

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Council Chambers, City Hall
70 Maple Street
Manistee, MI 49660

MEETING MINUTES

August 2, 2018

A Meeting of the Manistee City Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, August 2, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan.

Meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Perschbacher.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Dick Albee, Aaron Bennett, John Perschbacher, Mary Russell, Mark Wittlieff

Members Absent: Lee Trucks, Vacancy

Others: Tyler Leppanen (DDA Director), Mark Fedder (Museum Director) Steve Harold (Museum Curator), and Denise Blakeslee (Planning & Zoning Director).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Ms. Blakeslee asked the commission to amend the agenda to add under New Business - Establish goals for a three-year period as required under the Certified Local Government Program

MOTION by Aaron Bennett, seconded by Mark Wittlieff that the Agenda be approved with the addition under New Business - Establish goals for a three-year period as required under the Certified Local Government Program

With a voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION by Mark Wittlieff, seconded by Mary Russell that the Minutes of the July 12, 2018 Meeting be approved as prepared.

With a voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA RELATED ITEMS

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Local Historic Districts Act (Act 169 of 1907)/Guidelines and Policies

The Commission reviewed the Local Historic Districts Act and Chapter 1280 Historic District Commission.

Excerpt from the Act discussed reads:

399.202 Historic preservation as public purpose; purpose of ordinance.

Sec. 2. Historic preservation is declared to be a public purpose and the legislative body of a local unit may by ordinance regulate the construction, addition, alteration, repair, moving, excavation, and demolition of resources in historic districts within the limits of the local unit. The purpose of the ordinance shall be to do 1 or more of the following:

- (a) Safeguard the heritage of the local unit by preserving 1 or more historic districts in the local unit that reflect elements of the unit's history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.
- (b) Stabilize and improve property values in each district and the surrounding areas.
- (c) Foster civic beauty.
- (d) Strengthen the local economy.
- (e) Promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the local unit and of the state

Discussion included:

- Want to have all purposes considered when requests during deliberation/approval process
- Discussed differences in building material (existing vs replacement)
- Replace with materials with similar finish “replace in kind”
- Altering image of building vs preserving image of building/district
- Can’t abandon historic standards – has to be legally defensible
- How standards are applied to contributing buildings vs non-contributing buildings
- Do not want to chase away investors/developers
- By having the district, you will get quality investors
- Historic Preservation is a public purpose
- Beauty is subjective, the commission is not here to judge architecture merit, buildings have stood the test of time and are a community resource
- Not all buildings are examples of Victorian Architecture i.e. United Way, Vogue Theater

The commissioners had a good discussion on the topic and were encouraged to continue the discussion. They should utilize the resource of the consultant who assists with the update of the guidelines if it is selected as a component of Project Rising Tide.

This is Ms. Blakeslee’s last meeting and she wanted to encourage the Commissioners to request as a component of the Project Rising Tide Program to have the guidelines updated. The current guidelines are based off the Manistee Downtown Preservation and Development Plan from 1981. There have been changes in the Secretary

of the Interior Standards and in the Preservation Briefs since that time. The guidelines should be easy to read and allow the applicant to complete the application forms with minimal assistance.

The Commissioners signed a letter addressed to the Project Rising Tide Steering Committee requesting their assistance in updating the guidelines.

Chair Perschbacher left the meeting at 3:50 pm.

Establish goals for a three-year period as required under the Certified Local Government Program

Ms. Blakeslee spoke to the commission about the recent evaluation that was completed by the Certified Local Government Program. One item that needs to be addressed is that the Historic District Commission needs to annually establish goals for a three-year period. The goals can include updating the guidelines, submitting grant applications for city owned properties on the National Register of Historic Places and supporting and providing assistance as needed for the Fire Station nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Motion by Mary Russell, seconded by Mark Wittlieff that annually at their December meeting the Historic District Commission, the commission will establish goals for a three-year period as required under the Certified Local Government Program.

To comply with the requirement the Historic District Commission established the following goals:

- As a component of the Project Rising Tide Program update the City of Manistee Historic District Commission Guidelines to incorporate changes that have been made to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and NPS Preservation Briefs. 2019-2020.
- The Historic District Commission reviewed City owned properties that are on the National Register of Historic places and came up with the following goals relating to the properties:
- Apply for a Certified Local Government grant from SHPO for a National Register nomination for the Ramsdell Theater – Deadline September 30 (1-3 years |2019-2021) for façade improvements that include chimney repair, remove paint and repair and repaint front columns, repair or replace rear stage door
- Apply for a Certified Local Government grant from SHPO for a National Register nomination for the Ramsdell Theater – Deadline September 30 (3-5 years |2021-2023) for façade improvements that include tuckpointing the entire building.
- Apply for a Certified Local Government grant from SHPO for a National Register nomination for the Manistee North Pierhead Light - Deadline: September 30, 2022 to complete interior painting, including restoring metal ladders and metal floor hatches.
- Assist the Fire Department with application to have the Fire Hall that is currently on the State Register of Historic Places with the National Register nomination in 2019.

- Once Fire Station is on the National Register, apply for a Certified Local Government grant from SHPO for a National Register nomination for repairs/maintenance i.e. roof, window repair/placement, tuck pointing and painting. Date of application to be determined.

With a voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Albee shared a copy of his email with commissioners.

STAFF REPORTS

Denise Blakeslee, Planning & Zoning Director – Thanked the commissioners for their service to the city along with Mark Fedder and Steve Harold for all of their assistance with the commission over the years.

MEMBERS DISCUSSION

Commissioners thanked Ms. Blakeslee for her service and wished her well.

The Next meeting of the Historic District Commission will be on Thursday September 6, 2018 at 3:00 pm in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Mark Wittlieff, seconded by Mary Russell that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:05 pm.

MANISTEE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Denise Blakeslee, Acting as Recording Secretary/lyl