



Holyoke Historical Commission (HHC)

Meeting Minutes

Monday March 8, 2021

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

Zoom Meeting ID: 824 6892 1745

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

Not in Attendance: Harry Montalvo

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

Others in Attendance: N/A

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 February 8, 2021 Minutes

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

3. Public Participation - There was no public participation.

4. Preservation Ordinance (Demolition Delay)

Richard Ahlstrom notified the Commission that the Ordinance Committee will be hearing the new Preservation Ordinance on 4/13 instead of 3/23. Frances Welson asked if anyone has spoken to members of the Ordinance Committee and said she spoke to Juan Anderson-Burgos. Mr. Ahlstrom said that he spoke to Rebecca Lisi and Christopher Gauthier has spoken to Terence Murphy about the proposed ordinance

Ms. Welson asked about past demolition delay cases and Ben Murphy responded that based on his research of past demolition delay cases only 4 delays have been imposed and there were about 20 projects where no delay was imposed. Mr. Murphy added that Aaron Vega, OPED Director, suggested that there be an implementation period of possibly six months after the ordinance is approved. The Commission discussed the possibility of a 12-month delay as an alternative to the proposed 18-month delay.

Richard Ahlstrom stated that the Holyoke Medical Center Behavioral Health project is not going forward and that he tried to reach out to Carl Cameron, Holyoke Medical Center Chief Operating Officer, regarding 12 and 14 Corser Street. The house on the corner of Northampton and Corser Street needs to be renovated and needs a new roof. Mr. Murphy added that OPED was not contacted regarding the two Corser Street buildings and he said that Aaron Vega plans on speaking to Spiros Hatiras, CEO of Holyoke Medical Center.

Historical Commission Community Engagement

Ben Murphy stated that the Historical Commission has a budget of \$250.

Luis Salazar said he would like to update the HHC website page from PDF documents to HTML to be more user friendly. Mr. Murphy advised that Mr. Salazar reach out to Andres Villada, Mayoral Aide, to ask about how the Historical Commission website page can be edited.

Mr. Murphy shared that the MGM Casino Community Impact funds, that were dispersed to Holyoke, have been used to create a tourism plan for Holyoke. As part of the plan, a Tourism Committee will be formed and a representative from HHC will be asked to participate. The Commission discussed wayfinding signs to enhance tourism in Holyoke. Elana Aubrey suggested the Commission could host a garden tour to assist with historic neighborhood awareness.

5. Discussion on Wyckoff Park Historic District

Paola Ferrario shared information of the history and development of the Wyckoff Park neighborhood and explained the significance of some of the homes. She showed a historic map with the original layout of the area. It was noted that some of the modern homes that were built in the 1960's were designed by architect Elroy Webber, who designed many homes in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Ms. Ferrario will look into ways the area may be able to be protected.

6. Historic Plaque Program

Christopher Gauthier stated that neither G Street Vinyl nor Brick could produce the historic plaques as previously discussed. Mr. Gauthier added that Jeff Banchine, of the Print Shop, suggested that the Commission consider steel plaques which would cost about \$50-\$60 each. There is an option to add QR codes, but Commissioner had concerns about people walking on private property to scan the QR code. It was suggested that a prototype be presented to the Commission.

7. Survey & Planning Grant

Ben Murphy explained that the list of buildings to be surveyed is being finalized. Not all the identified buildings in the area will be able to be surveyed, but all the mill complexes, other industrial, commercial and institutional buildings, and brick apartments will be surveyed. Not all wood framed buildings will be surveyed, but a sampling of them will be surveyed.

8. Old Business - No old business was discussed.

9. New Business

Ben Murphy shared that the Local Historic District Commission (LHDC) is looking for members and asked Commissioners to let Marco Crescentini know, via email, if anyone is interested or knows of anyone that would be interested in serving.

10. Next Meeting- April 12, 2021

11. 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