



Holyoke Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2019

Attendance: Richard Ahlstrom (Chairperson), Chris Gauthier, Joe Paul, James Sheehan, Frances Welson, Paola Ferrario **Absent:** Alexandra Puffer
Municipal Staff: Debbie Oppermann (OPED) **Other:** Dennis Luzuriaga

1. **Call to Order-** Richard Ahlstrom called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
2. **Review of December 10, 2018 minutes** – A motion was made by Joe Paul and seconded by James Sheehan to approve minutes from December 10, 2018. All were in favor.
3. **Public Participation** – None.
4. **Holyoke Health Center – facility renovations**
Debbie Opperman stated that Holyoke Health Center (HHC) is undergoing renovations to 230 High Street and are not sure if the need to have an HHC Review. Mrs. Opperman stated that HHC has received Historic Tax credits in the past. In support of the HHC Substance abuse program they are doing renovations inside the building. HHC is removing walls that they put up during their last renovation in order to reconfigure existing space. Mrs. Opperman provided the Board with before and after floor plans of the renovation and an overview of what HHC is doing. The Commission stated that it only has review responsibility for renovations on the outside of a building not inside renovations. The Commission is willing to supply a letter of support should the HHC need one.
5. **Certified Local Government Review – Perkins Block – Historic Tax Credit**
Dennis Luzuriaga, the project manager for Whitman Properties spoke to the board regarding Historic Tax Credits for Hotel Jess. Mr. Luzuriaga stated that the owner is renovating the property and has applied for Historic Tax Credits. He is requesting a letter of support. Mr. Luzuriaga stated that there will be a restaurant on the main floor and will have apartments on the top floors. Mr. Luzuriaga added that renovations to the outside of Hotel Jess will include repairing and repointing of brick work, replacement of historic windows.
6. **Demolition Delay Ordinance Revisions** –
Commissioners reviewed draft revisions to the ordinance and agreed on the following changes:
 - Section 1. Sec.18-34 after “Demolition Delay Ordinance” – hereinafter referred to Preservation Ordinance;
 - Section 1. B. Definitions: OPED staff will draft and insert a definition for “demolition” and “partial demolition”;
 - Section 1. B. Historically significant building or structure, delete (1) and (2), keep (3) and in (4) change number of years from 100 to 75;

- Section 1. C. Procedure (2) OPED staff will research and draft language reflecting the Commission's desire to ensure that utility connections are maintained throughout the Preservation Ordinance's process.;
- Section 1. C. Procedure (4) v. OPED staff will research and draft language reflecting the Commission's desire for the applicant to provide proof of necessary zone change granted (if necessary) and site plan approval for the reuse of the parcel OPED staff will also research how to ensure that fines or outstanding taxes have been paid (if applicable); OPED staff will insert a statement emphasizing that if all the material asked for is not submitted within fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the public hearing that the public hearing procedure will restart.;
- Section 1. C. 6. OPED will research and draft language reflecting making the delay order non-transferable – new ownership – new project.;
- Section 1. D. Procedure for City Projects – delete in its entirety. Discussion emphasized the infrequency of the City undertaking demolition without federal or state funding.

7. Old Business –

a. Richardson Train Station –

Richard Ahlstrom stated that he called HG& E to get a tour of the building and have not heard back from them yet. Debbie Oppermann reminded the Commission that the Office of Planning & Development submitted an application for \$150,000 to fund a developer's incentive for redevelopment of the property.

8. New Business –

a. Mater Dolorosa Stained glass windows – Paola Ferrario stated that she was made aware that DC Riggott Inc (dealer of antique church items and stained glass) is selling stained glass windows from Mater Dolorosa online. The commissioners discussed making the newspaper aware of this so that they may write an article regarding this in the hopes that someone in Holyoke can purchase them and bring them back to Holyoke.

b. New Middle Schools – Richard Ahlstrom asked Debbie Opperman if the Middle School Project is still moving forward. Mrs. Opperman stated that yes, it is moving forward. She added that a parcel across from Lawrence school will be one of the locations for a new Middle school.

c. Historic Photos of Holyoke – Frances Welton stated that Glen Sullivan sent her a link to Historic Photos of Holyoke. Ms. Welton asked Debbie Opperman to forward the link to the Commissioners. The link is www.digitalcommonwealth.org

d. 37 Appleton Street- Although the owners of this parcel spoke to the Commission in the past about trying to save part of the exterior wall of this building, they have decided to demolish it instead given that the Building department deemed it an emergency.

e. Community Development –Debbie Opperman stated that she had a conversation with Alicia Zoeller regarding a possible funding pool for renovations for historic homes. The Community Development Office has a program called the Neighborhood improvement program where funding may be set aside for people looking to renovate historic properties. Ms. Zoeller suggested that the Commission might want to partner with an organization that has the experience and management capacity to run the program such as One Holyoke CDC.

9. Next Meeting – February 11, 2019

10. Adjourn – With no other business in Regular Session, a motion was made by Jim Sheehan to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m., the motion was seconded by Joe Paul. The decision was unanimous.

Submitted by: Barbara Bou