

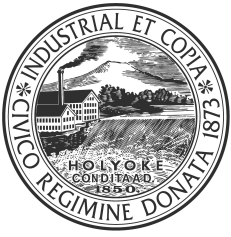


HOLYOKE HISTORICAL COMMISSION (HHC)  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, October 12, 2021

Due to the declared public health emergency the meeting was held virtually via Zoom.  
Meeting ID: 8897033 9351.

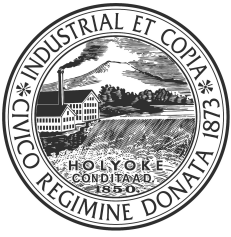
**Attendance:** Chair-Richard Ahlstrom, Elana Aubrey, Marco Crescentini, Luis Salazar & Frances Welson  
**Not in Attendance:** Vice Chair-Paola Ferrario & Secretary-Christopher Gauthier  
**Municipal Staff:** Director, Office of Planning & Economic Development - Aaron Vega  
**Others in Attendance:** David White, H.H. Richardson Train Station & Olivia Mausel, Holyoke Preservation Trust.

- 1. Call to Order** – Richard Ahlstrom called the meeting to order @ 5:30 pm and announced that the meeting was being recorded.
- 2. Review of September 14, 2021 Minutes** – A motion was made by Elana Aubrey and seconded by Luis Salazar to accept the minutes from September 14, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.
- 3. Public Participation** – Richard Ahlstrom introduced David White, from the H.H. Richardson Train Station. He wanted to give the Commission an update as to what is happening with the building. David White spoke that they have been working on the building for the past 2 years, hiring a local architect. They are just about done with the back roof on the railroad side and hopes to have the parking lot side done by winter. David White spoke of a lot of grouting to be done with the façade and that stone is coming loose. He is working to have the building placed on the National Historic Register and hopes to get a letter of support from the Commission to get the package going. David White spoke that their recent efforts have been spent working on the luggage building. More damage than anticipated. They do have a proposed tenant, and ice cream shop of which has gotten support from the mayor and the neighborhood. The porch has been repaired to replicate the Train Station and have secured all permits needed from the city needed to open the ice cream shop. They will be working this winter on the inside of the Train Station, concentrating on electrical and sprinkler systems. David White is concerned about continued upkeep and has applied to the state for monies. Olivia Mausel, of the Holyoke Preservation Trust spoke of their support to the Train Station and that the building will be open this weekend for the event, “Doors of Holyoke.” The building will be open from 9:00am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-4:00pm. They will be giving tours of the building and show that they are not deviating from the original Richardson design. Richard Ahlstrom asked David White if any issues/questions have come from Mass Historic and David White replied, “No”. David White spoke that they will not change the exterior design, the inside may change due to what type of tenant that will go into the space. He wants this building to be an asset to the community. Richard Ahlstrom asked if any discussion of pulling the main ceiling down to bring it back to a one-story interior. David White replied that that’s still up in the air. Discussion amongst the Commission about opening it up to see the ceiling, a big attraction of the building. Richard Ahlstrom asked if they would be applying for CPA funding, and Olivia Mausel replied that yes, it’s in the works. Discussion on when to send letter and inventory forms and a time line with the CPA meeting on October 28, 2021.



Marco Crescentini who is also on the CPA Commission stated that eligibility is first, with end of year final determination and he believes there will be other opportunities for letters. Marco Crescentini said that he would email the CPA chair to question and thought that both Commissions would be able to help move the application along.

4. **Community Preservation Act – Historic Preservation Projects** – Aaron Vega spoke to the Commission of staffing shortages @ OPED. He is working internally within his office and our roles within the Commission to take on responsibilities of attending ex: Problem Property Meetings, Tourism meetings. Clerical work, point person for historic surveys, etc. Marco Crescentini offered to write letters of support to CPA, since he is on the CPA Commission as well. Elana Aubrey asked about finalization of both Commissions before assigning duties, discussion of long-range projects, CPA letters, and that the OPED is moving together. And how quickly we pull Commissions together.
5. **Update on Staff Transition** – Covered in item #4.
6. **Historical Commission Community Engagement** – Elana Aubrey spoke about the interns and the great job that was done by them, but again as in the Doors of Holyoke the Historic Commission was not included. While she understood changes within city departments, and its symptoms of poor communication between departments and commissions. Richard Ahlstrom stated we have not seen the final copy from the interns and if it could be used to continue the work and to use this information in the future with better direction of which we were all clear on. Can we take the work from last summer to utilize in the future? Luis Salazar spoke of our direction within the Commission and at least 2 people being the face internally within the city, a historical map that we should be consulted. We should align especially the Historical Commission. Richard Ahlstrom agreed in addition to our roles, 2 people maybe 3 to continue with this project. Luis Salazar stated we need to finish what we started with our historical relevance, its impact, development. Aaron Vega stated that he has not seen the finished project either but noticed the Cubit and the Train Station will be on the tour and if printing was needed, he could make that happen. Paola Ferrario was not in attendance so no materials were provided. Discussion about QR codes and tourism not being a one-day thing. And a letter being drafted for an invite to RFP and a historical member attending. No meeting date as of yet.
7. **Proceeding with Revised Preservation Ordinance (Demo Delay)** –
8. **Combining Historical & Historic District Commissions** – Richard Ahlstrom stated he would be combing items 7 & 8 together as they are the same. Richard Ahlstrom stated no changes to the Demo Delay and that Ben changed verbiage to combine the 2 Commissions. The Local District is more effective as a body, while the Historical Commission relying on City Council & state, and that the Historical Commission would disappear. Richard Ahlstrom stated that we would ask to be on the Local Historic District with new appointments, and that do we need to approve the document to combine the two Commissions and if we are in a place to approve this evening? Aaron Vega spoke of preliminary talks with Joseph McGiverin, Rebecca Lisi and Mayor Murphy in support of combining the two commissions. Aaron Vega stated the authority of the Historical Commission can be transferred to the Local Commission, but the Local Commission cannot be transferred to the Historical Commission. With the Historical Commission being dissolved the mayor would appoint new members to the Local Commission.



Elana Aubrey stated that we are missing two Commissioners in this conversation tonight and with the next ordinance meeting and elections, thoughts about holding off and more time to look at this document. Richard Ahlstrom asked the Commission if we should wait until the November meeting to approve the language and the makeup of the next ordinance committee meeting with its new members. The process is confusing but the Commission agreed to go ahead with Ben's changes, a cleaner document for the November meeting. Aaron Vega is waiting for Rebecca Lisi to schedule this and for us to be flexible and prepared and the possibility of a separate meeting for these two items. Richard Ahlstrom agreed to do a finished draft. Discussion of the current demo delay preservation ordinance, would it go to the local commission now if Commissions have been combined and Aaron Vega answered yes.

## 9. Historic Survey Projects

### A. Canal System Industrial Area Survey

**B. Applying Mass Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant** – Aaron Vega stated that the Canal Survey is still in progress and the draft should be done in early November while Mass Historic is reviewing it at the same time, Alex is behind schedule, but the extension is approved and the monies has already been allocated. To be put on November's agenda.

## 10. Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated When Meeting Agenda Posted – Aaron Vega confirmed:

- letter to the H.H. Richardson Train Station-waiting for package first
- waiting on process for CPA/Marco Crescentini viable letter of support
- working on combining the two Commissions, we will meet before the next ordinance meeting and to expect an invite to an RFP.

Elana Aubrey asked with Ben's departure of any additional items that the Commission should know about. Aaron Vega stated that most things were wrapped up except the Canal survey, but possible talks of a WARD 4 survey. Aaron Vega reiterated that the Commissions are strengthening and to have one place where the knowledge of Holyoke's History resides will make us stronger.

## 11. Next Meeting – November 8, 2021

12. **Adjourn** – At 6:41pm there being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Marco Crescentini and seconded by Elana Aubrey to adjourn the meeting, the motion carried.