

**CITY OF AURORA
OHIO
LANDMARK COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
August 26, 2008**

The Aurora Landmark Commission met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 26, 2008, in the Council Chambers of Aurora City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman John Kudley.

ROLL CALL:

Present:: John Kudley
Sue Sutton
Richard Fetzer
Tom Spape (arrived 7:04 p.m.)
Melanie Miguel-Courtad (arrived 7:05 p.m.)
Also Present: Ron Lowe, Advisor to Landmark Commission
Karen Mitchell, Liaison - Aurora Historical Society
Susan Dombeck, Secretary

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the June 19, 2008 meeting as printed.

Mrs. Sutton moved for approval; Mr. Fetzer seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0, on a voice vote. (The others arrived after the approval of the minutes.)

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Lowe informed the members that the porch at 45 South Chillicothe has been repaired, and the repair is very close to what existed previously. Mr. Kudley, referring to 282 South Chillicothe, stated that the deck protrudes a little further out than he thought it would. A small patio was installed, but the turn-around was not put in.

NEW BUSINESS:

PAPER EXPRESSIONS, 196 SOUTH CHILLICOTHE ROAD - WALL SIGN (FRONT)

Mr. Kudley explained the signage applications submitted.

Lorena Hunter, of Paper Expressions, introduced herself and her husband. Referring to the sign proposed for the front elevation, Mr. Lowe asked if it would be displayed on the railing. Mrs. Hunter said they would like to if it is allowed. Mr. Kudley asked the secretary to explain the zoning review. Ms. Dombeck explained that Denise Januska did not approve the sign on the railing but did approve it being installed on the side of the building. Mr. Lowe did not feel that a sign on the railing would be appropriate.

Mr. Lowe asked if there was any lettering on the front door, and Mrs. Hunter confirmed that there is lettering. Mrs. Hunter explained that the hanging sign would be on the front corner and the large sign would be on the center of the north side of the building.

Mr. Lowe stated that the old Calico Corner signs were large and on both sides of the building. Those were then removed, and a planter sign was used. Several signs have since been used in that planter. Mr. Lowe mentioned that there is already a sign, or lettering, on the glass of the front door. Referring to the hanging sign, Mr. Lowe said it is only 36 inches in length. He thought that it was an appropriate sign for the location. A conversation ensued on the lease signs that are on the building, and Mrs. Hunter said that those were put up by the owner.

Mr. Kudley asked the members to consider the large sign on the railing, as originally proposed.

MOTION: To approve the wall sign proposed for the front railing.

Mrs. Courtad moved for approval; Mrs. Sutton seconded, and the motion was **DEFEATED**, 0-5, on a roll call vote.

Yeas: None

Nays: Mrs. Courtad, Mrs. Sutton, Mr. Spape, Mr. Fetzer, Mr. Kudley

Mr. Kudley then asked the members to address the hanging sign proposed for the building's front corner.

Mr. Lowe noted that the sign will be placed on an existing bracket, which is about 10 to 15 years old. He felt that the sign was an appropriate size for the location.

MOTION: To approve the hanging sign as proposed.

Mr. Spape moved for approval; Mrs. Courtad seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0, on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. Spape, Mrs. Courtad, Mrs. Sutton, Mr. Fetzer, Mr. Kudley

Nays: None

Mr. Kudley asked the applicant to return to the next meeting and submit a picture of the large sign, as it would appear on the side wall, before the next meeting. Mr. Lowe raised the subject of the lettering on the front door and pointed out that the commission never reviewed it. Mrs. Hunter explained that someone from the city informed her that they can put what they want on the inside of the windows.

Mr. Spape said that the Architectural Board of Review has had discussion on the neon signs that say "Open" being put in business' windows. They hope to address the situation and will try to bring it to the city's attention. Mr. Kudley noted that a business in the historic district would be put under more scrutiny than normal.

Mr. Hunter pointed out that many other businesses have that type of sign in their window. Mr. Lowe agreed and said it is an issue of enforcement.

Mr. Kudley reiterated that the applicant should submit a picture of the side of the building with the large sign in the proposed location. Mrs. Hunter agreed to provide the picture.

Mr. Lowe encouraged the members to visit the site, especially with the amount of lease signs being displayed. The commission wondered whether there were any limits on lease signs and asked Ms. Dombeck to check into it with the department staff. A brief conversation followed on how the enforcement of signs would be handled.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Spape said that Rugtime put an LED sign in their window, and a discussion on neon and LED window signs took place. Mr. Lowe spoke about some business owners being unhappy because they are told they cannot have that type of window sign, yet other businesses have them. Mr. Kudley suggested having a letter sent to the Planning, Zoning and Building Division asking the staff to investigate and take action against those commercial establishments that are violating the sign code regarding neon signs. It was noted that the request could only be for the historic district.

A conversation took place regarding neon signs in business windows, and the members agreed that a letter should be sent to the department staff asking about the neon signs in the historic districts. The members had a discussion about the boundaries of the two historic districts and landmarked properties.

MOTION: To send a letter to the Planning, Zoning and Building Division expressing the commission's concern about neon signage.

Mr. Spape moved for approval; Mrs. Courtad seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0, on a voice vote.

Mr. Kudley explained that Councilman Dreher is the Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, which has done an extensive investigation of all the city owned properties and buildings. Since some fall in the historic district and some are historic buildings, the committee will sponsor a citizen's tour and hoped that the Landmark Commission would be included, since some of the properties are under the commission's jurisdiction. He asked the members if they wanted to work with the committee and co-host the event. The members agreed to help.

MOTION: To co-host the event with the Building and Grounds Committee.

Mr. Fetzer moved for approval; Mrs. Sutton seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0, on a voice vote.

Mr. Kudley said that the Aurora Historical Society is getting ready to inventory all of the items stored at the two Harmon farms and houses. He added that the Ray Harmon house is deteriorating, but the other house is still in good shape. Mr. Kudley told the members that he will inform them when the inventory is to take place.

Mrs. Courtad began a short conversation on amending ordinances and enforcement of code requirements. Mr. Lowe noted that this is an advisory commission to the building department and Architectural Board of Review, and in terms of ordinances, the commission turns to the city staff for enforcement, since that is their job. He stressed that this commission is part of the building department, not a separate entity. Mr. Kudley suggested reviewing the ordinances and consider updates or revisions that the members feel are necessary.

Mr. Spape agreed with Mr. Kudley. He said that recommendations can be made to City Council to revise the process involved for enforcement. The members agreed to look into it. Mr. Fetzer gave a brief history of the current ordinances and how they came about.

Mr. Kudley asked the secretary to provide information on the historic districts and properties, as well as the ordinances regarding this commission, to the members. Ms. Dombeck stated that the information would be in their packet for the next meeting.

There was a conversation on devising a form to use when requesting that the department address a situation that may require enforcement and a fine.

Referring to the Seward/Giles Cemetery, Mr. Lowe informed the members that the fencing is almost completely installed. One side is about three feet in from the property line to save a tree that is about two feet in diameter. The bridge and piers have been installed, and the grading has started. Mr. Lowe gave further details on the progress of the site. He said that the final landscaping will be done at the end of the project. The members talked about the site and the parking for the area.

During a discussion about visiting the site and what decisions need to be made, it was decided to schedule a special meeting for that at 6:45 p.m. on Tuesday, September 2. The members added the sign for Paper Expressions to that agenda so that it could be addressed as soon as possible. The members then had a conversation on various items, including the special meeting, the sign's location, and the cemetery's dedication.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Courtad moved to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. ; Mr. Fetzer seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0, on a voice vote.

John Kudley - Chairman

Susan Dombeck - Secretary
AUDIO TAPE ON FILE