

**City of Portage - Historic District Commission**  
**Wednesday, October 4, 2017**  
**Portage City Hall – Conference Room #2**

**MINUTES**

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Called to Order at 8:21 a.m.

**Present:** Suzanne Nemeth, Jessie Duniphin, Collin Forrest, Mike Barton, Katie VanLonkhuyzen and Erica Eklov (SL).

**Absent:** Fred Grunert, Marty Maytnier (excused)

**Citizens:** Mick Lynch and Laura Bouw

**Old Business:**

- 1) Minutes from the regular meeting of September 13, 2017 were approved with a change to note Fred chaired regular meeting, with Katie chairing special meeting that followed.
- 2) Erica provided a verbal update on the list of Current Properties / Open Cases:
  - a. 5134 Oakland Drive – no longer for sale
  - b. 3221 W. Milham barn – no new progress
  - c. 1521 E. Centre (Davis) / Selinon Park development – Full Circle revised apartment complex proposal for re-submission of tax credit application to MSHDA per 9/12/17 Council meeting.
  - d. 922 W. Osterhout (Norman) exterior work (siding/windows) – need to follow-up
  - e. 2112 Vanderbilt – still for sale
  - f. 903 East Centre – listed for sale (as historic), Erica sent the realtor a letter / house is vacant
- 3) Community Awareness
  - a. Erica provided an update on the Parks Department joint “All Hallows in the Park” October event to open Celery Flats buildings. She noted volunteers should wear black and either bring existing name tags or see Erica at the beginning for a temporary one. Two youth members have signed up to assist. Suzanne suggested checking with the high schools as kids need volunteering credits. May be an option for future events.
  - b. It was noted that Mick Lynch and his daughter were interviewed for a front page segment in the local “Spark” Magazine. Jessie mentioned she would share the article on the HDC Facebook page.

**New Business:**

- 1) 5720 Oakland Drive Barn – Erica noted that the HDC had received additional info requested from the owner via e-mail. Katie noted two issues: 1) no drawing or materials noted. Erica said drawings were sent in original application, but did not identify materials; and 2) there is a concern with the lack of a time table submission and no immediate solutions provided. She mentioned that with the Nieuwenhuis barn, the HDC had a set time table to follow. With financial constraints, the current proposal is open-ended, which leaves a possibility that reconstruction may never occur. There currently is no code enforcement active with this property as was the case with 3221 W. Milham. Katie inquired with Erica as to why the desire is to re-build the barn in the same large scale if funds are a concern. Scaling down the size may minimize costs. Citizen Mick Lynch offered to provide his insight on the barn strategy based on his prior experience. Discussion on the age and status of the barn ensued. Erica reviewed the expert opinions on the barn provided by Steve Stier and Scott Pastor of the Michigan Barn Preservation Network. Citizen Laura Bouw inquired what would be needed to secure and mothball the structure. Erica replied with the February 20, 2017 opinion from Steve Stier. Discussion followed on the options of mothballing versus deconstruction. Katie asked what the group thought about declining the

application and asking for mothballing. Katie then asked Erica to contact Steve Stier again and get a cost estimate for the mothballing option, and if possible, his estimated percentage of materials salvageable based on his earlier site visit. Katie motioned to table the September 5, 2017 application pending the response from Steve Stier for consideration. Katie motioned to set a special meeting to review the information from Steve and make a final decision on the September 5<sup>th</sup> application for Wednesday, October 18 at 8:15 a.m. Motion seconded by Jessie and vote passed unanimously.

**Citizen Comments:** No additional comments.

**Member Comments:** None.

**Adjournment:** 9:45 a.m.