

# CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE

## Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation

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### AGENDA

August 8, 2023, 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
  - 4.1 ACHP Minutes - March 14, 2023
  - 4.2 ACHP Minutes - April 11, 2023
5. Open Forum
6. Action Items
7. Discussions Items
8. Project Updates
  - 8.1 William Crockett Plaque Ceremony
  - 8.2 Crockett Fields at Hamlet Park Entrance Sign
  - 8.3 Historical Display Case
9. Historic Inquiries, Articles, and Research Information
  - 9.1 Old People's Home and Cemetery
10. Committee Comments
11. Council Liaison Comments
12. Adjournment



**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION**  
**March 14, 2023**

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Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation was duly held at the Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway South, Cottage Grove, Minnesota, on the 14th day of March, 2023.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Herb Reckinger called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

*MEMBERS PRESENT:* Herb Reckinger, Corinne Marz, Tony Beckman, Linda Johnston

*MEMBERS ABSENT:* Jacob Grundauser, Joseph Gall, Marie Sumstine

*OTHERS PRESENT:* Councilmember Dave Thiede, Mike Mrosla, Senior Planner, Conner Jakes, Associate Planner; Lisa Hartfield, Citizen.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion made by Marz to approve the Agenda with no changes. Johnston seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

**OPEN FORUM**

No one spoke.

**ACTION ITEMS**

***Committee Terms***

Mrosla stated the newly adopted City Code has changed term length for committees and total number of members on the committee to seven members from the previous eight members. He then proceeded to inform the committee members on their term length and remaining time available to serve on the committee. Councilmember Thiede spoke about inclusion and inviting others to attend the meetings and participate even if there is not room on the committee as a committee member.

No additional action was taken.

### ***Review 2023 Meeting Schedule Discussion***

Mroska summarized the memo and opened for discussion on the meeting start time. Johnston stated she wouldn't mind an earlier start time of 5:00 p.m., and it would help staff not be required to stay late for the meeting. Reckinger and Marz agreed. Beckman stated a 5:00 p.m. start time would be difficult due to personal life and proposed a 6:00 p.m. meeting start time. Councilmember Thiede agreed that a 6:00 p.m. start time would be a good option as he would be able to attend as well.

Johnston made a motion to approve a 6:00 p.m. start time for future ACHP meetings. Marz seconded. The motion was approved unanimously (4-0).

### ***William Crockett Fields at Hamlet Park Plaque Ceremony Discussion***

Mroska summarized the memo and opened for discussion for a date and time of the commemoration of the Crockett Plaque. Reckinger stated that Crockett's sister Gail is open to either April 15 or April 22, but would prefer April 22. Reckinger showed the committee a wall hanging that will be presented to Gail at the commemoration. The committee came to a consensus that April 22 would be the date for the ceremony. Johnston suggested a 10:00 a.m. start time for the commemoration so that Gail and others could drive around the City after the event is over; all agreed. Reckinger asked whether the name will still be Crockett Fields; staff stated they will follow-up with Parks Director Dockter to confirm. April 22 at 10:00 a.m. was agreed to as the date and time for the William Crockett Commemoration Event. No further action was taken on this item.

### ***Preservationist of the Year Discussion***

Mroska summarized the memo and opened for discussion on whether to allow residents to nominate potential recipients for Historic Preservationist of the Year. Reckinger asked who would select the nominee; staff responded that the ACHP would still select the recipient, but residents would be able to nominate potential recipients. Reckinger asked if a small write-up could be inserted in the Cottage Grove Reports mailing; staff stated they will contact the Administration Department to verify whether the mailing dates will coordinate correctly for an insert. Beckman asked how the process was previously completed; staff responded that the ACHP previously nominated and selected the recipient. Staff showed the previous recipients of the award. All committee members agreed to allow nominations from the residents via the City's website. No further action was taken on this item.

### ***Historical Display Discussion***

Jakes summarized the memo and opened for discussion on possible display case ideas and options. Johnston responded that the display case could focus on schools and the case could rotate between different themes every six months. Johnston further recommended the idea of having an "old to current" section within the display case that would highlight a building's first use up to current day. Thiede presented the idea of a digital element to the display case with voice recordings of stories of what is presented within the display case. Mroska stated staff is currently working on a potential interactive map that would be on the City website and have a voice recorded element to it. Beckman asked if staff has photos or where items would be assembled from. Staff responded that they would go through City files to determine what items are already available and possibly contact New History, the City's consultant for History, for additional items and files. The committee then suggested having a portion of the display be static, which would contain a timeline of Cottage Grove from beginning to current, and part of the display rotating every six months. The rotational portion would have a specific focus around the themes of schools, evolution of Highway 61, rail-

roads, barns, and airplanes. Staff stated they would research within the City files to find what documentation could be used for the display and would report at the next meeting. No further action was taken on this item.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### ***Aurilla Furber Discussion***

Jakes summarized the memo and opened for discussion/suggestions on research locations. Reckinger suggested giving the poetry written by Ms. Furber to the County. Beckman asked staff if they have access to ancestry.com, which may contain additional information; staff responded they do not have access. Marz stated she will access her ancestry.com account and send any information that is found. Johnston stated the Washington County Historical Society should have property records for all of the past, which will help determine where she may have lived. Beckman suggested utilizing findagrave.com, which may also contain additional information for siblings. No further action was taken on this item.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### ***Century Homes Program***

Staff stated they are currently researching implementing a potential Century Homes Program. The program would allow a property owner with a century old home to enroll in the program and purchase a plaque that would be displayed on the property. Reckinger stated the County had a Century Homes Display at some time and could be a resource.

### ***Historical Context Study***

Staff stated they are currently working with New History on the potential to develop a Historical Context Study. Beckman asked what is contained within this document; staff responded that it is yet to be determined based on what documents have previously been created. Johnston stated it would be beneficial to focus on current history from 1975+ as many people are still alive and can give oral history. Thiede stated a small event could be held at River Oaks or a senior living location within the City to invite people to share what they know relating to historic events and people. The conversations could be recorded and documented for future use. No further action was taken on this item.

### ***Cedarhurst***

Staff stated there are no updates relating to the site. No further action was taken on this item.

### ***10301 Grey Cloud Trail South***

Staff stated the previous developer has decided not to continue with the project, and there are no further updates. No further action was taken on this item.

### ***Dodge Nature Center Remodel***

Staff stated a small addition is being constructed on site that would allow for additional learning opportunities and educational classes to be held on site. No further discussion was taken on this item.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were none.

## **HISTORIC INQUIRIES, ARTICLES, AND RESEARCH INFORMATION**

There were none.

## **COUNCIL LIASON COMMENTS**

Thiede stated a group with the University of Minnesota is conducting their capstone project on the area of Old Cottage Grove. Staff explained the project and the intent of the project. Additional information on open house time and location will be presented to the Committee.

## **COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

There were none.

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

There were none.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Reckinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marz seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.



**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION**  
**April 11, 2023**

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Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation was duly held at the Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway South, Cottage Grove, Minnesota, on the 11th day of April, 2023.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Herb Reckinger called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

*MEMBERS PRESENT:* Herb Reckinger, Corinne Marz, Tony Beckman, Linda Johnston, Joseph Gall, Jacob Grundhauser, Marie Sumstine

*MEMBERS ABSENT:*

*OTHERS PRESENT:* Councilmember Dave Thiede, David Olson, Parks & Recreation Commission, Mike Mrosla, Senior Planner, Conner Jakes, Associate Planner

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion made by Gall to approve the Agenda with no changes. Beckman seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

**OPEN FORUM**

Chair Reckinger discussed details relating to the William Crockett Plaque Ceremony. Discussion included ensuring the grounds were clean, USA Flag was raised, and invitations to members throughout the community.

**ACTION ITEMS**

***Historic Preservation Month 2023 Proclamation***

Mrosla summarized the memo and opened for discussion. Consensus among the committee was support for the proclamation and that it was correct.

No additional action was taken.

### ***Preservationist of the Year Selection***

Mroska summarized the memo and opened for discussion of the preservationist of the year selection. One nominee was submitted from the online submittal portal, which was Frances “Frankie” Ratzlaff. Discussion on other potential recipients of the award included Jack Germon for his property and structure maintenance, Orrin Thompson for suburban expansion, and the Sherwin Williams property for its maintenance and general upkeep. Committee member Brinkman asked for additional information on Frankie Ratzlaff in regard to why she was nominated. Staff and Chair Reckinger responded by stating she was on the ACHP for the maximum term length at the time, which was 10 years (2003-2013), very involved in historical outreach throughout Washington County, and involved in various items such as the ACHP playing cards and cookbooks. There was additional discussion on whether there could be multiple recipients; staff responded only one recipient can receive the award.

Johnston made a motion to nominate Frances “Frankie” Ratzlaff as the 2023 Preservationist of the Year. Gall seconded. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

### ***Historical Context Study Era***

Mroska summarized the memo and opened for discussion on the context study era. Johnston asked whether Panorama City is designated on the City’s historical nomination list. Sumstine asked whether the original police station is designated on the City’s historical nomination list. Staff stated they would further research whether each is currently designated on the City’s historical nomination list. Context studies were discussed in detail and what the desired outcome would be. Coffee over History events were discussed, where staff would hold an open house for members of the community to discuss memories about specific events of the past and to share stories with the intent of documenting oral history. Jakes provided an in depth summary of what a context study is and the potential future phases that could occur after the study is complete. Sumstine inquired as to who would conduct the study; staff responded the City currently has a contract with New History who they have been in contact with. Councilmember Thiede inquired to whether staff has contacted any organizations for grants; staff responded they have been in contact with the Minnesota Historical Society for grant funding. Chair Reckinger stated the 1945-1990 era would be a good era to study and could potentially include the lock and dam that created many rivers by Grey Cloud. Councilmember Thiede discussed utilizing the firehouse on Lamar as a local museum to display various historical items. Brinkman recommended including 3M and Chemolite in 1948.

Grundhauser made a motion to approve the proposed historical context study era of 1945 to 1990 and to move forward with grant applications to the Minnesota Historical Society. Gall seconded. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### ***Historical Display Case***

Jakes reminded the Commission of staff’s work on the historical display case to be located outside of the Training Room in City Hall, and that research has begun on schools of the present and past throughout the community. Staff had a few schools they wanted the Commission’s input and knowledge on, which included Grove Elementary School and Nessel School. Chair Reckinger recommended utilizing the Washington County Historical Society’s website as there is a webpage containing information on various schools of the past within Washington County. The Commission

discussed the Cottage Grove School, which was nicknamed the Mackintosh School after the farmers that dedicated the land for the school. No further action was taken on this item.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### ***William Crockett Plaque Ceremony***

Mroska reminded the Commission of the William Crockett Plaque Ceremony to be held at 10:00 a.m. on April 22, 2023 at Hamlet Park.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the March 14, 2023, meeting and April 11, 2023, meeting will occur at the June 13, 2023, meeting.

## **HISTORIC INQUIRIES, ARTICLES, AND RESEARCH INFORMATION**

There were none.

## **COUNCIL LIASON COMMENTS**

There were none.

## **COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

Sumstine inquired how to preserve the old school building off of Point Douglas Road and Kimbro Avenue, and if it would be possible to tour. Sumstine additionally inquired as to the current status of the foundation at the Furber house.

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

There were none.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Gall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marz seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

**TO:** Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation

**FROM:** Mike Mrosla, Senior Planner  
Conner Jakes, Associate Planner

**DATE:** August 8, 2023

**RE:** William Crockett Plaque Ceremony

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## Project Update

On April 22, 2023, the ACHP held the William Crockett Plaque Ceremony at the Crockett Fields at Hamlet Park. The ceremony consisted of a brief history of Mr. Crockett's life followed by the reveal of the plaque and a presentation of items to the Crockett Family. Following the presentation of items, William Crockett's sister, Gail Crockett Stanghelle, said a few words to those gathered. There was a great turnout of both residents and non-residents to support the Crockett family and to honor one of Cottage Grove's great veterans.

The South Washington County Telecommunications Commission filmed the ceremony and produced a video, which can be reached at the following link or by accessing the City of Cottage Grove's YouTube page: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0a5MyTCf\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0a5MyTCf_Q)



**William Crockett Plaque**



**William Crockett Plaque Ceremony**



**Presentation of Items to the Crockett Family**



**Chair Reckinger Providing a Brief History of William Crockett's Life**

## **Recommendation**

No action is needed on this item.

**TO:** Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation

**FROM:** Mike Mrosla, Senior Planner  
Conner Jakes, Associate Planner

**DATE:** August 8, 2023

**RE:** William Crockett Fields at Hamlet Park Entrance Sign

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## Project Update

The City recently installed the Hamlet Park entrance sign that honors William Crockett and provides the name of the ball fields at Hamlet Park. The sign reads, “Welcome to Crockett Fields at Hamlet Park” and contains various images that honor Mr. Crockett’s life. Among the images included are the POW/MIA flag logo, William Crockett rubbing/etching, a fighter jet, and Mr. Crockett’s life dates. An image of the recently installed sign is provided below.



**William Crockett Fields at Hamlet Park Entrance Sign**

## Recommendation

No action is needed on this item.

**TO:** Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation

**FROM:** Conner Jakes, Associate Planner  
Mike Mroska, Senior Planner

**DATE:** August 8, 2023

**RE:** Historic Display Case

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## Background

Staff was tasked with the design and implementation of a historic preservation display case at City Hall. The display case to be utilized is located in the Training Room hallway as shown in the image below.



**Training Room Display Case**

At its March 14, 2023, meeting, the ACHP recommended staff to proceed with the design of the display case with a portion of the case remaining static, while another portion would rotate every six months. The ACHP recommended the static portion provide an outline of the history of Cottage Grove, and the first rotational display be schools of the past and present.

At the most recent ACHP meeting, which occurred on April 11, 2023, the ACHP provided staff with additional resources through the Washington County Historical Society that have been valuable in obtaining information on schools of the past. In addition, staff has been in contact with the South Washington School District for information on schools of the present.

## **Next Steps**

Staff is continuing to compile research as well as beginning to create brief paragraphs about various schools of the past and present throughout the City. At an upcoming ACHP meeting, staff will present the Committee with the photos and descriptions of each school for review.

## **Recommendation**

No action is needed on this item.

**TO:** Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation

**FROM:** Conner Jakes, Associate Planner  
Mike Mrosla, Senior Planner

**DATE:** August 8, 2023

**RE:** Old People's Home & Cemetery

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## Background

On April 20, 2023, staff was contacted by a resident, Cindy Yff, inquiring about the Old People's Home and Cemetery. The Cemetery is located adjacent to 70th Street South near the intersection of 70th Street and Goodview Avenue, and the intersection of 70th Street and Granada Avenue, as shown below.



Staff met with Cindy on April 27, 2023, to discuss the site and information/documentation. However, staff was only able to discover limited information within the City's files and is seeking any additional information or resources the ACHP is aware of related to the site's history. In the recent July 2023 edition of Historical Whisperings, which is published by the Washington County Historical Society, Cindy wrote the article in the "Our Forgotten History" section on the Old People's Home and Cemetery. The article, which provides the history of the site and a few photos, is attached to this memo.

## **Discussion**

Staff was only able to find limited information/documentation related to the history of the Old People's Home and Cemetery site within the City's files. Staff is seeking any information the ACHP is aware of or can share with staff and Cindy related to the site in order to better document the site's history.

## **Recommendation**

That the ACHP should discuss and provide any information related to the history of the Old People's Home and Cemetery site.

# The Old People's Home and Cemetery in Cottage Grove

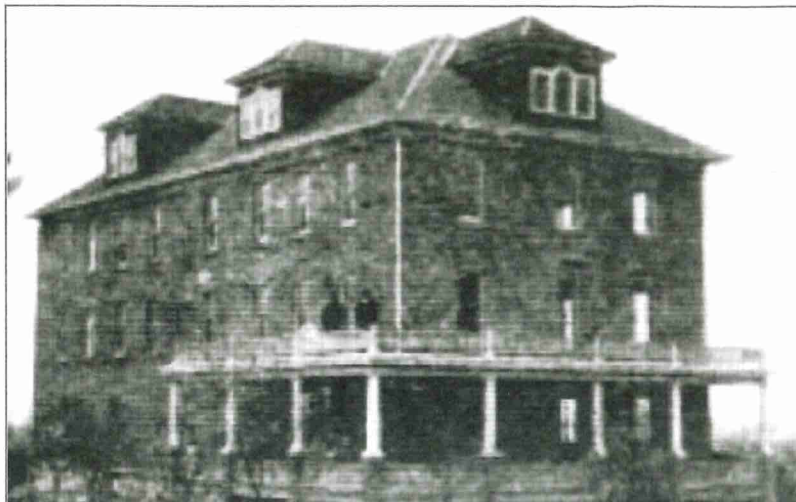
By Cindy Yff, Cottage Grove

In 1907, the Church of God built the Old People's Home of the Northwest and established a cemetery in Cottage Grove, on the bluffs overlooking St. Paul Park. The home provided care for the elderly at the turn of the century; many residents and staff were Scandinavian immigrants. The home burned in the early morning hours of November 16, 1917. People in St. Paul Park took in the residents until they could be moved to a new home.

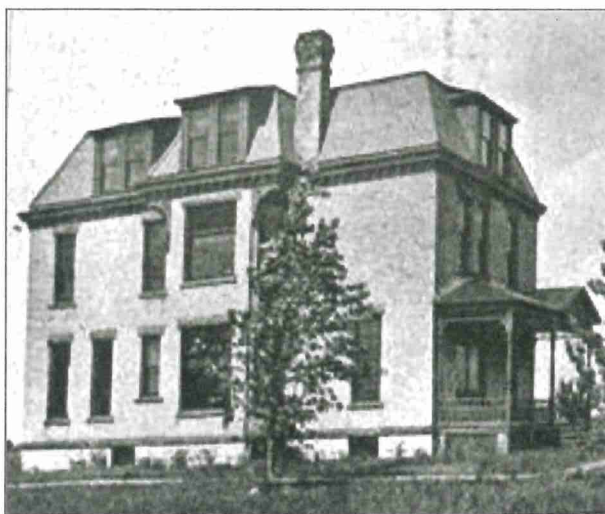
The Old People's Home got a new location in St. Paul Park. In 1918 the Church of God purchased the St. Paul Methodist College in St. Paul Park when the college was closing its doors. Residents of the home were moved into the unused women's dorm on the college campus. This location served until sometime after 1925.

The Old People's Home Cemetery remains on the bluffs. The cemetery was a burial ground not only for the elderly at the nearby home, but also for Church of God members. About 40 bodies are interred there. Some old timers in the area remember the cemetery with its markers, a gated fence, and a monument. Today the gated fence, headstones, and the large monument are gone. A marker installed by the Washington County Historical Society in 1990 remains near the road.

The cemetery has been a victim of unfortunate events and misunderstanding. It has been unclear who owns the cemetery. Apparently, when the Church of God merged



*Above: The Old People's Home was built on the bluffs in Cottage Grove in 1907 and destroyed by fire in 1917. Below: the Women's Dorm of the St. Paul Methodist College in St. Paul Park became the new residence for elderly immigrants.*



with another, they deeded the cemetery to the City of Cottage Grove on a quit claim deed in 2011.

Cottage Grove residents interested in the Old People's Home and cemetery want to hear from anyone who may have heard of, or remembers, anything about the home and/or the cemetery. Please contact Cindy Yff at 651 558-6314 and help us tell as much of the story as we can uncover.

*The Old People's Home cemetery, overlooking St. Paul Park, is now just a field. All headstones and monuments are gone. The WCHS placed the marker in 1990.*

