



Holyoke Historical Commission (HHC)

Meeting Minutes

Monday May 10, 2021

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

Zoom Meeting ID: 816 7955 1048

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

Not in Attendance: N/A

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

Others in Attendance: Penni Martorell, Holyoke City Historian

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 April 12, 2021 Minutes**

A motion was made by Paola Ferrario and seconded by Chris Gauthier to accept the minutes from April 12, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

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

4. **Historical Commission Community Engagement**

a. Penni Martorell, Holyoke City Historian

Ms. Martorell explained that she has been with the City for the past 13 years as City Historian and is an archivist at Wistariahurst Museum. She shared that Wistariahurst's collection, which is in the Carriage House at Wistariahurst, is primarily tangible historic items such as textiles, but also includes documents, some of which are duplicative of what the Holyoke Public Library holds in their collections. Starting June 1st the building will be open to the public from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. She stated that she often assists college students with research and provides archival services to other City departments.

Ms. Martorell indicated that interns working with the Commission would be able to utilize the archives and she would help direct them in their research. Paola Ferrario asked how much of the historical documents are scanned electronically and Ms. Martorell responded that less than 5% of their archives are digitized due to cost and time constraints. Elana Aubrey asked if there was a list of historic Holyoke social media accounts and Ms. Martorell responded that she does not have a list of historic social media accounts specifically but she has a list of resources for Holyoke and surrounding cities that the public can utilize. Luis Salazar brought up wanting historians to speak about Holyoke and organizing a "Holyoke Week". Ms. Martorell said that Wistariahurst puts together a newsletter that lists events for the year. Ben Murphy will share Commissioners emails with Ms. Martorell for any future projects they can work on together.

b. HHC Community Engagement Committee

Elana Aubrey shared that herself, Paola Ferrario and Luis Salazar have been working on developing a self-guided tour utilizing QR codes that people can scan around the City of Holyoke. Ms. Ferrario said that they have chosen three interns to help with the project. Richard Ahlstrom asked where the interns will stay when they come to Holyoke and Ms. Ferrario responded that she will reach out to their schools

to see what is allowed for internship lodging. She added that the interns may come to Holyoke for a few days, do their research, and then go back home to work on the project

Ms. Ferrario shared that she attended the first half of the Holyoke Tourism Stakeholders Meeting. Mr. Murphy explained that the larger tourism stakeholders group will continue to meet but a smaller Tourism Advisory Committee will be formed. The next steps will include having the City Council officially create the committee. He added that some of the focus of the committee will be marketing and wayfinding.

c. Historic Plaque Program

Christopher Gauthier shared that he is going to sign up for a membership at the Print Shop to be able to utilize their facilities for the plaque program. Mr. Salazar asked if the Commission has a list of all the historic properties in Holyoke that have plaques and Mr. Gauthier responded that he received a list from Olivia Mausel and he will send the list to the Commission.

Marco Crescentini explained that he received an email from Mary Moriarty from the Community Preservation Committee. She inquired about the Commission placing markers at historic sites where there is redevelopment occurring in the canal district, specifically the Farr Alpaca Mill. The markers would tell the history of a site. There was consensus that historic markers would tie in well with the tourism plan and that the developers of the Farr Alpaca Mill should be asked if they would place a marker on the building explaining its history.

5. Discussion on Wyckoff Park Historic District – The Wyckoff Park Historic District was not discussed.

6. Old Business - No old business was discussed.

7. New Business

Mr. Murphy shared that he has worked with the consultant for the Canal System Industrial Area Survey to create the target list of properties to be surveyed. The historic survey will include all the industrial mill complexes, other commercial and residential brick buildings, and a sampling of smaller wood frame buildings. The survey area includes buildings in South Holyoke and the Flats that were not part of the Main Street Corridor Survey. These surveys can be utilized for the walking tours that the Community Engagement Committee is working on.

8. Next Meeting June 14, 2021

9. Adjourn

At 7:40 p.m., there being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Christopher Gauthier and seconded by Luis Salazar to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Sincerely,

Holyoke Historical Commission