

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
July 1, 2015

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Bob Sherman
Aakash Raut

Members Absent: Mike Brooks

Staff Present: Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

New Business: The Committee discussed the agenda items as summarized below.

First, the Committee discussed whether the contest should focus on farmhouses or farmsteads (Agenda Item 3.a). Commissioner Jacobson suggested concentrating on farmhouses. Commissioner Sherman said if the Committee picks a farmhouse that is the oldest in a township then it should consider the farmstead as well. He said traditionally the farmhouse was secondary to the barn because the latter was more economically important. Commissioner Jacobson said the focus could be on the house but the Committee might ask about farmstead buildings in contest publicity.

Next, the Committee discussed whether the contest should focus on unincorporated Sangamon County or all of Sangamon County (Agenda Item 3.b), and the number and distribution of winners (Agenda Items 1 & 2). Commissioner Sherman said the Leland farmhouse is in the middle of Leland Grove. He said all Sangamon County would be okay. After some discussion, the Committee also discussed the number of winners and their distribution. Commissioner Sherman said he would prefer one per township. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Raut if the contest should include the whole County instead of only the unincorporated areas, to which Commissioner Raut said yes. Commissioner Jacobson said the point about the number of winners was open for discussion. He said he likes having one winner per township as this develops more local interest. Commissioner Jacobson asked how many townships there were, to which staff replied 25. Commissioner Sherman said if there were only Countywide entries the same houses will win every time. He said one winner per township might increase the chances for other houses to win.

The next item of discussion was whether to include houses in neighborhoods or to only include houses on active farms (Agenda Item 3.c). Commissioner Sherman cited the Leland house in Leland Grove as an example. Commissioner Raut asked what the options were for the item under consideration. Commissioner Jacobson said farmhouses traditionally had farmsteads (barns and silos) surrounding them. He said as time progresses the land around it may be divided and the house is another residence rather than being actively lived in by the people running the farm around it. Commissioner Jacobson said do we include former farmhouses that are now non-farm residences, or do we only include true (active) farmhouses. He indicated Commissioner Sherman thinks if the farmhouse was initially a farmhouse it should be included so long as it maintains its integrity of design and exterior features. Commissioner Sherman said a farmhouse could be included even if there is no barn located on the property. He said silos are a relatively recent invention. Commissioner Jacobson, summarizing Commissioner Sherman's comment, said if the

farmhouse maintains its appearance whether or not it has a farm next to it that the Committee should consider it, to which both Commissioner Sherman and Commissioner Raut agreed.

The Committee then discussed whether to consider both occupied and abandoned buildings (Agenda Item 3.d). Commissioner Jacobson said he believed both should be included, to which both Commissioner Sherman and Commissioner Raut agreed. Commissioner Sherman said the Brunk farmhouse is a significant abandoned structure.

Commissioner Jacobson said the Committee decided it wants one winner per township. He asked whether the Committee wanted the one, five, or ten oldest winners throughout the County. Commissioner Sherman said all the oldest farmhouses in each township are winners to him. Commissioner Sherman and Commissioner Jacobson said this could return some responsibility to all the Historic Preservation Commissioners since they have township assignments. Commissioner Jacobson said once the oldest farmhouse in each township is identified it should be easy to determine which one is the oldest in the County, for instance ranking them 1 to 25.

The Committee next discussed sponsorships and prizes (Agenda Item 4). Commissioner Jacobson said ideas included: the Farm Bureau, seed companies, grain elevators, farm implement retailers, appliance dealers, and banks. He asked what should be gifts. Commissioner Jacobson suggested letting entities sponsor a gift. Commissioner Sherman suggested a prize for the house. Commissioner Jacobson said a plaque, to which Commissioner Sherman replied exactly. Commissioner Sherman said it does not have to be bronze and Commissioner Jacobson mentioned a \$200 special. Staff said if each township has winners, then the cost could be thousands of dollars. Commissioner Sherman said businesses could sponsor the contest and/or the prizes. Commissioner Jacobson said the Committee could ask sponsors for donations. He said the winners could receive a plaque and recognition. Commissioner Sherman suggested a parchment as well. He said the award might make more sense inside as a conversation starter rather than outside because of the difficulty seeing it. Commissioner Raut asked how many overall winners there would be. Commissioner Jacobson said Commissioner Sherman thinks there should ideally be one winner per each township. Staff asked how to handle incorporated areas, e.g. Springfield, since most of it is also in a separate township (Capital Township). Commissioner Raut asked how many Countywide winners would there be. Commissioner Jacobson said if there were 12 submissions then the dates determine an overall winner. Commissioner Jacobson said there might not need to be one grand County winner. It will be self-evident which house is the oldest. Commissioner Jacobson said Commissioners might need to research entries for some townships if there are no submissions. He said he is not expecting 25 townships to participate, and that he expects it will be a smaller number. Commissioner Jacobson said the process may take 2-3 years and the Committee would look at all the information and see how many entries there are. He said the publicity for the contest might say the Brunk or the Pulliam house was the oldest in the County. Commissioner Sherman reiterated that the prize might resonate more with winners if it is an indoor rather than an outdoor prize.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Jacobson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:55 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
August 5, 2015

Members Present: Bob Sherman
Aakash Raut
Mike Brooks

Members Absent: Jerry Jacobson

Staff Present: Norm Sims, Peter Jordet

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Sherman called the meeting to order at 3:24 PM.

New Business: The Committee first discussed possible starting points to evaluate farmhouses (Agenda Item 2.a). Commissioner Sherman said the township commissioners would be a good starting point. Commissioner Sherman also discussed the centennial farms program with the Illinois Department of Agriculture as another potential starting point. Commissioner Brooks said there could be very old houses that may not qualify to be in the centennial program because they change hands many times. Commissioner Brooks said if a house is not a centennial program house does it qualify, to which Commissioner Sherman said sure. Commissioner Brooks said he would be concerned for farmsteads not on the list, to which Commissioner Sherman said it is only a starting point.

The group next discussed the issue of unincorporated versus all of Sangamon County (Agenda Item 2.a). Commissioner Brooks asked if farmhouses outside city limits should count. Commissioner Sherman was of the opinion to include everything inside and outside corporate (city) limits, as long as it had been a farmhouse. Commissioner Sims said the Committee can select whatever it wants, however, if the Committee wants to select properties outside corporate limits there should be a reason why to exclude Springfield, but to include Rochester and other cities. Commissioner Brooks said excluding Springfield but including other towns could put the contest in a bad spot. He said there are some little towns with three houses and it is clearly a farmhouse. Commissioner Brooks said if something is within a city limit, maybe someone has a house that four generations ago was a farmhouse and that has now been moved to downtown Springfield. Commissioner Sims asked what the plan is. Commissioner Brooks asked if it should only be outside city limits, to which Commissioner Sherman said I do not think so. Commissioner Sherman said he sees where Commissioner Brooks is coming from, but it might have become part of a city long after it was built. He said there are some houses in Chatham that were occupied as farmhouses a long time ago. Commissioner Sherman asked if Capital Township is all within the City of Springfield, to which the reply was yes. He said there would not be an award winner for Capital Township, if this is the way the thinking goes. Commissioner Sims asked if the starting point is by township.

Commissioner Sims said as he sees it there are five tasks in the contest. He said they are: promote the project, receive/solicit the properties, review the properties, select the properties, and award the properties. He asked what is going on in the five phases of the project, how will the group promote, solicit, and the rest. Commissioner Brooks said the Committee should decide what it is looking for. Commissioner Sims asked what is the mission here. Commissioner Brooks said houses built within subdivisions were not farmhouses. He said many houses in Springfield would not meet an oldest house standard because they are too recently built. Commissioner

Brooks said some houses near the Lincoln site might be old enough to be in the contest. Commissioner Sherman said he did not think so because there was no farmland near the Lincoln home. He said if a house started as part of a farm, then it is acceptable to consider it a farmhouse.

Commissioner Sims said if you had to write the press release today, what would go in the press release (Agenda Item 2.c). Commissioner Brooks said it needs to be defined simply to explain to the public what qualifies. He said it could be narrowed to being an operative farm. Commissioner Brooks said it may get somewhat hard to define what we are looking for away from being on an operative farm. Commissioner Brooks and Commissioner Sims discussed definitions of farms. The federal definition of \$1,000 and the zoning definition of \$2,500 were discussed.

Returning to defining the contest entries, Commissioner Sims said if you had to write the press release today, how would you tell the public what you are asking for and how to submit it. Commissioner Brooks asked if the mission is to promote the work of the Commission. Commissioner Sherman said there is also a purpose to find more historic properties in the County. Commissioner Brooks asked if something is located within the City of Springfield that there would be nothing done with it. He said for a site survey it would need to be within the unincorporated area. Commissioner Raut said the Commission does not have regulatory jurisdiction over Springfield proper. Commissioner Sherman said this is not regulatory. Commissioner Sims said the Committee could select properties all over Illinois if it so chose. Commissioner Brooks said it does not further the mission of the contest to look at houses within Springfield or Leland Grove. Commissioner Sims said there are three goals: promote the Commission, identify properties eligible for landmarking, and to recognize the farmsteads. He said the next question to consider could be to whom is the Committee promoting the contest. Commissioner Sims said the Committee could state it wants a building on an active farm that has been in existence since X date and to submit it with some proof of age. He said the Committee could say here is what we think is proof. Commissioner Sims said another way to look at it is to use townships for awards. He said this could leave multiple buildings left out who enter from the same township and other townships with no awards. Commissioner Brooks asked if the awards would be by township or one award by County. Commissioner Sherman said if the contest is by township, then the oldest can be determined. Commissioner Sims asked if the intent is to give an award to the oldest property. Commissioner Sherman said if the Committee is handing out plaques, then yes, but he is not sure. Commissioner Sims said he has not seen any fundraising suggestions for this contest. He said this is another task for consideration. Commissioner Brooks said raising the funds for one winner might not be much of a problem. Commissioner Sims asked about the number of awards. Commissioner Brooks said it might be important to narrow down the number of awards. Commissioner Sims said depending on how the solicitation is done the Committee still might not find the oldest farmhouse in unincorporated Sangamon County. He said the Committee might find the oldest one submitted. Commissioner Brooks suggested referring to it as the oldest known farmhouse (Agenda Item 2.b). Commissioner Sims said another approach might be to identify through submissions the number of houses beyond X age, or built prior to a certain year. Commissioner Brooks said this award would just become something besides the centennial farm. He said this might be something to note like the State of Illinois notes centennial farms. Commissioner Brooks said Sangamon County could recognize a pre-1900 or pre-1850 farm. He said if the Committee is looking for coverage, a reporter is more likely to cover the 1 winner rather than the 25 oldest farms prior to the cut-off date. Commissioner Sherman said you need to know the dates of all the entries to know which one is the oldest. Commissioner Brooks suggested giving out a plaque for the oldest farmhouse. Commissioner Sims asked does the contest involve the oldest in each township or the oldest in the County. Commissioner Sherman said if the oldest in each township is known they can be ranked to determine which is the oldest in the County. Commissioner Brooks said the Committee

can publicize a list of the other winners that were found. He said it is difficult to absolutely know which farmhouse is the oldest. Commissioner Sims said he was unsure about dividing the contest by township. Commissioner Brooks said this was a way to contact the townships. Commissioner Sims asked if anyone has talked to the township representatives to see if they would go along with the contest, to which Commissioner Sherman said I do not know. Commissioner Brooks said there are multiple avenues to solicit information besides townships like the Farm Bureau. He said it is important that the contest finds the one winner. Commissioner Sherman said this is more important than a collection of winners. Commissioner Brooks asked how old the oldest farmhouses might be, to which Commissioner Sherman estimated the 1820s. Commissioner Brooks suggested language that any farmhouse older than 1900 send in its paperwork. Commissioner Sims suggested the Committee use blanket language such as entrants should send in information about farmhouses prior to 1850. He said the entries could all be recognized and that it does not matter from which township they are. Commissioner Sims said the townships could be used to help distribute the solicitation, but the contest is not dividing them by township. Commissioner Sherman said a particular property might be the oldest in a township but much younger when compared Countywide. Commissioner Sims said the Committee members will have to do the vast majority of the work.

Returning to the defining the scope and tasks of the contest (Agenda Item 2.a), Commissioner Brooks said we need to outline what we are looking for and how we are going to get it. Commissioner Sims asked does the Committee want to award the oldest 1 with a plaque, and the next 15 with a certificate (Agenda Item 1.a). Commissioner Brooks asked if the Committee would need money for a printed certificate. Commissioner Sherman said he believes it is better to have a certificate inside then a plaque outside. Commissioner Sims said a plaque could be created for the oldest farmhouse in this cycle. He said a wooden and plexiglass plaque costs nine bucks at Hobby Lobby. Commissioner Sims said it is about one-tenth the cost of another plaque. Commissioner Brooks said a secondary prize to encourage entries might be good. He said the contest is looking for the oldest farmhouse, to which Commissioner Sims added older than 1850. Commissioner Brooks suggested anything older than 1850 gets a certificate. He said the certificate for farmhouses older than a particular year might encourage more participation than just presenting awards for the oldest farmhouse in the townships. Commissioner Sims said be careful of saying the oldest, suggesting the oldest submitted instead. He said saying the oldest could lead to disputes. Commissioner Brooks said the Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission says this is the oldest submitted; and, there could always be a contest in the future. Some discussion followed on how to determine the oldest building. The consensus of the group was that it must be submitted in the contest to be considered. Commissioner Sims asked when to make the awards. Commissioner Sherman suggested preservation week. Commissioner Sims suggested the fair. Commissioner Sherman asked the County or the State Fair. Commissioner Brooks said it would be easier to cover the Sangamon County Fair. Commissioner Sims said the attendees could be invited to attend. He suggested posters to unveil the winners at the fair. Commissioner Sims said the Sangamon County Fair would also be a good website tag. He said it might be a good in to discuss with the Farm Bureau. Commissioner Brooks said it might be easier to get the Farm Bureau to engage if the contest is for active farms rather than for houses that were previously farms. Commissioner Sims said it would also help to say the Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC] and the Farm Bureau are doing the contest. Commissioner Brooks said narrowing it to the oldest active farm farmhouse could help increase interest in farmers discussing the program. Commissioner Sims said if you get the Farm Bureau on board, it might be a good entry to go to Brandt and say could you sponsor this as well. He said it might entice Brandt more if the Farm Bureau is working with the SCHPC on the project. Commissioner Sims suggesting having the announcement next to the Sangamon County Farm Bureau display. Commissioner Brooks said this location is inside, so weather is less of an issue. Commissioner Sims suggested getting an elevator speech ready to give to the Farm Bureau and

to Brandt with the financial issues to help sponsor the contest. Commissioner Brooks said the Committee could offer its expertise of reviewing the submissions. He said defining and reviewing is a big part of determining how old a farmhouse is. Commissioner Brooks said the looser we keep the requirements the better off it is. He said there might be twenty farms everyone knows are from 1820, but without documentation. Commissioner Sherman said what is submitted is important. Commissioner Sims suggested laying out how the Committee believes the contest will proceed and then asking the Farm Bureau or Brandt if they have ideas to make it better. Commissioner Brooks said it could come down to who has the best evidence that a particular farm was built at an early date. Commissioner Sherman said it is important to check other evidence, e.g. land records, to help determine the date of a particular building. Commissioner Sims said the evidence submitted could vary greatly from a deed, to written records, to oral sources of information. He said the Committee will have to sort through the information because the Farm Bureau will not want to do it.

Commissioner Brooks discussed a motion to limit the contest to active farms, but then withdrew it. Commissioner Sherman said limiting entries to active farms gets the Farm Bureau more likely to be involved. Commissioner Brooks said it is not that important if the original farm operators are still the ones to be operating it, as long as it is still a farm as defined by the IRS or the Ag Department. Commissioner Sims said based on it being an operating farm, it may not be as important to say unincorporated versus all of Sangamon County. He said the conflict goes away. Commissioner Brooks asked if there should be a vote, to which Commissioner Sherman said sure. Commissioner Sherman said starting with a date, e.g. pre-1850. Commissioner Brooks said submit requests from active operating farms dated from pre-1850. He said everyone prior to 1850 gets a certificate. Commissioner Sherman asked if the Committee wants to say this upfront. Commissioner Brooks said I think we want to encourage participation. He said someone thinks they may have the oldest farm and they might. Commissioner Brooks said we can print certificates for free, to which Commissioner Sims said I can make you certificates. He suggested printing coupons to go buy placards, if needed. Commissioner Brooks said we want everyone to submit documentation for farms created prior to 1850. He said the winner will receive something nicer, depending upon sponsorship. Commissioner Brooks said it also has to be an operating farm. Commissioner Raut asked for clarification on the points. Commissioner Sherman said we are getting away from farmhouses with an active farm. Commissioner Brooks said no the farmhouse just has to be on an active farm. He said it includes a farmhouse, on an active farm, that pre-dates 1850. Commissioner Brooks said we want everyone who has one of those to submit it to us. He said once it is determined by the Committee that it is reasonably certain the farmhouse dates to prior to 1850, the owner will receive a certificate most likely. Commissioner Brooks summarized for the group that the contest is Countywide.

Staff asked for a motion. Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, that the Committee ask for all farmhouses dated prior to 1850 on active farms from all over Sangamon County to submit paperwork, with certificates to be handed out and other prizes for the winner to be determined. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 4:04 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
October 7, 2015

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Aakash Raut
Mike Brooks

Members Absent: Bob Sherman

Staff Present: Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:16 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to approve the August Committee minutes near the end of the meeting. Motion carried.

Old Business & New Business: Commissioner Jacobson brought up prizes (Agenda Item 1.a). He wanted to know whether plaques and certificates were enough incentive. Commissioner Brooks said it might be doubtful to give more than small prizes because there is no budget. He said the most likely entrants would be owners who have time and historical interests.

Commissioner Jacobson asked if the program would be limited to pre-1860 houses, to which Commissioner Jacobson said yes to allow more Civil War era structures.

The Committee next discussed the revised program entry form (Agenda Items 2.b). Commissioner Brooks said this is the first Committee discussion of the form for the Sangamon County Farm Bureau [SCFB]. He said the differences included, but were not limited to: (1) changed a date in the first paragraph (1860); (2) reworded from competition to *Pre-Civil War Farmhouse Search Program* (title); (3) added language other evidence of pre-1860 construction language in the second (Rules) paragraph; (4) changed language in the third (Prizes) paragraph to mention 1860; and, (5) changed winner to determined in the third (Prizes) paragraph. Some minor wording changes were not enumerated.

Commissioner Brooks (Agenda Item 1.a and 2.b) said the SCFB would like the Committee to talk to Growmark or FS as a potential co-sponsor. He said he did not think there would need to be many sponsors. Commissioner Brooks said FS probably covers the widest geographic area in Sangamon County. Commissioner Jacobson asked about the relationship between SCFB and FS. Commissioner Brooks said FS is a farmer-owned grain elevator co-op. He said Growmark owns the franchise/trademark for FS; and, the county FS branches then own Growmark. Commissioner Brooks said both entities have ties to the SCFB. Commissioner Jacobson asked if adding sponsors increases the complexity of the search. Commissioner Brooks said more sponsors increases the public relations opportunities, e.g. member newsletters.

Commissioner Jacobson asked if November is too soon to begin the search (Agenda Item 1.c). He said there is no rush as the SCFB has not agreed yet to co-sponsor the program. Commissioner Brooks explained the timeline to enter the program in the November SCFB newsletter and to conclude the search by the June 2016 Sangamon County Fair. Staff suggested farmers could spend more time on a search in the winter months. Commissioner Brooks said if the Committee approves the proposal then a press conference could be called in a week.

Commissioner Jacobson asked if the Committee would know in a week what would be given out. Commissioner Brooks said exact prizes might not be necessary. Commissioner Jacobson asked if the SCFB would pay for a plaque. Commissioner Brooks said he did not ask the SCFB to contribute. He thought it might only take a day or two to get cash from a sponsor. Commissioner Jacobson asked if approval of potential donors is required. Commissioner Brooks said sometimes but if the amount is small, perhaps the spending is discretionary. He said the deadline for the November SCFB newsletter is approaching or might have already passed. Commissioner Brooks discussed potential stories for the program. Staff asked if his job would cause any conflicts with a press conference, to which Commissioner Brooks said no. Commissioner Jacobson asked if anyone else had comments on the timeline. He said the proposal looked acceptable. Commissioner Raut asked for clarification on the schedule. Commissioner Jacobson said he wanted to know if there are concerns starting the search in November. Commissioner Brooks said SCFB sponsorship is more pressing than the press release. He said the press release can wait. Commissioner Jacobson asked if Commissioner Brooks has a newsletter contact with the Farm Bureau, to which Commissioner Brooks said yes he could call her.

Commissioner Brooks asked if writing a press release triggered OMA concerns. Staff advised any communication about a press release must occur in an open public meeting; and, that a discussion between two members of the Committee constitutes an open meeting. Commissioner Brooks asked if there should be a special meeting to discuss a press conference. Staff advised this could happen provided a posting occurs. Commissioner Jacobson said the purpose of the OMA is to allow public notification of meetings. He said the spirit of the law is to inform the public when and where a meeting will occur. Commissioner Brooks said if the proposal is adopted, a special meeting could be held to vote on sponsorships. Staff said a meeting requires a 48-hour notice.

Commissioner Jacobson asked who should create an entry form for the program (Agenda Item 2.a). Commissioner Brooks said his concern is the Committee should be flexible about evidence. He gave the example of a deed versus a newspaper article. Commissioner Jacobson stressed the importance of written evidence over oral evidence. Commissioner Brooks suggested broad guidelines in the registration form to not discourage entries. Commissioner Jacobson said he would create an entry form and submit it for Committee review. Commissioner Brooks asked if it would be possible to post an entry form online and discuss it without violating the OMA. Staff said the OMA indicates discussion outside a public meeting is prohibited. Commissioner Jacobson asked about an email meeting. Staff said a physical quorum, i.e. three members for this Committee, must be present at the posted location of a public meeting, and then a fourth member can call in if the others allow it. E-mail meetings are not allowed. Commissioner Brooks said he would write an entry form and then Commissioner Jacobson could finish it.

The Committee next discussed a potential letter to township supervisors and County Board members ahead of a press release (Agenda Item 2.e). Commissioner Jacobson thought it could inform township and County elected officials of the search. He said it might get the Historic Preservation Commission's [HPC] name on people's minds. Commissioner Jacobson volunteered to write the letter. The consensus was to draft a letter.

Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion on the text of the SCFB proposal as presented by Commissioner Brooks (Agenda Item 2.b). Commissioner Raut made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to accept the proposal as presented. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jacobson asked if there is any way the program could include non-operating farmhouses (Agenda Item 1.b). Commissioner Brooks said the Committee struggled with a definition and chose an operative farmhouse to emphasize the unincorporated area.

Commissioner Jacobson said he would be hesitant to exclude a renovated farmhouse that looks exactly like an 1820s farmhouse but is not on an operating farm. Commissioner Brooks said the rule was created as a way to draw a line as to what is a farmhouse. He said the thinking was to rule out a farmhouse now surrounded by a residential subdivision. Commissioner Brooks said the 40 acres part of the rule was his idea. Commissioner Jacobson asked for an extra category for historic houses on non-operating farms. Commissioner Brooks asked then what is a farmhouse. He said the standard from the last meeting is 40 acres and an operating farm. Commissioner Jacobson raised his earlier example of an 1820s farmhouse. Commissioner Brooks said a person could own the farmhouse and the ground around it but lease the farm ground to someone else. He said a big part of the thinking on the rules was to promote the HPC in unincorporated Sangamon County. Commissioner Jacobson said he thinks the thinking makes sense.

Commissioner Jacobson summarized the following roles:

- Contact and secure sponsorship with SCFB – Commissioner Brooks
- Draft entry form for the SCFB newsletter – Commissioner Brooks and/or Commissioner Jacobson
- Draft letter to township supervisors and County Board members – Commissioner Jacobson
- Contact Country Companies as potential sponsor – Commissioner Raut
- Contact FS and/or Brandt as potential sponsor – Commissioner Brooks

Commissioner Brooks said the Committee might call a special meeting to discuss a press event and finalize prizes. Commissioner Brooks and Commissioner Jacobson discussed the entry form that Commissioner Brooks created at the meeting.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Raut made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:57 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
November 4, 2015

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Aakash Raut
Mike Brooks

Members Absent: Bob Sherman

Staff Present: Norm Sims, Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:46 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, to approve the October Committee minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Old Business: Commissioner Jacobson asked if the Sangamon County Farm Bureau [SCFB] agreed to partner in the farmhouse search, to which Commissioner Brooks said yes. Commissioner Jacobson asked about other sponsors. Commissioner Brooks said FS is out; he is waiting to hear from Brandt. He said some state lawmakers might help with the contest. Commissioner Raut said he would contact Country Companies.

New Business: Commissioner Jacobson asked for changes to the letter for elected officials. Commissioner Sims suggested adding unincorporated Sangamon County language. Commissioner Brooks clarified the contest could be open to people in municipalities if one owns a house with forty acres. He said it makes the contest simpler. Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to accept the letter with no changes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jacobson asked for changes to the entry form. He said there is a suggestion to change the submission from December 31, 2015 to March 31, 2016. Commissioner Brooks suggested mentioning the date a second time, to which Commissioner Sims suggested keeping the form as is. Commissioner Sims suggested the date of known alterations as a separate line. He also suggested language to submit copies of documentary evidence, no originals. After some discussion of fonts, Commissioner Brooks said he would make the document look uniform. Commissioner Sims suggested the document submission language be larger than above; and, after known construction the fonts could be smaller. Commissioner Brooks said he would integrate the SCFB logo with the Historic Preservation Commission [HPC] logo. Commissioner Jacobson suggested proofreading the final edition. Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, that the draft entry form be amended as discussed at the meeting and submitted to the SCFB. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jacobson asked whether the farmhouse search needs a press conference. Commissioner Brooks suggested one for the initial press release. He said if done on the right day there could be some publicity, but there is no requirement. After some discussion of potential media opportunities among Commissioners Brooks, Sims, and Jacobson, the consensus was to complete a press release and ask for publicity spots in the local newspapers, and on TV and radio. Commissioner Sims suggested some typographical changes to the release, e.g. be in the second paragraph. Commissioner Brooks said he would have Chairman Pell approve his quote; and then add some language from the SCFB. Commissioner Raut made a motion, seconded by

Commissioner Jacobson, to accept the press release with amendments as discussed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jacobson asked if a memorandum of agreement/understanding [MOA/MOU] with any partners/sponsors is necessary. Commissioner Sims said it is not necessary.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 4:02 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
December 2, 2015

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Aakash Raut
Mike Brooks
Bob Sherman

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Norm Sims, Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:54 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, to approve the November Committee minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Commissioner Jacobson said depending on entries there might be a press release in early January (Agenda Item 2.a). He thought the publicity might bring another entry or two; and, there could be an extension of the program to 1870 [from 1860]. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Sherman if he had any comments, to which Commissioner Sherman said no. Commissioner Brooks said 1860 gives the program a nice Civil War connection. He suggested not going beyond the end of the Civil War [1865]. Commissioner Brooks said this is something for January or February and that there could be 20 entries. He cautioned not to jump the gun. Commissioner Jacobson said the Committee could summarize the press coverage in the Historic Preservation Commission [HPC] meeting.

Commissioner Sherman suggested FFA students as potential co-sponsors. Commissioner Brooks said he has a contact. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Brooks to reach out to his contact. Commissioner Jacobson thanked Commissioner Raut for mentioning the search program on social media.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:58 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
January 6, 2016

Members Present: Aakash Raut
Mike Brooks
Bob Sherman

Members Absent: Jerry Jacobson

Staff Present: Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Brooks called the meeting to order at 3:26 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to approve the December Committee minutes. Motion carried.

Old Business: Staff introduced the agenda item about handling few entries (Agenda Item 1.a). Commissioner Brooks said few entries might occur because few pre-1860 houses exist. Commissioner Sherman suggested a press release to explain the low number of entries and to encourage entries.

Commissioner Brooks suggested reaching out to the FFA. He has a directory and suggested contacting local chapters. Commissioner Brooks also suggested a letter or a Committee member speaking to an FFA chapter. Some discussion followed on the location of FFA chapters among Commissioner Brooks, Commissioner Sherman, and staff. Commissioner Brooks read the list (New Berlin, Pawnee, Pleasant Plains, Tri-City, and Williamsville). Commissioner Sherman asked if Commissioner Brooks knows any FFA advisors, to which Commissioner Brooks said Tri-City. He said it might be beneficial to see a map and see if there are extra FFA chapters in Sangamon County. Staff suggested seeing if any overlapping school districts, e.g. Athens, have FFA chapters. Commissioner Brooks said some FFA contacts might occur.

The next discussion concerned ways to increase entries. Commissioner Brooks asked about the letter to elected officials and township supervisors. Staff summarized the responses received to the letter. Commissioner Brooks suggested asking the tax assessors. Commissioner Sherman said the township assessors might have building dates. Staff said Capitol Township has dates, but most township assessors do not collect this data. Commissioner Brooks said he might ask for entries at another Farm Bureau meeting. He also suggested an *Illinois Times* article. Commissioner Brooks said he did an interview with WSMI out of Litchfield. He said the radio station reaches part of southern Sangamon County. Commissioner Brooks suggested the REA news and maybe covering a Taylorville radio station. Commissioner Brooks asked if Commissioner Sherman wanted to reach out to churches. Commissioner Brooks and Commissioner Sherman discussed possible sources of contact for rural churches. Staff suggested a website (www.guidestar.org) which has information about non-profits. Commissioner Sherman suggested posting it on a church bulletin board. Commissioner Brooks said he knows a pastor who is a church lobbyist. Commissioner Sherman and Commissioner Brooks discussed if there is a state interfaith organization that lists churches by county. Commissioner Sherman said he would draft a letter for Chairman Pell's signature for the churches about the search.

Commissioner Brooks said he would try to reach out to his pastoral contact. Staff suggested the phone book, but Commissioner Sherman said it might be difficult to get a response from some churches.

Regarding sponsors, Commissioner Brooks asked Commissioner Raut if there was word from Country Companies on co-sponsorship. Commissioner Raut said he would check. Commissioner Brooks said Brandt seemed acceptable with making a donation. Staff advised using private channels for donations.

New Business: Staff introduced the houses on farm tracts item (Agenda Item 2.a). He said he had some conversations with the owner of a house on Old Route 36 who wants to enter the search. The house was likely constructed in the 1850s per a survey. Staff said the house was previously on approximately 80 acres and now sits on 6-7 acres. He said one family owned the house; but a different family name now owns it. Commissioner Sherman asked if 40 acres is a dead deal, to which Commissioner Brooks said I do not think so. Commissioner Brooks said the current owner is a relative of the former owners. He said they farm the parcel near where the farm sits. Commissioner Brooks said initially the house was with the farm. He said his house is the farmhouse on a 200-acre farm, but actually sits on a 5-10 acre tract. Commissioner Brooks said it is a smaller tract on a contiguous farm like this example. He said for now the extended family still farms the ground and owns the house, but this could change with ownership.

Staff said a similar situation exists with one of the farmhouse entries on Wake Road. Commissioner Sherman asked where the property is located. Staff said north and east of Berlin. Commissioner Sherman said if it is the house he knows, it has 4'X4' limestone slabs in the basement. He said the house has a new addition, but is an I-house probably dated before 1860. Commissioner Brooks asked about the issue, to which staff said the house sits on approximately three acres. Commissioner Brooks asked if there is a connection to the ground surrounding the house. Commissioner Sherman said the house appears split from the surrounding farm ground. A tax records search showed the owners only appeared to have approximately six acres around the house. Commissioner Brooks suggested calling the applicant to see if the house and farm owners are related. Commissioner Sherman volunteered to call the applicant. Commissioner Sherman said the original purpose of the contest was for farmhouses rather than acreage. Commissioner Brooks said that next year the search could focus on farmhouses five acres and more. He said there could be a future search for an historic rural house. Commissioner Brooks said no matter what rules are established, there will still be cases that test them.

Commissioner Sherman asked about a house slightly east of the Buckhart Tavern. After some discussion between Commissioner Sherman and staff, it was determined the house is slightly east of the tavern on Buckhart Road. Chairman Pell said the Historic Preservation Commission discussed the house in the past.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:58 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
February 3, 2016

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Mike Brooks
Bob Sherman

Members Absent: Aakash Raut

Staff Present: Norm Sims, Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:28 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to approve the January Committee minutes. Motion carried.

Old Business: Commissioner Jacobson introduced the press release item (Agenda Item 1.a). Since most entries would not qualify because of the 40 acres rule, he suggested a press release. Commissioner Jacobson asked what the minimum acreage might be, e.g. five or ten acres. Commissioner Jacobson said an entry in Gardner Township sits on five acres. He said the division was among family members; the house actually sits on 80 acres. Commissioner Jacobson said the owner has title to only five acres. He said the entry complies with the spirit but not the letter of the 40 acres rule. Commissioner Brooks said the Committee discussed the rule and the cases may need individual consideration. He said the rules indicate the house needs to sit on 40 acres. Commissioner Sims suggested issuing a clarification: that a house is associated with a working farm. Commissioner Sherman said it would not be necessary to mention acreage after this clarification. Commissioner Sims mentioned many farms had to split the farmhouse to refinance because of the recession. Commissioner Brooks said this could be another press opportunity. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Brooks to prepare a press release to distribute. He suggested language clarifying the required connection between the house and the ground. Commissioner Brooks said there might need to be a meeting to approve the press release.

Commissioner Jacobson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to allow Commissioner Brooks to draft a press release to clarify the acreage requirement of the Farmhouse Search rules. Motion carried.

Commissioner Sherman said the intent of the search is to find the oldest farmhouse. [At this time, Commissioner Brooks left the room.] Commissioner Jacobson said he had not contacted any property owners to encourage entries (Agenda Item 1.b). He said he would follow up on some of the leads. [Commissioner Brooks returned to the room.] Commissioner Jacobson suggested giving leads to the Commissioner who covers a particular township. Commissioner Brooks said it does not matter. The Committee members volunteered to follow up on the leads.

New Business: Commissioner Brooks said he contacted some FFA organizations (Agenda Item 2.a) but received no replies. He said he would try to reach out a second time.

Commissioner Sims asked if there was any correspondence sent to the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Commissioner Brooks said it is possible to make a contact. Commissioner Brooks asked who runs the Centennial Farms program, to which Commissioner Sherman said the Department of Agriculture. Staff said a list of the centennial and sesquicentennial farms was emailed. Commissioner Sherman said anyone could follow up on any farm in any township. Commissioner Jacobson suggested following up by mentioning centennial farms at the HPC meeting.

The Committee discussed other possible contacts. Commissioner Sherman said he called some rural church pastors, but received no replies. Staff suggested contacting the Sangamon County Historical Society. Commissioner Jacobson volunteered to contact the Historical Society. Commissioner Brooks said he would send over the new press release clarifying the entries. Commissioner Jacobson suggested sending out the press release to the Committee at a minimum. Commissioner Brooks called a Taylorville radio station, but the spot may not yet have run. He mentioned he sent the first press release to some *Illinois Times* reporters. Commissioner Brooks mentioned he asked some electric coops for a spot in newsletters. He said a Sangamon-based group would mention the search in its newsletter. Commissioner Brooks said other contacts were maybes. Commissioner Jacobson said the downstate representative of Landmarks Illinois asked for a photo of one of the farms for its website. He said he sent the photo, but received no reply. Commissioner Brooks mentioned Channel 20 did not complete a story with an old farmhouse due to some flooding.

Commissioner Jacobson asked about Committee assignments to verify entry information (Agenda Item 2.b). Staff asked if there was interest in assigning roles to verify the information in the received farmhouse search entries. Commissioner Jacobson said he worked with the four entrants to provide additional information like acreage. Commissioner Sims asked if there was correspondence to the applicants concerning application receipt. Staff volunteered to write a statement. Commissioner Jacobson said he contacted the entrants. Staff said he talked to an entrant near Pawnee. Commissioner Jacobson asked if the acreage was verified, to which staff said it is 40 acres.

Some discussion of entries and potential entries followed. Commissioner Sherman said he would try to contact some owners on Buckhart Road about entry. He summarized the details of a four bay barn with a limestone foundation. Commissioner Jacobson asked if a house has hand hewn beams and a limestone foundation what is the date, i.e. no later than. Commissioner Sherman described how people used different wood cutting techniques in Sangamon County. He guessed it was probably about 1870 when circular saws came into use here.

Commissioner Sherman mentioned a book about Sangamon County mills. He noted if mills are known they can add historic value much like cemeteries.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:55 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,
Steve Keenan

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
April 6, 2016

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Mike Brooks*
Aakash Raut
Bob Sherman

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Chuck Pell, Dean Williams, James Schackmann

Staff Present: Norm Sims, Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM. The participants identified in the room at the beginning of the meeting were Jacobson, Raut, and Sherman.

Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion to allow Commissioner Mike Brooks to attend via speaker-phone. Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to allow Commissioner Brooks to attend the meeting by speaker-phone due to employment purposes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Sherman asked to bring up a Greek Revival house at the corner of State Routes 125 and 97. He dated the house from the 1840s and thought it could be a survey item. Commissioner Jacobson asked if this was an item pertaining to the farmhouse search, to which Commissioner Sherman said no. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Sherman to hold his comments until later in the meeting.

Old Business: Commissioner Jacobson asked if anyone had comments about sponsors (Agenda Item 2.a), to which there was no reply.

[Commissioner Brooks entered the meeting via speakerphone at approximately 3:36 PM].

New Business: Commissioner Jacobson said there are nine entries (Agenda Item 2.a). He said there was a late entry, which appears to have fairly solid evidence to indicate a pre-1860 construction. Commissioner Jacobson discussed another entry which withdrew because the house was built in 1875. He said there were three entries in Cartwright Township. Commissioner Jacobson said the other townships covered were Rochester, Gardner, Illiopolis (withdrew), Loami, and Cotton Hill. [Lanesville Township is also represented.] Commissioner Jacobson said three have evidence to indicate a pre-1860 construction date. He said the others are still pending. Commissioner Jacobson said he suggested entrants check with the Sangamon Valley Collection. He said entries in Cotton Hill, [Lanesville], and Cartwright had good evidence. Staff suggested focusing the Committee's efforts on verifying the information on three pre-1840 entries in Gardner, Cotton Hill, and Cartwright Townships.

Commissioner Sherman asked if the entry deadline had passed, to which Commissioner Jacobson said yes. Staff suggested discussing the deadline under Agenda Item 2.c.

Commissioner Jacobson said staff has sent letters to search owner/participants indicating receipt of entry (Agenda Item 2.b). He mentioned that he contacted all entries besides the last entry received.

Commissioner Jacobson asked about publicity following closure of the search (Agenda Item 2.c). He asked whether the Committee thought they should run with the number of entries received. Commissioner Jacobson wondered whether it would be bad to have nine entries. Commissioner Sherman suggested extending the deadline by a month or so. He thought there might be a couple more entries if the Committee extended the deadline. Commissioner Sherman discussed several potential entries. Commissioner Raut asked if one of the potential entries in Gardner Township had entered, to which Commissioner Sherman said no.

Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to extend the farmhouse search entry deadline to May 1. Commissioner Brooks said he thought extending the deadline would allow another press release. Commissioner Raut believed extending the deadline would be a good idea as well. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brooks suggested he could write a press release. He suggested if the Committee would be okay with a message that there was some late interest in entering the search that he would send out the press release. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Brooks to draft a press release for review. Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to allow Commissioner Brooks to draft a press release for review and to later send it extending the entry deadline. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jacobson volunteered to draft a number of items to be considered prior to the County Fair event (Agenda Item 2.d). Staff suggested bringing the list to the May meeting for Committee discussion and action. Chairman Pell asked about the date of the County Fair. [The County Fair's website shows the dates as Wednesday June 15 through Sunday June 19, 2016.] Commissioner Jacobson suggested Commissioner Brooks contact the Farm Bureau about plans and whether there needs to be a booth or a display at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks mentioned two options: having an event in the building with the Farm Bureau display or having an event at the oldest farmhouse. He said if it is held at the oldest house, it does not have to be at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks thought it might get better press coverage at the house. He also mentioned it might be more guaranteed coverage at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks asked what the oldest house was at this moment. Staff mentioned one of the entries in Cartwright Township. Commissioner Jacobson asked what Commissioner Brooks had discussed with the Farm Bureau. Commissioner Brooks said the Farm Bureau was okay with the Fair because there is already a display there. He suggested setting up a small display within someone else's display. Commissioner Sherman suggested posters of the entries with dates of construction. Commissioner Jacobson asked if someone needed to be paid to make the posters. Commissioner Sims asked what the Committee wanted to do. Chairman Pell suggested his office could volunteer to print something up. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Brooks to remind the Farm Bureau that the Committee wants to participate at the Fair and that the Committee is thinking of doing a display. Chairman Pell asked if there were concerns about entry to the Fair. Staff said there is an entry fee to the Fair. Chairman Pell mentioned hopefully entry would be covered if there is an event at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks mentioned he would mention how to handle Fair entry to some members of the Fair board.

Commissioner Jacobson said he did not think an additional meeting would be needed in April and to plan on a meeting at the beginning of May (Agenda Item 2.e).

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Raut made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:57 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,

Steve Keenan

*attendance by speaker-phone

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission [SCHPC]
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
May 18, 2016

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Mike Brooks*
Aakash Raut
Bob Sherman
Chuck Pell

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Steve Keenan, Norm Sims

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:21 PM. The participants identified in the room at the beginning of the meeting were Commissioners Jacobson, Sherman, and Pell.

Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion to allow Commissioner Brooks to attend via speakerphone. Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pell, to allow Commissioner Brooks to attend the meeting by speakerphone due to employment purposes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brooks verified his attendance at the meeting via speakerphone at this time.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion to approve the minutes for February and April. Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Raut, to approve the February and the April Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Old Business: None.

New Business: The meeting began with a discussion of the merits of contacting a tree ring expert (Agenda Item 2.a). Commissioner Sherman said using tree ring dating could introduce conflicts with the documentary evidence. He expressed doubt it could pick the oldest entry. Commissioner Jacobson thought tree ring dating might help eliminate some entries based on post-1860 materials. Commissioner Sherman argued for one sample from each entry chosen. Commissioner Pell argued one should be able to determine age from both tree ring dates and other available evidence, e.g. a foundation. Commissioner Sherman argued for a sample from an original part of the structure. Commissioner Pell and staff asked if a Committee member could investigate the tree ring expert's services. Staff suggested having the expert look at a maximum of one to two houses. Commissioner Pell said it is beginning a dialogue and offered some suggestions. Commissioner Sherman said the expert might want some research data for future use. Commissioner Jacobson volunteered to make the contact.

Commissioner Jacobson summarized the entries (Agenda Item 2.b). He said there were 12 entries including one withdrawal, leaving 11 valid entries. Commissioner Jacobson said Cartwright Township had four entries; Gardner Township had three entries; and, four other townships had one entry each, i.e. Cotton Hill, Lanesville, Loami, and Rochester. Commissioner Jacobson said there were seven pre-1860 entries with insufficient evidence. Commissioner

Brooks asked for clarification. Commissioner Jacobson said in his estimation these entries did not have almost any documentation to back their pre-1860 construction estimates. Commissioner Brooks wanted to know if this is before or after reaching out to them, to which Commissioner Jacobson said after reaching out to them. Commissioner Pell said the evidence is anecdotal at best. Commissioner Jacobson said it is hardly that because he believed oral history could be valid documentation. He said these seven entries did not have even this level. Commissioner Sherman said abstracts only tell about land ownership not structures. He said that in many cases there is no concrete evidence to indicate a house's construction date without a source like a diary. Commissioner Sherman said there is not good aerial photography for historical purposes this far in the past. [Commissioner Raut entered the meeting at this point].

Commissioner Jacobson said the youngest entry with sufficient evidence was in Cartwright Township. He said a diary entry from 1857 read in part, "Entered into a contract with Child to [build] a house." Commissioner Jacobson said the evidence is good that the construction occurred prior to 1860. He said the next earliest entry is in Gardner Township. Commissioner Jacobson said the Greek Revival house, constructed in 1847, was originally an addition. He said the second oldest house is in Cotton Hill Township. He said family history states when the family bought it in 1854 the previous owner indicated the house was constructed in 1835. Commissioner Jacobson suggested the oldest farmhouse entry with documentation is in Cartwright Township. He said the entry has court testimony the house was constructed in 1832 or 1834. Commissioner Jacobson said the case involved distribution of assets of an estate. He said the shape of the house could be consistent with the early construction date.

Commissioner Sherman said at least one entry was a log house and might be older, but did not have particularly great evidence. He said he talked to the owners but never received documents.

Commissioner Raut asked if the seven owners with insufficient documentation were informed. Commissioner Jacobson said he contacted all but the two entries Commissioner Sherman submitted. Commissioner Raut asked if the owners had been given an opportunity to submit evidence, to which Commissioner Jacobson said yes. Commissioner Jacobson summarized some of his contact efforts.

Staff asked if the Committee should wait until the next meeting to make a final determination (Agenda Item 2.c). Commissioner Jacobson suggested using this decision but leaving the door open for more research information. He suggested wording to Commissioner Brooks for a press release. Commissioner Jacobson said of the entries seven had insufficient documentation and four had sufficient documentation to establish pre-1860 construction dates. Commissioner Brooks asked if the Committee wanted to wait for a press conference to unveil the oldest farmhouse. Commissioner Jacobson asked if the press conference would come before the Sangamon County Fair. Commissioner Brooks said he thought the announcement would be at the County Fair, but nothing is set in stone. Commissioner Jacobson suggested a release with a results roundup and to mention a presentation at the County Fair. Commissioner Pell suggested asking if the oldest farmhouse owner wants to participate in a TV news story. He suggested it might be important to determine this because if not, a generic reference might be appropriate. Commissioner Pell also suggested talking to all the owners to see if they would consent to having a picture of their houses on a poster. Commissioner Sherman suggested certificate language, i.e. the oldest versus one of the oldest houses. Commissioner Pell said this is from the entries received rather than being an absolute. Commissioner Brooks suggested language to the effect that it is the oldest known farmhouse in Sangamon County. Commissioner Jacobson asked if there should be a press release at this time later. Commissioner Brooks said they could wait for

the State Fair. Commissioner Pell suggested focusing on the Sangamon County Fair. Commissioner Sims suggested no delay, but that he does not know if someone talked to Fair personnel. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Brooks if he talked to the Farm Bureau about plans for the County Fair. Commissioner Brooks said the Farm Bureau does not really care how the Committee handles the press event. Commissioner Sims said there might not be that much play for the oldest farmhouse search at the State Fair. Commissioner Brooks suggested a second press conference at one of the houses. He said this might lead to more media exposure. Commissioner Sims said the original plan was to do this at the Sangamon County Fair. Commissioner Jacobson said he would draft a press release for the Committee. Commissioner Pell suggested calling the oldest farmhouse owner to say there will be an event at the County Fair and to ask if the owner wants to participate. He asked who wants to call the owners, to which Commissioner Jacobson said the Committee could address this later. Commissioner Sherman and Commissioner Jacobson discussed the lineage of one of the entries in Cartwright Township. Commissioner Jacobson said the Committee should anticipate a meeting at 3:15 PM on Wednesday June 1, 2016 (Agenda Item 2.e).

Commissioner Jacobson asked if the Committee could organize its Fair display (Agenda Item 2.d). Commissioner Pell said he could help if someone gets him information. He said he might photograph the sites. Commissioner Sims advised getting the wording together for the final event(s). Commissioner Jacobson advised photos for the 11 entries. Commissioner Pell asked if Commissioner Brooks would contact the appropriate Fair and/or Farm Bureau personnel to determine space availability for the entirety of the Fair. Commissioner Brooks agreed to talk to the Fair and Farm Bureau personnel. Commissioner Jacobson advised starting to think about the certificates. Staff said we could print the certificates if there is a final design printed and we know what goes on each one. Commissioner Jacobson volunteered to design the certificates and to work with staff on final printing. He asked who wants to handle the plaque for the oldest farmhouse. Commissioner Jacobson asked Commissioner Brooks if the Farm Bureau would sponsor a plaque. Commissioner Brooks said he would check with Brandt about a plaque. Commissioner Pell suggested talking to Ace to find out a cost. Commissioner Sims suggested talking to Brandt to find out the budget first. Commissioner Pell volunteered to contact Ace. Commissioner Brooks said it might be helpful to have a price for Brandt. Commissioner Sherman asked if the language on the plaque would say the oldest known farmhouse. Commissioner Pell said this could be handled later.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pell, to adjourn the Committee meeting at 3:59 PM. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,

Steve Keenan

*attendance by speakerphone

Minutes of Meeting
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
June 1, 2016

Members Present: Bob Sherman,
Mike Brooks
Jerry Jacobson
Aakash Raut*

Members Absent: Chuck Pell

Staff Present: Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:22 PM. The participants identified in the room at the beginning of the meeting were Commissioners Jacobson, Sherman, and Brooks.

Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion to allow Commissioner Raut to attend via speakerphone. Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to allow Commissioner Brooks to attend the meeting by speakerphone due to family or other emergency. Motion carried.

Commissioner Raut verified his attendance at the meeting via speakerphone at this time.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 18 Committee meeting. Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to approve the May 18 Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Commissioner Jacobson said he contacted Professor [Glen] Freimuth, a tree ring expert (Agenda Item 2.a). He said he would try and arrange for Professor Freimuth to access the entries at a later date. At this time, Professor Freimuth does not have equipment for analysis. Commissioner Sherman noted dendrochronology can do the same thing for logs as tree ring analysis. Commissioners Sherman and Jacobson discussed tree ring analysis versus dendrochronology. Commissioner Brooks asked whether this would hold anyone up from receiving a certificate, to which Commissioner Jacobson said no.

Commissioner Brooks said Farm Bureau and Brandt will be in the H.A.Y.L.O.F.T [Helping All Youth Learn about Farming Techniques] building at the County Fairground, near the southeast corner of the site by the campgrounds and the handicap accessible parking lot. Commissioner Jacobson asked for confirmation of the Fair dates, to which staff said June 15-19. Commissioners Brooks, Sherman, Jacobson and staff discussed the location of the HAYLOFT building.

Commissioner Brooks said Farm Bureau is okay with doing the press event near its display. He said Brandt is happy with having a pictorial display for the Farmhouses near its display, as is Farm Bureau. Commissioner Jacobson asked if the two displays are adjacent, to which Commissioner Brooks said they are real close. He described the Brandt space and typical displays. Commissioner Brooks suggested putting the Farm Bureau and Brandt logos on the final

pictorial display as well as mentioning Brandt in the press release. He summarized his discussion with Brandt about the oldest farmhouse plaque, which agreed to sponsor the plaque for a flat cost (Agenda Item 2.c). Staff suggested using marketing personnel with Brandt, if available. Commissioners Jacobson, Brooks, and Sherman discussed materials for the plaque. Discussion next proceeded to participant certificates. Staff suggested a heavy glossy paper for the certificates. Commissioner Sherman said Commissioner Pell volunteered to print a display. Staff said if Commissioner Pell wants to print certificates and the display great, but noted he was not present. Commissioner Sherman suggested parchment paper. Commissioner Brooks seemed optimistic that someone could print the certificates. Commissioners Jacobson, Sherman, Brooks, and staff discussed possible plaque vendors.

Staff asked about the final date for the Fair event (Agenda Item 2.b). Some discussion ensued over possible dates and times among Commissioners Brooks, Jacobson, Sherman and staff. Commissioner Brooks suggested Friday is a slow news day. He also suggested it might work better to hold the event at the Fair to ensure better coverage. Commissioner Jacobson suggested sending out a press release on Tuesday prior to the Fair with an event at the Fair.

Commissioner Jacobson opened discussion of the pre-Fair press release (Agenda Item 2.d). Staff suggested changing the dates in the second paragraph to move them up a week. Commissioner Brooks suggested changing the location to mention the Farm Bureau's HAYLOFT exhibit and adding in a mention of Brandt.

Returning to the certificates (Agenda Item 2.c), Commissioner Sherman suggested language for the certificates, i.e. one of the oldest versus the oldest farmhouse. Commissioner Brooks suggested wording for the certificate: "the undersigned hereby certify that ____ was hereby entered by ____ and determined by the Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission as being an historic farmhouse". Staff suggested eliminating the County Board signature since the event was sponsored by the Historic Preservation Commission. Commissioner Jacobson suggested this was [HPC Chair] Chuck [Pell's] call. Commissioner Brooks said he would provide some suggested edits for the certificate. He suggested language to tighten up the wording on the entries that submitted verified evidence of pre-1860 construction. Staff suggested removing the added language at the bottom because earlier it was stated that everyone would receive a certificate for participating. Commissioner Brooks said the idea of the added language was a smaller group had verified evidence. Commissioner Sherman suggested a landscape layout to make the title larger. Commissioner Jacobson added that many certificates have a landscape layout. Commissioner Brooks suggested adding Brandt to the certificates. He suggested having all three logos (HPC, Farm Bureau, and Brandt) on the final version of the certificates. Commissioner Jacobson asked if Commissioner Brooks would take charge of editing the final versions of both the plaque and the certificate. He suggested shooting the final version of the certificate and plaque to the rest of the group. Commissioner Brooks asked about a motion. Staff gave advice on wording.

Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, to give Commissioner Brooks final authority to edit and prepare the certificates and the plaque. Motion carried.

Returning to Agenda Item 2.b, Commissioner Jacobson said the place [HAYLOFT building] is known. Commissioner Brooks suggested not on Wednesday. Commissioner Jacobson suggested having it on a relatively quiet day at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks said kids days with reduced kids admissions are the 16th and the 17th. Commissioner Brooks said if the event is on Friday it is

a slow news day. Commissioner Sherman thought Friday would be a good. He asked when the farmhouse owners would be likely to show up. Commissioner Brooks said it might be good to ask the farmhouse owners. He said the plaque winner should be at the event and it would be nice to have the other owners make an appearance. Commissioner Jacobson said correct. Commissioner Brooks said the Farm Bureau really does not care about which day the event is. He said logistically it would not be as crowded on Thursday or Friday at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks added there might be a lot of little news stories on the weekends, e.g. festivals and athletic events, with which to compete. Commissioner Jacobson asked if it was determined to send out an announcement of the oldest farmhouse prior to the Fair. Commissioner Brooks advised a late Monday morning press release for a pre-Fair advisory. Commissioner Sherman asked if the farmhouse has a name. Commissioner Jacobson said he does not know. Commissioner Sherman advised talking to the oldest farmhouse owner to ask what to put on the certificate. Commissioner Brooks asked if someone else could handle the display. He asked if someone wants to give the oldest farmhouse owner options for the date and time. Commissioner Brooks suggested 10 or 11 AM, or 1 to 3 PM on Thursday or Friday [June 16 and June 17] as times for the event.

Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, to allow Commissioner Jacobson to work with the owner of the oldest farmhouse to determine the date and time of the final certificate ceremony at the Sangamon County Fair. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jacobson asked who would present at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks suggested the County Board Chairman, the Farm Bureau President, Commissioner Pell [HPC Chair], or a Brandt representative. Commissioner Jacobson suggested allowing Commissioner Pell to make the determination. Staff suggested bringing the issue up at the next Committee meeting.

Staff asked if the Farmhouse Committee wanted to meet again prior to the Fair (Agenda Item 2.e). After some discussion among Commissioner Brooks, Commissioner Jacobson, Commissioner Sherman, and staff, the consensus was to hold another meeting on Monday June 13, 2016 at 3:00 PM.

Additional Comments: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:59 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Steve Keenan

**Minutes of Meeting
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission
June 13, 2016**

Members Present: Chuck Pell
Bob Sherman
Mike Brooks
Jerry Jacobson

Members Absent: Aakash Raut

Staff Present: Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM.

General discussion of the minutes followed. Commissioner Pell asked staff to put up a copy of a proposed exhibit for the Sangamon County Fair. Commissioners Sherman and Pell and staff discussed the display.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pell, to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion carried.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Commissioner Jacobson summarized evidence received regarding the Barringer house. Commissioner Pell asked if the evidence suggests some part of the house makes this entry the oldest farmhouse. Commissioner Sherman said the log house is in the middle of the house. Commissioner Jacobson said it is the oldest. Commissioner Sherman asked how old the house in Cotton Hill [Township] was, to which Commissioner Jacobson said 1835. Commissioner Jacobson said the Barringer entry was from 1823. Commissioner Sherman said the layout of the house on Salisbury Road is indicative of its age. Commissioner Jacobson said he believes the Barringer house is the oldest based on the newspaper interview.

Commissioner Jacobson asked for a motion from the Committee that the oldest farmhouse has been established to the best of our ability. Commissioner Sherman asked if the motion should include language that it is the oldest known farmhouse. Staff clarified the language of the motion. Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jacobson, that the Barringer house was the oldest known farmhouse among entries. Motion carried.

Commissioner Brooks entered the meeting at 3:10 PM. He said he has a proof of the plaque. Some discussion of portrait versus landscape orientation ensued. Commissioner Brooks said it is walnut wood with brass plating and an older style. He said the plaque printer [Spinner Plastic] would also do the certificates. Commissioner Brooks said if there are changes to the copy it should be decided at this meeting to ensure the plaque is available for Friday. After some discussion amongst Commissioners Pell, Jacobson, Sherman, Brooks, and staff, the Committee's determination on signatures was to have Commissioner Pell [as HPC Chair] sign the certificates along with the Farm Bureau President. Later, Commissioner Pell gave some suggestions on how to present his name on the plaque and/or certificate.

Commissioner Pell asked whether all the certificates would say oldest farmhouse. Commissioner Brooks said only this one. Commissioner Pell asked if everyone gets a certificate, except the plaque winner; to which Commissioner Jacobson replied yes.

Regarding certificates, Commissioner Jacobson said one group with documented pre-Civil War connections gets one certificate and the other group gets another certificate. Commissioner Brooks expressed concerns with the word qualified on the certificate. He said several of the houses could not be documented as pre-Civil War. Commissioner Brooks suggested saying an historic 19th century home. He said the certificate would not say anything about the Civil War in the text. Commissioner Pell said determining details, e.g. names and addresses, was the main thing with the certificates at this point.

Returning to the plaque, Commissioner Brooks said he would lean towards the Barringer Family for the plaque text. He suggested owned by the Barringer Family. Commissioner Brooks asked if the name of the farmhouse should be the Walters Farmhouse, to which Commissioner Sherman said yes. Commissioner Sherman asked about wording, to which Commissioner Brooks replied the wording was oldest documented farmhouse. Commissioner Brooks said Spinner would do the plaque and all the certificates for a specific price. Commissioner Brooks said he went to Valco but they were more expensive. Commissioner Brooks described how the plaque materials were chosen. Discussion of the plaque materials and layout ensued among Commissioners Jacobson and Brooks. Commissioner Pell said the other certificates would simply be a piece of paper without a frame. Commissioner Brooks said he thought the parchment paper with an ivory color is appropriate. He said yellow is another option, but he thought the ivory looked better. Commissioner Jacobson asked if wood would be oriented the same way as the plaque. Commissioner Brooks said yes, it is slightly larger than the brass engraving.

Commissioner Brooks said everything is in agreement except names and the language at the bottom of the certificate. After much discussion among Commissioners Brooks, Jacobson, Pell, Sherman, and staff, the general consensus on the final certificate was similar to: "Furthermore, sufficient evidence was submitted to show that this farmhouse was likely constructed during the mid-19th century, and it is thus of historical interest to Sangamon County due to its lengthy survival as a home."

Commissioner Brooks said he forgot to send out the press release this morning. He said he would wait until after the meeting. Commissioner Brooks said that the first press release would act as an advisory to the event on Friday.

Commissioner Jacobson said the second press release will be sent Thursday. Commissioner Brooks said if something is important you usually have the first press releases available for people who show up at the event and then you send out the release sometime afterward. He said in this case it really does not make sense to send it out early. Commissioner Pell said this will likely be Saturday (or Sunday) news.

Commissioner Pell presented the display and solicited feedback. He said it will be a 34" X 34" square. Commissioner Pell discussed some of the highlights. Commissioner Sherman asked for an electronic copy. Commissioner Pell then discussed the 11 entries on the display. Commissioner Brooks suggested corners and a border on two sides. Commissioner Pell said the information includes the name of the farmhouse, the age, and an address. Some discussion among Commissioners Jacobson, Pell, Brooks, Sherman and staff about the names and addresses

for the entries on the display. Commissioner Jacobson asked about one of the entries with a different entrant than the owner. Staff said there were two application received letters for that entry. Commissioner Pell asked where the display should go at the Fair. Commissioner Brooks asked if anyone has an easel. Commissioner Pell said he thought it would be okay to provide one. Commissioner Brooks said worst case the display could be dropped off by the Farm Bureau display, and then moved to the Brandt area.

Commissioner Pell asked how the Commissioners will get into the Fair. Commissioner Brooks said the Fair allocated 25 passes. He said priority would go to farmhouse owners. Commissioner Jacobson said six entrants wanted eleven passes. Commissioner Brooks suggested having someone at the main gate to hand out the passes. He said if all the passes go to the entrants we could probably pay to get ourselves into the Fair. Commissioner Jacobson asked who is informing the rest of the Commissioners. Staff suggested an email or letter advising the Commissioners and other elected officials, e.g. County Board and township officials. Commissioner Brooks suggested the Commissioners let us know by Wednesday because we may have tickets. He said free parking is by the school and is in a different area from the main gate.

Commissioners Brooks and Jacobson asked Commissioner Pell if he would make a short presentation. Commissioner Brooks suggested laying out how the search works and then describing the entries. Commissioner Pell suggested having the Farm Bureau Chair say something.

The Committee announced another meeting on July 6 at 3:30 PM.

Adjourn: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pell, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:14 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Steve Keenan

**Minutes of Meeting
Oldest Farmhouse Committee
Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission
July 6, 2016**

Members Present: Jerry Jacobson
Bob Sherman
Mike Brooks
Chuck Pell

Members Absent: Aakash Raut

Staff Present: Steve Keenan

Call to Order: A quorum being present, Commissioner Jacobson called the meeting to order at 3:32 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Sherman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to approve the minutes of the June 13 meeting. Motion carried.

New Business: Commissioner Jacobson introduced the final Fair event agenda item. Commissioner Brooks said there were about five certificates for non-attendees. Some discussion ensued about the certificates with the consensus that Commissioner Brooks would drop off one and staff would mail the others. Commissioner Jacobson discussed a communication lapse with some of the entrants. He asked how many attendees there were, to which the response was about 25-30. Commissioner Brooks asked who the prominent attendees were. Commissioners Brooks, Jacobson, Sherman, and staff discussed some of the prominent attendees. Commissioners Jacobson, Sherman, and Brooks then discussed some photos of the Fair event taken by RPC staff.

Commissioner Brooks said there was an email from Commissioner Raut linking several news stories about the Fair event. He asked when the story ran in the *State Journal-Register*. Commissioner Jacobson said on Saturday. Commissioners Jacobson, Sherman, Brooks and staff discussed media coverage and links in the email.

Commissioner Jacobson asked about letters of appreciation. After some discussion among Commissioners Jacobson, Brooks, Sherman and Pell, the consensus was to send out letters of appreciation to various entities by Commissioner Pell.

Commissioner Jacobson asked about dissolving the Committee, as its work is complete. He made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to recommend that the Historic Preservation Commission [HPC] Chair dissolve the Oldest Farmhouse Committee. Motion carried.

Adjourn: Commissioner Brooks made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sherman, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Steve Keenan