

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2024

Approved January 23, 2025

Commission Members Present: IN PERSON: Laz Scangas, Chair; Richard Stahl, Vice Chair; Joe Luneau.

Commission Members Absent: Lisa Evans; Barbara Weinstein.

City Staff present: IN PERSON: Katie Haseltine (Minute-Taker); Chip Sawyer (Director of Planning & Development)

Members of the public present: Lyssa Papazian; Louise Haynes

- 1. Begin Recording and Open Meeting - L. Scangas calls meeting to order at 6:00 pm.**
 - a. Introduction of attendees
 - b. Public comment on issues not on agenda - none
 - c. Discuss additions or deletions to agenda - none
- 2. Approval of Minutes - no quorum, so will table approval until next meeting**
- 3. Discuss French Canadian Heritage District project**
 - a. Introduction to consultant
 - a. L. Papazian introduces herself and explains that she has done some work in the St. Albans area in the past and is looking forward to working on this. L. Scangas shares that L. Papazian did work on the Apple Blossoms building near Holy Angels.
 - b. Background and past work on heritage district
 - a. L. Haynes opens the discussion with the research/knowledge she has:
 - a. The St. Albans Museum started the French Heritage Project
 - b. Her parents came from Quebec for farming and thought that was the direction this project would start, but soon found out that immigrants were predated by people from the railroad.
 - c. There was a lot of missionary priests, most of which came down from Quebec.
 - d. 1853 the dioceses of Vermont was created and the bishop was instrumental in navigating change. Down the road, people were able to purchase the southwest corner of North Elm Street, which is where they built the church.
 - e. The French speaking population decided they wanted to have a school. So, they bought property on the northwestern side of North Elm Street. The school opened in 1899 and continued into the 1960s. Secretarial and bookkeeping classes were started to encourage students to stay beyond the 8th grade.
 - f. 1899 - congregants went west of the church, across the parking lot and built a school. It continued into the 1960s and Father Dano at the time discovered

students were leaving after 8th grade and he didn't agree with that. So, they started secretarial and bookkeeping skills. In 1954, schools shifted from a half day of English and a half day of French to chosen classes in certain languages.

- g. There has been a long time rivalry that predates the new world between the Irish and the French.
- h. The area south of Lake Street and the railroad has been fairly well maintained.
- b. L. Papazian asks for more clarification from where the names came from. L. Haynes explains that the museum has directories that date back to 1936. J. Luneau suggests looking at Holy Angels stained glass windows and the people that sponsored those windows.
- c. L. Scangas asks L. Haynes to expand on families that started business in the area. L. Haynes mentions a bait shop, insurance company, grocery stores, etc.
- d. L. Haynes adds that the bay area had a church called Lady of the Lake, but to her knowledge, didn't have French background. She goes on to say that area farmers had a pretty close knit group by way of St. John the Baptist or home parties.
- e. L. Scangas inquires about the prominent names/families from this time. L. Haynes mentions Montcalm, Cota, Veins, Montana, Luneau, Lamothe, Yandow, Parrow, Allard, Chevalier; Mosher, Gays, Bloiun, as just some of the names from that time.
- c. Scope of work
 - a. L. Scangas, J. Luneau, C. Sawyer, and L. Papazian discuss the upcoming timeline and what needs to be done.
 - b. L. Scangas mentions that the board took pictures of all buildings in that district in Summer 2023. C. Sawyer will share those with L. Papazian.
- d. Need for volunteers
 - a. L. Papazian notes that April is the best time for photography when leaves are off the trees. L. Haynes mentions the school and if there might be students in a photography club that might be interested in helping out. J. Luneau mentions that high schoolers need community service hours and could potentially get volunteer hours from them.
 - b. C. Sawyer suggests that the best approach would be for L. Papazian to determine what items can best help her out. C. Sawyer notes that she is not limited to what was set in the RFP. L. Papazian will work on a to-do list that she believes volunteers can manage completing and get that to the board.
- e. Next steps
 - a. L. Scangas asks what L. Papazian needs from the board. She will start with some of her own research and then reach out to the board on areas they can help with.
 - b. L. Haynes asks if they plan to commemorate this project at its conclusion, noting that 2030 is the 100th anniversary of BFA. L. Scangas estimates this project to be finished around 2026, so if there was anything it would be prior to 2030.

4. Other Business - None.

5. Review next meeting date/time

- a. Will hold December 10th meeting to check-in with L. Papazian and see where she is at.
- b. C. Sawyer mentions the need of recruiting volunteers.

- c. L. Scangas mentions the need for 2 new board members.
- d. J. Luneau can mention this at the board meeting for the Historical Society. C. Sawyer mentions the Rotary Club and if anyone there might be interested.

6. Adjourn.

- **L. Scangas adjourns meeting at 7:15 pm.**