

Chair – Paola Ferrario  
Vice Chair & Recording Secretary – Christopher Gauthier  
Commissioners: Elana Aubrey & Luis Salazar  
Alternate Commissioner: Marco Crescentini

## HOLYOKE HISTORICAL COMMISSION (HHC)

Meeting Minutes Monday, June 13, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

Conference Room 403 or virtually via Zoom - Meeting ID 857 0948 7585

**Attendance:** Paola Ferrario, Christopher Gauthier (Virtual), Elana Aubrey (Virtual), Luis Salazar and Marco Crescentini (Virtual)

**Not in Attendance:** None

**Municipal Staff:** Jennifer Keitt, Development Specialist – Office of Planning & Economic Development  
**City Attorney** – Attorney Degnan.

**Others in Attendance:** Peter Palombella, Eric Babski, Robert Comeau & Michael Ernst

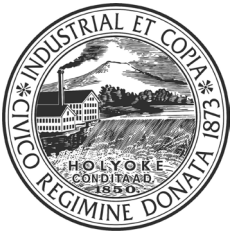
1) Call to order at 5:40 p.m. by Chair Paola Ferrario

Roll Call: Paola Ferrario, Chair; Christopher Gauthier, Vice Chair (Virtual), Elana Aubrey (Virtual), Luis Salazar

In audience: Peter Palombella, Eric Babski, Robert Comeau and Michael Ernst.

2) Review of minutes of May 9, 2022 and May 25, 2022. Minutes are not entirely ready. Chair Ferrario requests Motion to accept minutes (not approve). The minutes will be presented for approval when completed. Motion to accept minutes made by Commissioner Aubrey. Seconded by Commissioner Gauthier. Unanimous vote.

3) Continuation of Public Hearing concerning the proposed demolition of 110 Appleton St (Parcel 031-01-009) owned by Edaron LLC – Chair Ferrario requests Motion to Continue Public Hearing of 110 Appleton St. Motion made by Commissioner Gauthier to Continue Public Hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Salazar. Unanimous vote. Eric Babski, representing Edaron, LLC to present. Chair Ferrario stated that the Law Dept received the affidavit from lender for property located at 110 Appleton. Atty Degnan confirmed it was adequate and she forwarded a copy to the Chair. Commissioner Aubrey and Chair Ferrario gave report from on-site visit of 5/20/2022. Chair Ferrario added to site visit discussion. Mr. Babski thanked Commissioners for visiting site. Explained reasons



why they are proceeding the way they are. Once building comes down, approx. 30-40 additional parking spaces will be created. Awaiting site plan for confirmation. Should have by the end of the month. Chair Ferrario solicited site plan from Mr. Babski upon receipt. Discussion was had about what documents have been provided to the Commission. Commissioner's Salazar and Gauthier stated that the image provided by the applicant was sufficient. Alternate Commissioner Crescentini entered meeting via Zoom. Chair Ferrario shared pictures of lot/building to be demolished. Mr. Babski clarified plans for lot/building. Chair Ferrario requests Commission's opinion(s). Commissioner Salazar suggests closure of hearing and requests vote be taken. Peter Palombella requests to speak – explains purpose of demo delay and need for balance; urges Commission to not impose demo delay. Chair Ferrario requests Motion to Close hearing. Motion made by Commissioner Aubrey. Seconded by Commissioner Gauthier. Motion made to impose a Demo Delay by Commissioner Gauthier. Seconded by Commissioner Salazar. Vote taken: Commissioner Aubrey – Nay; Commissioner Gauthier – Nay; Commissioner Salazar – Nay; Chair Ferrario – Yay. 3-1 No Demo Delay imposed. Mr. Babski thanked everyone.

- 4) Special Guest Ms. Shannon Walsh, Historical Preservation Planner for PVPC and Tiffany Menard, Community Development Planner for PVPC. Ms. Walsh discussed the current Cultural Tourism Plan and Holyoke's preservation priorities. Digital historic tourism survey had over 800 respondents. There will be a public outreach meeting at the Senior Center, 6/22/2022, where they will have their plan and digital survey results as well as have Aaron Vega present the new website – exploreholyokey.com. Eileen from the history room to present new project being worked on. Ms. Walsh asked the Commission numerous cultural tourism plan survey questions. Important historical, cultural resources to be saved include: canal district, city hall, church buildings, historic neighborhoods, the dam, reservoirs (Whiting & Ashley), Mt. Tom, Scott Tower, Fairfield Ave Historic District, Highlands/Wyckoff Park, Holyoke Rows, Canoe Club. The river is a great resource. South Holyoke's history with layers of immigration history. Industrial planning of the city. Main barriers include lack of general awareness of what other groups are doing, lack of funding resources, lack of historical storytelling. Deep rich history needs to be pulled together to build our story. Discussion had regarding Holyoke events, historical and current. Bob Comeau states that the exploreholyokey.com website is great. Goals would include: reduce bureaucracy. HHC overworked. 4 people doing the work of 9. Wish list items: getting their voice out



there. Massive clearinghouse of Holyoke info – CPA, HHC, events, etc. Stories are waiting to be told. Need capability to publish items to get info out.

5) CPA update:

- a. Discussion of new methods to review 2022-23 proposals for CPA Historic preservation and restoration grants on Google drive online – Meagan McGrath-Smith, Amy Landau and Jennifer Keitt working on setting google drive connection to review documents.
- b. Final review and approval of CPA workflow document for procedures for CPA Historic preservation and restoration grants – Discussion had. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Aubrey. Seconded by Commissioner Gauthier. Unanimous vote.
- c. Appointment of Commissioner to CPC – Chair Ferrario spoke of the urgency to fill Alternative Commissioner Crescentini’s seat with CPC. Letter will be forwarded to the mayor.
- d. Historical assessment forms – Reviewed form. Chair Ferrario suggested use of the form not just for demo delay hearing but for also for CPA evaluation for historical significance for future use. Motion to move on to Item #6 made by Commissioner Aubrey. Seconded by Commissioner Salazar.

6) Preservation Of Historic Buildings Ordinance update

- a. Inventory of buildings from 1922 to 1947 – 87 pages, over 1000 buildings, inventory totaling over \$200M. Will provide to Ordinance Committee.
- b. Response to Mayor Garcia’s letter to City Council – Will invite Mayor to come to a Historical Commission meeting.
- c. Report by the chair on the Ordinance Comm. meeting of May 24<sup>th</sup>
- d. Chair Ferrario presents and discusses use of Historical assessment forms.
- e. Comments about the Preservation Ordinance from the Property Preservation Group – Marie Hogan uploaded Preservation Ordinance to the Drive for the PPG. Once comments are received, they should be forwarded or access to Drive should be obtained.

7) Reports on progress with organization of archives (storage drive), staff, accessibility of records of public meetings online (Holyoke Media) - Chair Ferrario provided update. Jennifer Keitt is main staff



for HHC now. She will do the bulk of the meeting minutes. Meetings and recordings of meetings will be provided online by Holyoke Media. Chair Ferrario wants additional archival, historical informational files provided to Commission.

- 8) Report on materials and information on the HHC webpages – Chair Ferrario provided update. 2017 plan was received by City Council but not approved. Changed website wording to “Proposed Plan”. Master Plan has also been uploaded.

Chair Ferrario requests permission from the Commission to post on the website that they are actively seeking additional Historical Commission commissioners. Anyone interested needs to begin attending meetings regularly and send a formal letter to the mayor expressing interest. Commissioner Gauthier suggests reaching out to Ward Councilors for help in filling the vacancies. Chair Ferrario will follow up with Ward Councilors. Chair Ferrario requests Motion to write a letter and send to all ward councilors requesting help finding new commissioners. Motion made by Commissioner Aubrey. Seconded by Commissioner Salazar. Unanimous vote.

- 9) Historic Plaques program – Commissioner Gauthier found a company out of RI. Healy Plaques. Starting price \$250. Discussion followed. Chair Ferrario to follow up with Legal Dept.

Chair Ferrario requests Motion to go out of Order to go back to #8. Commissioner Aubrey made motion. Commissioner Salazar seconded.

Go to #12.

- 10) Report from Commissioners attending other board and committee meeting: Commissioner Aubrey said that the Holyoke Garden tour was awesome.
- 11) Review of the Holyoke Certificate of Local Government Annual Report: Jennifer Keitt has created initial draft. Once completed, will be sent out for approval. Chair Ferrario to make appt with MHC person to answer questions regarding the report. Once completed will need approval from Commission. Schedule a short meeting to approve.
- 12) Mass DOT project update 609385 for District 2 ADA retrofits: Per Chair Ferrario, no update from the City Engineer yet. Will update commission upon receipt of information. Chair Ferrario requests Motion to go back to #10. Motion made by Commissioner Aubrey. Seconded by Commissioner Salazar.



- 13) Announcements – Chair Ferrario will be doing a lecture about her artwork this Thursday night at Gateway City Arts at 7pm.
- 14) New Business – none
- 15) Old business - none
- 16) Adjournment – Commissioner Aubrey made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Salazar.  
(Time: 8:34 pm)