

**WHITEWATER LANDMARK COMMISSION  
ANNUAL PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES REPORT  
(January – December 2021)**

The City of Whitewater Landmarks Commission met 12 times during 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings scheduled for February through June were held virtually and the remainder of the meetings for the calendar year were hybrid with the option of attendance in person or by a virtual platform.

The Commission currently monitors 27 individually listed Local Landmarks as well as the oversight of the National Register's Main Street Historic District and historic city owned property. The Commission works in conjunction with the City Parks and Recreation Department, Neighborhood Services and the Whitewater Historical Society. In 2008, the Commission reviewed and accepted the Architectural and Historic Survey of City of Whitewater properties.

In 2021 Landmark Commissioners:

**February**

The Commission began an investigation into the history of the Whitewater City Waterworks Building as a possible Local Landmark. It was later determined that historic signage of the site would be a better option as opposed to landmark status.

They also began a proactive campaign suggesting the provision of a capital improvement plan for future restoration of the Birge Fountain and cited the need for the Birge Fountain Committee to begin holding meetings, provide annual reports and meeting minutes.

The Commission investigated and determined that they would begin posting different locally landmarked city owned sites on "The Clio" website as a part of their public education component.

**March**

The Commission was informed by the Wisconsin State Preservation Commission that the \$33,000 grant that had they had applied for to analyze and measure the mounds at the Effigy Mounds Preserve was denied citing that the jury who reviewed the grant request but felt that "the objectives and scope of work was not driven by the city".

Approved the request of the owner of the Landmark Hotel at 204 Main Street regarding the replacement of exterior doors to the south and east sides of the building and informed Neighborhood Services of this decision.

Provided a photo and detailed information on The Prairie Tiller Mural for posting on "The Clio" website.

The Commission proposed that they begin research and nominate the Ellen and Everett Long residence as a local landmark representing an excellent example of a mid-century modern architecture.

**April**

Commissioners attended the Wisconsin Archeological Conference virtually.

Commission members met with the Director of Parks and Recreation to discuss the LIDAR Survey and recommendations prepared by Amy Rosebrough, State Archeologist several years ago. While the LIDAR imaging does not clearly define the parameters of the mounds, it is one of the few tools that the Commission has to establish a 15 foot, clear buffer around the mounds. This buffer zone is mandated by state law prior to establishing a walking path through the preserve.

The Commission suggested the additional postings of photos and information on “The Clio” website regarding the Walton Oaks, the Territorial Oak and the Oak Grove Cemetery.

With the person of the Long’s the Commission scheduled a hearing for May to finalize their residence as a local landmark.

### **May**

The Commission presented an Annual Commission Activities report to the Whitewater City Council for 2020.

They designated the Ellen and Everett Long house as a Local Landmark.

Letters were sent thanking the owners of Local Landmarks for the continued maintenance of their properties.

The Commission applied for a permit from the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office “to disturb a burial mound site” with regard to the clean-up of storm damage at the Effigy Mounds Preserve. In addition, they contacted the Commonwealth Heritage Group (archeologists) with regard to assistance with the repair of the damage caused by fallen trees and upturned root balls.

Provided an educational photo display of City owned Local Landmarks and Historic City Owned Property at the library for public education.

Received proclamations from the City Manager regarding Historic Preservation and Archeology Month.

### **June**

The Commission received the permit from the State allowing for work at the Effigy Mounds Preserve and contacted Commonwealth Heritage to assist with a review and suggestions for repair of the storm damage. The permit cites that a state certified archeologist must be present and provide for recommended procedures for repair. Commission members met virtually with Commonwealth Heritage regarding this. In addition, Commissioners met at the mounds with city employees to discuss repair and maintenance concerns.

Met with the Neighborhood Services department and building inspectors regarding the procedures to follow with permits issued to changes in the facades of locally landmarked buildings.

Approved the request of the Hamilton House Innkeeper for exterior areas of restoration needed.

### **July**

We renewed the Landmark Commission’s membership with the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Association and submitted our annual report to the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Commission to maintain our Certified Local Government Status.

The city cleared trees and brush from the area near the Panther Effigy Mound to allow for a 15 foot buffer zone where the walking path begins. Elissa Hult, state certified archeologist came on site and recommend that the upturned root ball on the Panther Mound is left to decay.

Addressed citizen concerns regarding maintenance and encroachment issues at the Walton Oaks Park with the city and the Urban Forestry Commission.

### **August**

We filed the annual Commission report with the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

We filed the annual Commission report with the National Park Service to maintain Whitewater’s Certified Local Government status.

### **September**

Commissioners attended the Wisconsin State Historical Society’s virtual conference.

Suggested that the Birge Fountain oversight be returned to the Landmarks Commission because the Birge Fountain Committee is defunct (does not meet, members have resigned, annual reports and minutes have not been filed).

The Commission presented a power-point presentation to the Common Council regarding the Effigy Mounds Preserve.

Sent a letter to the City Manager on September 10th relating the concerns the Commission had regarding the lack of maintenance of a City owned landmark (Effigy Mounds Preserve) requesting that he or his designee would have sixty days to develop a plan of action to the concerns addressed by the Commission.

### **October**

Historic city signage which was suggested and researched was installed for the Starin Park Water Tower, the Territorial Oak and the Brickyard Kilns. The Weinberg historic sign had been previously installed at the Lakefront Park in late spring.

Reviewed plans from Midwest Prairie for proposed maintenance at the Effigy Mounds Preserve and the Walton Oaks Park. The Commission also recommended securing bids from Tall Grass and Creative Edge.

The Commission recommended the consideration of an ordinance change by the Common Council indicating that the Birge Fountain Committee is no a viable committee and oversight of the fountain should be designated to the Landmarks Commission.

### **November**

The Commission approved a request from the Delta Zeta Sorority for the installation of a storm door on the west side of their house for reasons of health and safety.

Investigated citizen concerns expressed regarding the status of the Starin Park Water Tower and its possible destruction. The City has indicated that it will not be destroyed but decommissioned once the new water tower becomes operational.

Entertained the request from students at the University for the possible LIDAR measurement of the Effigy Mounds.

### **December**

Approved the request presented by Jason Jerman, owner of the Landmark Hotel for materials to be used in the restoration of the structure and contacted Neighborhood Services allowing for a building permit to be issued for this restoration.

### **Looking ahead to 2022, the Whitewater Landmarks Commission is planning to:**

continue monitoring the maintenance plan proposed by the City for the Effigy Mounds Preserve and Walton Oaks Park.

Assist other agencies with planning for a Heritage Day Celebration for 2023.

continue with the posting of historic information about the City of Whitewater and its Local Landmarks on "The Clio" website.

provide an educational display of "the history of the Birge Fountain" at the Irvin L. Young Memorial Library to celebrate May as Historic Preservation month.

consider additional designations of properties that qualify for the status of Local Landmarks.  
continue assisting property owners of Local Landmarks with their efforts regarding restoration of their homes and businesses.

update the inventory of “city owned historic property”.

provide oversight for the Birge Fountain.