



HIGHLAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Robert B. Blackwell Municipal Building
12050 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park, Michigan 48203
313-252-0050 x257 Chairman F.Ross

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION (HDC) MEETING Highland Park Fire Station, 25 Gerald Monday, 23rd May 2022 OFFICIAL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER - 5:45PM

The meeting was hosted by Chair Zobel in the Highland Park Fire Station and also called to order by Chair Zobel, roll call was performed by Secretary Harris

Commissioners Present: Anne Zobel - Chair, Malika Pryor - Vice Chair, Jeffrey Harris-Secretary, Commissioner Arthur Williams, Commissioner Debbie Morrison [by phone]

Commissioners Absent: none

Other: Donya Clowney - Prospective Commissioner, Anthony Askew - Prospective Commissioner, Angela Thomas - resident

The April 2022 Minutes were brought to the table for approval. Vice Chair Pryor motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Secretary Harris. Motion passed unanimously at 5:46

REPORT FROM COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED) DIRECTOR – 5:47PM

CED Director Hinton was unable to provide any details for this meeting.

Chair Zobel noted that the MacGregor Library Committee meeting was held recently. During this meeting a rejection by Wayne County of the Committee's attempt to secure ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds was discussed. The KIP-D grant is still on the table, however.

MICHIGAN STATE PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO) - CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM (CLG) – 5:49PM

Chair Zobel began this topic by saying the Highland Park Historic District Commission is now on the National Parks Service website and Ty Hinton is listed as the primary contact for the Commission. This will help with recognition, funding, and resources.

This past Saturday, Anne went to the Michigan Historic Preservation Network Conference in

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Holly, MI where she attended a panel discussion. She mentioned that it was interesting to see that the Detroit Historic District Commission has six full time staff members, whereas the Grand Rapids Historic District Commission has one. Another noteworthy takeaway from this conference was the availability of funding available to under-represented communities to assist these communities with adding historic resources to the national register. To this effect, she asserted that adding the old Highland Park High School to the national register would be a great idea. She believes Kristine Kidorf had already attempted to nominate the highschool ages ago; the commission could check with her. Anthony Askew is particularly interested in this project, Secretary Harris offered to help Anthony in this pursuit.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWING WORKSHOP AND NEXT STEPS – 6:00PM

Chair Zobel and the commission talked briefly about how great the Oral History Interview workshop went, both in terms of the actual event and also the enthusiasm of the attendees.

Various updates were provided during this period of the meeting. Anne asked that the commission provide responses to the follow-up questionnaire she sent out a few weeks ago by June 1st; as of now only four attendees (including two commissioners) have filled this out. Anne also asked Vice Chair Pryor to follow up with Billy about obtaining his slide-show for future reference. Despite Malika's impending move out of state, Anne would like her to stay on as the "thought leader" for the Oral History Committee that will be forming. Both Donya Clowney and Angela Thomas volunteered simultaneously to lead this committee. Malika stressed that the Historic District Commission of Highland Park should think through how it wants to formalize its relationship with the Detroit Historical Society (DHS). The DHS has many resources available to the commission. Anne has updated Alan Higgins with MI SHPO about this Oral History Committee - she's eager to have him attend our meeting so we can discuss funding options. Lastly, there was interest in Oral Histories related to LGBTQ history of Highland Park; to this end, Malika messaged her contact Dean who should have LGBTQ resources the committee can contact.

FORD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING FUNDING APPLICATION SUPPORT LETTER – 6:25PM

Chair Zobel began this period of the meeting by explaining that the Ford Administration Building - one of the HDC's highest priority topics - is majority owned by Woodward Avenue Action Association (WA3), and minority owned (about 18%) by the Highland Park TIFA. Carlo Liburdi is interested in the property and is currently on an 18 month 'due diligence' period. Anne talked with Mr. Liburdi recently and he states that he is committed to using historic tax credits for this property which means that he will need to follow the same Secretary of the Interior Standard for Historic Properties which the HP HDC follows. He has an opportunity to use an ARPA Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) grant through MEDC. Anne drafted a letter of support for Mr. Liburdi which was provided to all commissioners the week prior. The commission discussed this letter prior to approval. Secretary Harris wanted to know if by approving and sending the letter the commission was giving Mr. Liburdi license to make the proposed changes which the letter reflects on. Anthony and Malika both believe the letter is just a simple support to seek grant funds and does not directly approve of any proposed changes. One line of the final paragraph is changed to reflect that the HP HDC has jurisdiction not just over the structure, but the surrounding property. With the changes, Secretary Harris motioned to approve the letter, seconded by both Vice Chair Pryor and Commissioner Williams. The motion passed unanimously at 6:47PM.

Also noted during this meeting was that there is a restrictive covenant on the property preventing the property from being housing or residential. Chair Zobel is curious about how open the Ford family would be to rescinding this covenant for development purposes since they do not seem to have any interest in this structure. At present, however, Carlo's goal is to use grant money to improve the property and have it stabilized.

Vice Chair Pryor also mentioned that Wayne State and a Lead Abatement program have both contacted her regarding the HDC (presumably after her WDET interview). She will forward those communications to Chair Zobel and the rest of the commission.

ADJOURNMENT – 6:53PM

Secretary Harris motioned to adjourn, seconded by Chair Zobel. Meeting was adjourned at 6:53PM

- The next Historic District Commission will be held on June 27th, 2022.