



Holyoke Historical Commission (HHC)

Meeting Minutes

Monday April 12, 2021

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

Zoom Meeting ID: 829 6272 0876

Attendance: Richard Ahlstrom, Elana Aubrey, Marco Crescentini, Paola Ferrario, Christopher Gauthier, Luis Salazar, Frances Welton

Not in Attendance: Harry Montalvo

Municipal Staff: Ben Murphy (OPED) Gabriella Klinakis (OPED)

Others in Attendance: Lauren Canepari, WinnDevelopment and Mary Nastasi, MacRostie Historic Advisors

1. Call to Order – Richard Ahlstrom called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

2. Review of March 8, 2021 Minutes

A motion was made by Christopher Gauthier and seconded by Elana Aubrey to accept the minutes from March 8, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Participation – There was no Public Participation.

4. Historic Tax Credit Letter of Support

Ben Murphy gave a brief overview of the property at 216 Appleton Street that will house a 55 and over residential community. He then introduced Lauren Canepari and Mary Nastasi. Ms. Canepari shared a presentation outlining the Phase 1 plan for the site and explained that WinnDevelopment is an affordable housing developer that has developments in 23 states and has completed over 35 historic mill renovations in New England including Mill 10 in Ludlow. The project will be a phased project; Phase 1 will include Buildings 6,5, and half of 4. The buildings will include 88 units, 76 one-bedroom and 12 two-bedroom units along with several common areas. Winn's goal is to have 15% market rate housing and 85% affordable housing. The units will be lottery based and the new tenants do not need to be Massachusetts residents. A 91-space parking lot will be constructed on vacant land at 191 Appleton Street and there will be outdoor amenities to improve the CanalWalk. Elana Aubrey asked if public transportation was accessible to future tenants and Ms. Canepari replied that there is a bus stop as well as local service organizations that Winn partners with to provide transportation. Mary Nastasi shared that WinnDevelopment has been applying for State Historic Tax Credits for this project for just over 4 years. Originally the application was one phase and included all six buildings. All interior and exterior repairs or replacements will be historically appropriate.

*A motion was made by Paola Ferrario and seconded by Frances Welton to approve a letter of support for the State Historic Tax Credit application for 216 Appleton Street.
The motion carried unanimously.*

5. Preservation Ordinance (Demolition Delay)

Richard Ahlstrom shared that Rebecca Lisi, Chair of the City Council Ordinance Committee, asked if the Preservation Ordinance could be delayed to a future meeting because the next Ordinance Committee meeting agenda was full. Mr. Ahlstrom suggested that the Commission may want to consider delaying the ordinance until a new Mayor is elected. There was concern about waiting until 2022, but Ben Murphy

clarified that the new mayor would be seated in November not January due to the special legislation. There were some concerns raised about waiting but there was consensus that it made sense to delay the ordinance for now.

A motion was made by Paola Ferrario and seconded by Elana Aubrey to request that the City Council Ordinance Committee postpone reviewing the Preservation Ordinance until after a new Mayor is sworn in.

The motion carried 6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 abstention (Frances Welton)

6. Historical Commission Community Engagement

Paola Ferrario shared that the Community Relations Committee had agreed upon a public relations campaign that will include a website about the Historical Commission, meeting minutes, and historical preservation resources. The Committee is also working on a walking trail that will include QR codes that can be scanned to provide information about historic sites in Holyoke. Ms. Ferrario has reached out to Smith College and UMASS and will reach out to HCC to find interns to help develop the website and QR codes. Three students have already expressed interest. Elana Aubrey suggested the Commission ask local businesses to help sponsor the initiative. Additionally, Luis Salazar offered to photograph and film parts of Holyoke for the website.

a. Historic Plaque Program – No update was provided.

7. Discussion on Wyckoff Park Historic District

Paola Ferrario shared an original Wyckoff Park brochure from 1923 and photos of many homes in the neighborhood. The brochure provided information about the development of the neighborhood. Ms. Ferrario stated that she has spoken to some current homeowners in the neighborhood to ask if they are open to the idea of Wyckoff Park being a historic district. There was enthusiasm from homeowners for creating a historic district but also concern about restrictions that controlled what they can and cannot do to their home. Christopher Gauthier asked what the procedure was to create a historic district and Ben Murphy replied that a local historic district report would be produced, the report would be sent to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for their comments and then ultimately it would be up to the City Council to approve the district.

8. 2020 State Register of Historic Places

Ben Murphy explained that funding for Community Preservation Act (CPA) Historic Preservation projects requires a property to be listed on the State Register of Historic Places or for the Historical Commission to determine that a property is historically significant to the City of Holyoke. Mr. Murphy explained that because much of the State Register properties in Holyoke are in historic districts, not all property addresses are listed in the Register, even though they are on the Register. He has put together a list of each property address that is on the list, which makes it easier for CPA applicants to know if their property is on the State Register. The Commission had previously approved a policy that stated the Commission would annually approve an official list of properties that are on the State Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has come out with the 2020 Register and Mr. Murphy stated that he reviewed the list for Holyoke and that it had not change from the previous list. He asked the Commission to approve the 2020 State Register of Historic Places for Holyoke, which was sent in the meeting packet and is the same list that was previously approved just with an updated date.

A motion was made by Frances Welton and seconded by Christopher Gauthier to accept the official Holyoke 2020 State Register of Historic Places list.

9. Old Business

Richard Ahlstrom asked if Aaron Vega had reached out to Carl Cameron, COO at Holyoke Medical Center, regarding 1840 Northampton Street and Ben Murphy responded that he was not sure but it looks like they are rehabilitating the property but have not yet repaired the roof.

10. New Business

Ben Murphy shared that he had sent out additional documents to Commissioners before the meeting and asked if the Commission was willing to hear those items at tonight's meeting. The documents included a

National Register Eligibility Form for the Richardson Train Station and information about the Rock Valley Cemetery for the Commission to determine whether the cemetery is historically significant to Holyoke for CPA funding. The consensus among Commissioners was that they would act on those items at the current meeting.

A motion was made by Paola Ferrario and seconded by Elana Aubrey to approve and submit the National Register Eligibility Form for the Richardson Train Station.

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Chris Gauthier and seconded by Paola Ferrario to determine that the Rock Valley Cemetery is historically significant to the City of Holyoke.

The motion carried unanimously.

11. Next Meeting- May 10, 2021

12. Adjourn

At 8:12 p.m., there being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Christopher Gauthier and seconded by Frances Welton to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Sincerely,

Holyoke Historical Commission