



Holyoke Historical Commission (HHC)

Meeting Minutes

Monday February 8, 2021

Due to the declared public health emergency, the meeting was held virtually via zoom.us

Zoom Meeting ID: 893 2468 2841

**Attendance:** Richard Ahlstrom, Elana Aubrey, Marco Crescentini, Christopher Gauthier, Harry Montalvo, Luis Salazar, Frances Welson

**Not in Attendance:** Paola Ferrario

**Municipal Staff:** Ben Murphy (OPED) Aaron Vega (OPED Director) Gabriella Klinakis (OPED)

**Others in Attendance:** N/A

1. **Call to Order-** Richard Ahlstrom called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and Ben Murphy announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Mr. Ahlstrom introduced Aaron Vega, the new Director of the Office of Planning and Economic Development.

2. **Review of January 11, 2021 Minutes**

*A motion was made by Christopher Gauthier and seconded by Frances Welson to accept the January 11, 2021 minutes.*

*The motion carried unanimously*

3. **Public Participation-** There was no public participation.

4. **Preservation Ordinance (Demolition Delay)**

Richard Ahlstrom, Frances Welson, and Ben Murphy met with Damien Cote, the Building Commissioner, to speak about changes to the Ordinance that have been submitted to City Council. Mr. Ahlstrom shared that Mr. Cote was in favor of most of the changes and only had a few suggestions for minor changes. Mr. Murphy said Commissioners will be assigned to contact City Councilors that are on the Ordinance Committee to explain the changes to the ordinance and he will send to the Commission a copy of the revised ordinance, assignment list, and the letter that was written to the City Council. Ms. Welson suggested that if Commissioners have trouble reaching City Councilors, to contact her or Mr. Ahlstrom. Mr. Ahlstrom asked that Commissioners contact him to confirm that they have been in touch with their assigned City Councilors and if any concerns were raised.

Mr. Vega shared that he thought the Ordinance would probably take two Committee meetings to review and that it will be important for there to be Historical Commission members at the meeting to present the Ordinance. Mr. Ahlstrom and Ms. Welson agreed to speak about the Ordinance at the Ordinance Committee meeting on February 23 at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Murphy suggested the Commission not have more than three members participate at the meeting because four or more will be a quorum which will require posting as a public meeting. Ms. Welson asks if there should be any public engagement about the meeting and Mr. Murphy suggested that getting public support could be helpful.

**5. Historical Commission Community Engagement**

Luis Salazar suggested that the Historical Commission webpages include more information about Commissioners and improve and expand resources on the site. Mr. Salazar volunteered to help update the site. Richard Ahlstrom agreed that the website should have a greater public presence and educational component. Aaron Vega suggested the Commission reach out to Andres Villada, Mayoral Aide, to help edit and update the Commission's page. Mr. Murphy suggests the Commission speak to City Historian, Penni Martorell and the Holyoke Preservation Trust. Mr. Salazar asks if the Historical Commission would be able to have their own publication and Mr. Murphy said he would review the budget to see if funds are available.

**6. Discussion on Wyckoff Park Historic District-** No Discussion on this topic.

**7. Historic Plaque Program**

Christopher Gauthier said he received about ten plaques from Olivia Mausel, Historic District Commission member. Mr. Gauthier shared that he reached out to several local businesses in Holyoke about producing new plaques and G Street Vinyl gave Mr. Gauthier a quote of \$30 a plaque. He explained that the information on the plaques would be done in vinyl. Some Commissioners shared concerns about the durability of vinyl and if it would be aesthetically appealing. Mr. Gauthier shared that in the past the Commission would produce the plaques but property owners would pay for them. There was consensus from Commissioners that they would like to see a prototype produced by G Street Vinyl. Aaron Vega provided the information for another local business named Brick, which may be interested in producing the plaques.

**8. Survey and Planning Grant**

Ben Murphy shared that the project consultant has started researching the historic properties and that Mr. Murphy has started to gather Building Department records for the project.

**9. Old Business-** No Old Business.

**10. New Business**

Ben Murphy informed the Commission that the City of Holyoke has hired a conservator to assess the repairs needed to be made to the Civil War Monument located at Veterans' Memorial Park.

**11. Next Meeting-** March 8, 2021

**12. Adjourn**

*At 7:22 pm., there being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Harry Montalvo and seconded by Elana Aubrey to adjourn the meeting.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

Sincerely,

**Holyoke Historical Commission**