker, Vice Chair Elizabeth Hamilton, Michael Lockwood, Courtney Morehouse, Lynne Evans, Barbara Henk, Megan Berens, Michael Ackman, Charlie Peters and Chris Geddes.

**Excused:** N/A

**Staff:** Drake Brownfield, Historic Preservation Specialist and Jacob McDonald, Historic Preservation Assistant

**Guests:** Thomas Terpening III

### **I. Call to Order**

A quorum being present, Chair Gordon Tucker called the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC or Commission) meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Commissioner Ackman had one correction to the minutes from the HPC regular meeting on August 11, 2020. The minutes were approved as amended via motion by Commissioner Peters, second by Commissioner Hamilton.

### **II. Staff Report**

Historic Preservation (HP) Specialist Drake Brownfield gave his report to the Commission.

**Section 106 reviews:** The reviews included 3 cell towers, a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) plumbing/electrical project, and a demolition of a non-historic power plant on Buckley Air Force Base. No historic properties affected.

**Aurora History Museum & Historic Sites (AHMHS) programming:** HP Specialist Brownfield detailed the various programs put on by AHMHS: Super Old News, Morning with the Museum, Online Lecture, Discover \_\_\_\_\_ (Delaney Farm, Coal Creek- it can be any historic site in Aurora that utilizes QR codes), and Aurora History Museum (AHM) Exhibits.

**Commission Member Appointments/Reappointments:** New appointment for Thomas Terpening III and reappointments for Charlie Peters and Mike Ackman will go to the City Council Study Session on 9/14/2020. If they are approved at that meeting, their names will be submitted to the City Council for final approval and official appointment/reappointment on 9/21/2020.

**Victory Grange Drawing:** Commissioner Henk completed a beautiful rough draft drawing of the Victory Grange as a thank you gift for recently resigned Commissioner Bailey. Commissioner Henk will transfer the drawing to cardstock and frame it for delivery to Commissioner Bailey.

**Landmark Brochures:** HP Specialist Brownfield is working on reformatting the landmark brochures to make it easier to update when new properties are designated. This next version will include the Mission Viejo Cultural Heritage Site designation and the newly landmarked Smith-Cox House. The question was raised as to whether this should be available online only or continue to print out a hard copy. Chair Tucker recommended continued printing of the brochure in small quantities, to be made available at city-owned properties and for when people are visiting various historic sites in the city.

**Geocaching Spots:** In addition to Bicentennial Art Center, ceramic coins are available at Centennial House and the Hornbein Building.

**Firewood Storage Shed (Delaney Farm Historic District-DFHD):** HP Assistant Jacob McDonald shared information he uncovered in researching this structure. It appears to be associated with the Gully Homestead and after a brief relocation to Tollgate Elementary School, was moved to the DFHD in 1981. HP Specialist Brownfield asked HPC members for their opinion about relocation or repurpose of materials if the structure was dismantled. Rehabilitation is simply too expensive and there are no drawings showing what it looked like at time of original construction. Commissioner Geddes expressed reservations about removing it when it is associated with the Gully Homestead and suggested slowing down the process in order to properly evaluate the significance of the structure. HP Specialist Brownfield mentioned a possible option of cooperating with Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) on a trail and signage in the area where the structure could play a role. He also suggested the possibility of a workday where volunteers such as Children of the American Revolution (CAR) and Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) could assist in repainting and cleaning up around the structure because it is presently in poor condition. Multiple commissioners expressed interest in helping with a repainting and cleaning effort. Several suggestions for funding sources and a possible State Historical Fund (SHF) grant to do an Historic Structure Assessment (HSA) came from commissioners. Chair Tucker reiterated the consensus of the HPC to slow things down and fully explore all options before any decisions are made.

**Boards & Commissions Meetings:** A reminder of the monthly meeting dates/times for the various city boards and commissions was shared if HPC members are interested in attending.

**Budget:** Purchase of flowers for HPC Secretary Lynne Evans. The current budget is \$5,080.05.

### III. Old Business

**1557 Dallas Landmark Nomination:** City Council approved Local Landmark designation for the Smith-Cox House at 1557 Dallas Street on Monday, August 17, 2020. HP Specialist Brownfield will work on delivering the plaque to owner Todd Discher. Chair Tucker brought up the idea of a more public unveiling of the Local Landmark plaque and several commission members (Peters and Geddes) expressed interest in attending.

**Red Cross Project:** No update on the project. HP Specialist Brownfield reiterated the fact to CU/Anschutz that interpretive signage is a key component for the project as they go back out for bids due to the previous bids coming in at double the amount allotted to the project.

**Lowry Building 880 Interpretive Signage:** Nothing to report. Commissioner Geddes will continue to work on writing the material for signage.

**Coal Creek COA:** Corrections list is done. Once a letter is sent from the engineer to the city confirming completed work, the city can reinspect the building and hopefully issue the Certificate of Occupancy.

**Delaney Farm Loafing Shed:** SHF grant is complete and city has received reimbursement for their payout of funds. HP Specialist Brownfield mentioned that the local company who provided a bid to repair the corral gates cannot accommodate the project this year. It may have to wait until next year. Construction of a small section of concrete sidewalk next to the loafing shed is an action item; see New Business below for discussion/vote.

**Oral History Project:** No update. Museum has equipment to do this even during COVID, so let Drake or Liz Ricci (AHM) know if there are any people to interview.

**KOA Fountain Project:** The Historic Sites and Preservation Office sent a note of thanks on behalf of the HPC to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for a project well done and CDOT was pleased with its receipt. HP Specialist Brownfield traded information with the CDOT Historian who oversees the KOA Building, providing her with info and pictures from our files and receiving the HSA CDOT had done years ago. Discussion also occurred related to Commissioner Ackman's suggestion of signage about the KOA Building and fountain at the RTD bus stop in front of the fountain along East Colfax Avenue. While budgets are thin due to the impact of COVID, a small signpost with a QR code would be inexpensive to create and so that option will be looked into further.

**Fire Station No. 5 Local Landmark Nomination:** A meeting is scheduled for 9/17/2020 with the Fire Chief, fire department officials, Fire Fighter Union, the City, Commissioners Ackman and Geddes, and AHMHS staff to further discuss the possible sale of the building by the city. The Fire Fighters Union is still interested in using the building as a museum. Commissioner Ackman is facilitating the meetings. HP Assistant Jacob McDonald completed a draft of the local landmark nomination form to be submitted in early 2021 when the building is officially 50 years old, an action supported by the union.

**Fox Theater SHF grant:** Drawings for the project came from a now-defunct sign company and so a new set of drawings needs to be obtained. Aurora Public Works is assisting on the project and a Request for Proposal (RFP) will go out soon. Work is expected to start at the beginning of 2021.

**Aurora Newspaper Digitization Project:** Nothing new to report. HPC will look at putting some money towards the project to spend out its budget by the end of the year. The Newspaper Digitization project can always use a donation to continue the progress and it is a valuable resource to other staff in the museum.

**HABS Assessment for Royal Villa Motor Court:** The property is due to change owners in November, and while the thought is that nothing will happen to the motor court until after the sale, there is concern that a sudden demolition would leave the HPC without any documentation of the historic buildings. Chair Tucker expressed an interest in having a team ready to go quickly should a demolition permit come in before the HPC has an opportunity to properly document the

complex. Drake will continue to keep watch for a demolition permit as well as the sale of the property in order to inform the HPC when Historic American Building Survey (HABS) level documentation can begin.

**Survey Work:** Commissioner Geddes explained in more detail how the Discover Denver survey software works and what is needed: Tablets that run on the Android operating system (available through Best Buy for approximately \$100-\$125); a database to store the data and files; and a place to store the images (Amazon for example). If the City can support these functions, that would reduce costs. Chair Tucker had multiple questions ranging from where survey work would begin to how people would be trained in survey to requesting specific dollar amounts involved. Commissioner Geddes suggested using the survey plan completed by Historitecture 5 years ago for the HPC as a starting point and explained that the Discover Denver survey project is done with volunteers, so it would be easy to train any HPC members interested in performing the survey work. Chair Tucker expressed a concern about the project being performed without proper planning and requested a deliberate plan at the October HPC meeting. Commissioner Geddes will work with HP Specialist Brownfield to discuss this project with the city IT department to see how we can move forward.

#### **Subcommittees Reports: Events**

Commissioner Morehouse shared that the Events subcommittee is working with HP Specialist Brownfield and Museum Director Scott Williams to do virtual events/video tours at various historic sites in the city and share them online. A conference call on 9/10/2020 will hammer out the final details/ logistics. The hope is to complete these programs by the end of the year.

**Report on Ward Meetings:** None attended.

**Site Plan Reports: Commissioner Peters-** *Fox Theater, Robidoux House, Milliken House, and Centennial House*

#### **V. New Business:**

**Action Item: Loafing Shed Entrance Sidewalk Square Funding Request:** HP Specialist Brownfield requested \$1500 to complete a 5'x5' square of concrete at the edge of the loafing shed. The selected company will grade the area and add concrete to facilitate entry into the loafing shed. Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to fund the loafing shed entrance sidewalk concrete work at \$1500. Second by Commissioner Ackman. Action item passed unanimously.

**Commissioner Ackman** reported that fireworks ignited a small brush fire on the DFHD property, not far from the Delaney Round Barn. Fire Station No. 8 is immediately adjacent and responded quickly. Commissioner Ackman is working with Lizz and Jessica Lira at the AHM for walking tours of Fitzsimons Army Medical Center through the eyes of Commissioner Ackman's grandfather. His grandfather first went through Fitzsimons as a 19-year-old soldier and then worked there for 48 years, retiring at age 65. They're scanning photos and working on the storyline for the tour.


**Items for the October 13, 2020 meeting will include:**

- Update on Red Cross Project
- Update on Lowry Building 880 interpretive signage
- Update on the Coal Creek CoO
- Update on the Loafing Shed concrete work
- Update on Oral History
- Update KOA signage opportunity
- Update on Fire Station No. 5
- Update on the Fox SHF Grant
- Update on the Aurora Newspaper Digitization Project
- Update on the Royal Villa Motor Court HABS Assessment
- Update on Associated Costs for Survey Software
- Subcommittees reports: Events and Designation
- Site Plan report: Commissioner Ackman: William Smith House and School
- Report on Wards meetings

**V. Adjournment:**

The Commission adjourned its meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Chris Geddes Date: September 9, 2020

Approved by: 

Date: October 13, 2020