MINUTES OF THE MEETING
ALTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Tuesday, January 20, 2015, at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Bader, Mary Anderson, Matt Asselmeier, Monica Mason, Diane Plummer and Jonas Janek

ABSENT: Tom Edelmann

Others: Debbie Beck, Secretary

The meeting of the Alton Historical Commission was called to order by Chairman Doug Bader on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, at 7:00 pm.

This was a joint meeting with the Cool Cities Committee. The members present were Wayne Politsch, Jeff Dale, Adam Piepert and David Boulds. The members absent were Zeke Jabusch and Laura Asher. The reason for this joint meeting was a conference call with EPA regarding planning an event related to balancing energy efficiency with historic preservation. At 7:01, Matt Asselmeier placed a call to Erin Newman, who is in charge of the Air Progress Climate and Energy Program for the Chicago EPA office. Newman stated that she understands that the four topics the groups are interested in are roofs, insulation, windows and indoor air quality and the concerns of historic preservation versus energy efficiency. Newman stated that she thought an all-day, hands-on training seminar for the commissioners only, and then a shorter, possibly 2 hour, meeting/seminar, with a take home packet for the homeowners, would be the appropriate format for this event. Newman stated that an evening session is not long enough to educate homeowners, so the take home packets would make a maximum impact for them. Some of the information that could be included in the packets is the programs that Ameren offers. Adam Piepert stated that he would get the information from Ameren on their incentives and forward it to each of the commissioners.

A discussion then ensued. One topic discussed was that of an energy audit being held at a historical house. Two venues suggested were Haskell House, at 1211 Henry St, and Hart House, at 524-526 Belle St. Haskell House is vacant, has three stories, approximately 60 windows, with over half of them having been replaced. Hart House is a duplex, with a commercial business on one side. The residential side is a smaller venue, vacant, but all of the windows are original. The results of this audit would educate the Historical Commission and the Cool Cities Committee on air flow and how to increase energy efficiency without interfering with the historical aspects of the house. Newman stated that springtime would be a good time to do the energy seminar, because residents have been paying larger electric bills and the energy audit works better when the inside temperature is close to the same as the outside temperature.

Another topic discussed was the speakers. She stated that Frank Butterfield, of Illinois Landmarks, and Emily Robinson, of Elevate Energy, have both shown an interest in participating in a seminar, at no cost to the City. Another possibility would be Michael Allen. A remark was made about a possibility of video recording these speakers. Newman stated that there would have to be an agreement made with the speakers in order to record their speeches.

At 7:53 pm the conference call with Erin Newman ended. Doug Bader then asked if there were any comments from the public.

At 8:00 Cool Cities Committee departed.

After reading the minutes of December 2, 2014, Doug Bader wanted an addition made to the minutes. Bader wanted the word "porch" added to the second line of the first paragraph under NEW BUSINESS. Mary Anderson moved to accept the amended minutes for December 2, 2014. Diane Plummer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Doug Bader stated that certificates for improvements made to historical properties have not been awarded since 2011. He sent out an e-mail to the commissioners reference the categories and descriptions for the awards from then. The following is the list:

1. PRESERVATION – For historically sensitive rehabilitation, renovation, or restoration of a building.
2. NEW CONSTRUCTION – For a new structure, or an addition to a structure, which is sensitive the character of the original building.
3. COMMERCIAL – For a historically sensitive improvement to a property used for commercial or industrial purposes.
4. STEWARDSHIP – For an individual who has shown long term dedication towards an architecturally important building.
5. SURVIVOR – For restoration of a building damaged by a natural calamity, such as by storm or fire.
6. PAINT – For sensitive painting of a building with historical or architectural importance.

Bader stated that he would like to be able to finalize the categories' wording at the February 3rd meeting. The commission would make nominations, but he would also like to do a press release announcing the categories and the public would have 30 days to submit their nominations. He stated it would be beneficial to have an e-mail address so that people would be able to make their nominations, via the computer. Bader stated the nomination form didn't need to be an elaborate form, to make it simple, just the address and which category the nomination was for. He also stated that there could be more than one (1) winner per category. It was stated that since May is Historic Preservation Month, this would be the best time for the presentation of certificates. Bader stated that the presentation of awards would need to be added to the May 27, 2015, City Council Meeting, so that Mayor Walker would be able to make the presentation of certificates to the winners. It was noted that the Commission needed to plan ahead for the certificates, because the individual who use to make them has retired. Bader reminded everyone to think about their nominations and present them at the February 3rd meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

In other business, Matt Asselmeier related the news that 510 Seminary Square was going before the Planning Commission to become a bed and breakfast, Grand Theatre is on Craigslist for $89,000 and that 821 Alby would be coming before the commission on February the 3rd for vinyl siding.

There being no further discussion, or comments from the public, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie J. Beck
Secretary