

MINUTES FOR
REGULAR MEETING
OWOSSO HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2016, 6:00 p.m.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Newman.

ROLL CALL was taken by Recording Secretary, Bridget Cannon.

PRESENT: Chairman Scott Newman; Secretary Philip Hathaway; Commissioner Matthew VanEpps; Commissioner Lance Omer; Commissioner Gary Wilson

ABSENT: Vice-Chairman Vince Gonyou

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Josh Adams, Owosso Main Street Manager

AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by Commissioner Hathaway and supported by Commissioner VanEpps to approve the agenda for February 17, 2016.

MINUTES APPROVAL: Motion by Commissioner Hathaway and supported by Commissioner Wilson to approve the minutes of September 16, 2015 with the following amendment as revised by Commissioner Hathaway: ~~Mr. Michael~~ NICKOLAS Ardelean is going to be the contractor doing the brickwork (See 200 W. Exchange Street – Front Entry Reconstruction).

Motion by Commissioner Hathaway and supported by Commissioner VanEpps to approve the minutes of October 8, 2015.

Communications:

1. Staff Memorandum
2. Meeting minutes of September 16, 2015
3. Meeting minutes of October 8, 2015

Public/Commissioner Comments:

No public comments. The board wishes to fill vacancy of board member James Eaton.

Committee Reports: None

Public Hearings: None

Items of Business:

- 1) HDC Response to proposed House Bill 5232 and Senate Bill 720

Board referred to advocacy alert from the Michigan Historic Preservation Network and the proposed House Bill No. 5232 in the meeting packet. Board agrees with the stance from the Michigan Historic Preservation Network that House Bill 5232 and Senate Bill 720 have serious detrimental impact to historic resources and local historic districts in Michigan's Local Historic Districts. The proposed bills would diminish local historic districts, resulting in "insensitive development" in historically significant areas, "inappropriate alterations, and demolitions." The

new proposal would require a 2/3 majority support petition of property owners before a study committee could be appointed. The board feels proposed bills control what districts may be established, resulting in historic districts in the future being very difficult to create & very easy to dissolve. Local historic districts have boosted property values downtown in Owosso and the board feels it would be disastrous to eliminate historic districts at this point. Commissioner Hathaway notes that the historic Wesener Building, gutted by a fatal arson fire in 2007, was proposed to be demolished and converted to a parking lot in years past. The historic district commission disapproved the demolition, and now a \$2.5 million project is in progress. The building's historic character is being restored, thanks to the new property owners.

Motion by Commissioner Hathaway and supported by Commissioner VanEpps to draft a letter from the City of Owosso Historic District Commission in opposition to the proposed House Bill 5232 and Senate Bill 720.

Yeas all. Motion was passed.

Public Comments: None

Board Comments: Josh Adams gave a brief update regarding the façade restoration program for the downtown area. There are currently eleven possible façade restorations in the design process and Owosso Main Street is hoping to see construction start by July 1, 2016.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Commissioner Wilson and supported by Commissioner Omer to adjourn at 7:03 p.m. until March 16, 2016.

Phil Hathaway, Secretary

bac