

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting – March 21, 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Aledo met in Open Session in the Council Chambers of the City Hall building on March 21, 2023. Chairman KATE DANNER called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M. The roll was called, whereupon the following commission members answered present:

Commission Members KEITH CLARK, RONN DILLAVOU, JIM HOLMES and KATE DANNER were present. Member GERROD ANDRESEN was excused.

Also present were CHRIS HAGLOCH, Mayor, JAROD DALE, City Clerk, and LINDSEY DUNN, Aledo Main Street.

Minutes:

Motion made by JIM HOLMES and seconded by RONN DILLAVOU to approve the meeting minutes of 8/02/19. A Roll call vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Clark, Dillavou, Holmes, and Danner. NAYS: None. Motion carried. 4 yeas, 0 nays.

Old Business:

Review of Restoration Project of the Soldier's & Sailor's Memorial in Monument Park:

MAYOR Hagloch reported to HPC in 2022 money was budgeted for the installment of new sidewalks in Monument Park. A flag pole was also erected on the site. The project also included two benches, one of which was donated and the other installed during the sidewalk restoration.

DILLAVOU also reported at one time HPC also discussed adding fencing around the monument. MAYOR reported no quotes have been obtained to date for the rod-iron installation of the fence.

Also, four memorial markers are in the possession of the City and could be incorporated back into the park area. The markers were originally placed in the park in 1923. These markers honor Miss Clara Barton, a civil war nurse; Mrs. John A. Logan; Fallen Heroes, Word War I, 1914-1918; and Civil War Veterans.

New Business:

Discussion & Review of the Proposal for Monument Park Interpretive Panels:

Panel 1:

On August 12, 1875 a group of Mercer County Civil War veterans met. Among the topics discussed was the erection of a monument to the Mercer County soldiers and sailors who gave their lives during the Civil War.

A monument design submitted by W. W. Webster of Muscatine was chosen. The money to pay for the monument was raised by county residents through a fundraising campaign. The entire project cost roughly \$4,000 in 1875. In 2020 dollars the project would have cost roughly \$80,000.

The unveiling and dedication for the monument was held on July 4, 1878. Citizens of Mercer County, and artillery group from the Rock Island Arsenal, and General John A. Logan joined the committee for the event. General Logan addressed those gathered for the occasion and the names of the 357 fallen soldiers engraved on the monument were read aloud.

Panel 2:

A re-dedication of the monument was held on November 11, 1986 after a group of citizens undertook a \$4,500 restoration effort. As part of this restoration effort the names of the 357 fallen soldiers were engraved on marble tablets and affixed to the monument to replace the weathered and hard to read engravings on the original limestone.

In addition to the main monument four smaller markers were placed at the park after 1923. The markers honor “Miss Clara Barton, Civil War Nurse”, “Mrs. John A. Logan”, “Our Fallen Heroes, World War I, 1914-1918”, and “Civil War Veterans”. The markers recognizing Clara Barton and Mrs. John A. Logan also bear the letters “W. R. C.” This stands for Women’s Relief Corps. The markers recognizing “Our Fallen Soldiers” and “Civil War Veterans” bear the letters “A. L. A.” It is possible that this stands for American Legion Auxiliary.

DANNER inquired on the history of the cannons and if those should be incorporated into a panel. HOLMES to review and possibly highlight the commission of the donated funds.

DANNER inquired if HPC should include the costs related to restoration projects that have been completed in the past and recently as well. HPC had no thoughts either way on that with no final determination made.

MAYOR inquired if a QR Code should be created so visitors are able to link to the city website and read the entire dedication speech. HPC noted the suggestion and voiced interest of the idea.

After discussion, HPC to gear towards four (4) panels:

Panel 1 – the history of the park in the 1870’s as referenced above in the draft panel 1.

Panel 2 – the dedication & ceremony and to include photos of the cannons.

Panel 3 – the 1900’s with the addition of the smaller memorial markers as referenced above in draft panel 2.

Panel 4 – dedicated to the restoration in the 2000’s.

Panel 5 – (Possibility) – to include the poem read during the dedication by Poet Collins on page 852 of the History of Mercer and Henderson Counties.

“How sleep the brave who sink to rest, By all their country’s wishes best; By fairy land their knell is rung, By forms unseen their dirge is sung; Their honor comes, a pilgrim gray, To bless the turn that wraps their clay, And freedom shall awhile repair, To dwell a weeping hermit there.”

HPC noted an onsite of Monument Park to be held on Tuesday, March 28 at 6:00 p.m. To possibly visit the RMA Memorial the same evening to review those interpretive panels at that site.

DANNER inquired if HPC should create a self-guided tour of historical sites in Aledo with QR codes. MAYOR noted the downtown business district would be a great start. Suggestions were also discussed on how the City could incorporate an audible form as well.

DANNER inquired if future funding should be considered to help assist HPC and AMS to create this type of project. HPC to review building history, memorials, monuments, murals, etc. for this type of project. To also consider an audible, readable or both and be included in future discussions. HPC to continue the discussion of the project.

Discussion of the Appointment of Historic Preservation Commission Members:

DANNER reported she has spoken with Kaitlin Engwall and Tara McFarland who have both voiced interest in becoming HPC Commission members. HOLMES will be going off the City Council in May and the Commission will need to find a replacement for him. DILLAVOU to also speak with Mark Reick who is versed in technology and inquire if he would be interested in being a member.

Next Meeting: HPC to meet quarterly.

Adjournment:

Motion made by RONN DILLAVOU and seconded by KEITH CLARK to adjourn the Historic Preservation Commission Meeting. Unanimous voice vote followed in agreement. Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M.