

Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission

Minutes

The meeting was held on Thursday, May 18, at 7 p.m., in the meeting room of the Jefferson County Planning Commission. Commission members Coyle, Theriault, Adams, Crolus, and Washington were present.

Washington opened the public hearing on the Landmark Commission's Rules. The following persons testified:

Dixie Kilham: In Section IV B, the notice for calling a special meeting (24 hours) is too short; it should be 2 weeks. The provisions for cancellation of meetings should be changed so that the public is given more notice.

He expressed concern over members of the Landmarks Commission having possible conflicts of interest, and he indicated that members should consider the impact of their decisions on the economy of the county. He also warned members against becoming swayed in their decisions by pressure from the National Park Service.

Mr. John Skinner: Asked if the County Commission will hold a hearing on the Rules after the Landmarks Commission hearing. Washington said that the County Commission would hold a hearing on the Landmark Commissions recommendations.

Mr. Skinner expressed concern over the ambiguity of the definition of an historic district and said that the statutes and rules will probably be subject to a variety of interpretations. He thought the procedures for granting Certificates of Appropriateness were cumbersome, bureaucratic, and unwarranted.

He requested that the Rules be amended to state that they must be in agreement with the zoning ordinance. He said that he had no problem with persons applying for voluntary historic easements but thought that maintaining an historic zone would cause administrative problems.

He said that he would submit written comments within the next three weeks.

Mr. Nidinger: Stated that he was opposed to having his neighbors decide whether his property would become part of an historic district.

Michael Shepherd: Said that he disliked the involuntary nature of the procedures for designating historic districts. He thought that the Certificates of Appropriateness were cumbersome and that specific criteria were needed.

The public hearing was closed at 8:10 p.m.

During the regular meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

Coyle recommended that the Rules regarding notice for special meetings of the Landmarks be amended to provide 48 hours notice rather than 24 hours. Theriault seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Adams recommended that the Landmarks Commission meet with representatives of other historic districts in the county. He also recommended that the Landmarks Commission conduct a windshield survey of county sites on the national register.

Coyle and Adams agreed to oversee the efforts of volunteers working on the survey. The following persons had volunteered to help: Mr. and Mrs. Santucci, Sarah Olsen, Susan Munro, and Edna Jordan.

Washington noted that the Jefferson County Historical Society would match money provided by the County Commission for an historic overlay to the zoning map. He also said that the Landmarks Commission will have to re-designate landmarks previously entered on the national register.

Coyle moved that a plaque be given to Mrs. Bretch for Walnut Grove. Crolius seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Crolius noted that the Historic Preservation Unit of the WV Dept. of Culture & History would meet in Jefferson County on August 12.

The meeting ended at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William D. Theriault
Secretary