

City of Portage
Historic District Commission
Wednesday, January 5, 2022
City Hall Conference Room 2

Meeting Called to Order: 8:30 a.m. Chair Katie VanLonkhuyzen called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Jessie Duniphin, Katie VanLonkhuyzen, Martha Deming Maytnier, Nick Meyle, and Laura Glass

Members Absent (unexcused): Anthony Amarasinghe

Members Absent (excused): Becky Lopez, Suzanne M. Nemeth, and Jeremy P. Custer

Staff: Biqi Zhao, Senior City Planner

Other: Riley Thomas, Youth Advisory Committee Liaison

Approval of Minutes: Nick Meyle made the motion, seconded by Jessie Duniphin, to approve the December 1, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted; motion approved 5-0.

Discussion:

a. Event Planning to highlight Historic Preservation month (May 2022)

Three events for the year of 2022 were extensively discussed to promote Portage Historic Preservation:

- City Hall Spring Exhibits
Staff Biqi Zhao presented the timeline from Parks & Recreations for City Hall Exhibits and asked the HDC to decide the topic selection. Katie VanLonkhuyzen, Jessie Duniphin, and Martha Deming Maytnier proposed to create story line of Northwest Corner of Portage Historical Homes including but not limited to family histories, architectural styles, cemeteries, schools etc. HDC also mentioned this project would serve as a start of deep dive for Portage Historic Districts geographically and they might continue doing other areas of the City in next year's exhibits. It would be about 10-12 slides for the panels. Katie VanLonkhuyzen stated that she would prepare the writings and asked Nick Meyle to help with photos. Nick Meyle agreed to research in the library files. Martha Deming Maytnier introduced other resources such as newspapers and genealogy to conduct research. Jessie Duniphin will work on the description by February 27's Parks and Recreation's deadline. Katie suggested gathering all the information first and narrow them down later. Jessie Duniphin will create a google drive and send the invite to HDC to put all the documents in. Staff Biqi Zhao offered to create GIS Storymap of the exhibits and feature it in the City's social media. Jessie Duniphin and Katie VanLonkhuyzen asked if the panels from Parks & Recreation Department will be highly quality and durable in order to reuse in other historical events. Staff Biqi Zhao responded to relay this request along with the topic selection to Lauren Lott of Parks & Recreation Department.
- Historic Preservation Month May 2022 event
HDC decided that an educational event/lecture will be held on May 14th for Preservation Month. Jessie Duniphin stated that she hasn't received any response from Steve Rossio as the speaker for the lecture. Katie VanLonkhuyzen proposed that Nick Meyle can be the speaker if Steve Rossio is not available. Nick Meyle responded that Steve Rossio would love to give a lecture and he might be too busy to respond. Katie VanLonkhuyzen suggested HDC limiting topic selections for the

lecture and coordinating with Library’s events and prerecorded seminars. She also mentioned that story line of Northwest Portage would catch Steve Rossio’s interest. Jessie Duniphin responded to further contact Steve Rossio.

- Fall Festival September 18, 2022
Staff Biqi Zhao showed the email from Alexis Conklin of Parks and Recreation Department requesting the input from HDC for planning Fall Festival on September 18, 2022. Jessie Duniphin stated that HDC had great success in opening historic buildings in 2021 Fall Festival. HDC agreed to support 2022 Fall Festival. Katie VanLonkhuyzen mentioned that she will not be available on September 18 due to her child’s birthday. Youth Advisory Committee Liaison Riley Thomas responded to check with Youth Advisory Committee for more volunteers serving the festival.

- b. Historic Preservation Tax Credit in the reinstatement process by the State
Staff Biqi Zhao stated that the Historic Preservation Tax Credit would help property owners in historic district to rehab their homes. Martha Deming Maytnier responded to add this information to the drafted letter to engage HD property owners. Martha Deming Maytnier also read out the definition of “exterior” from Interior Standard and State, and proposed to include it into the letter. Jessie Duniphin stated that the letter mentioned “the first step in the process of making any exterior changes to your designated historic property is to request a ‘Certificate of Appropriateness’ from the Department of Community Development.” is sufficient for the applicant to check with the City at the initial step. Martha Deming Maytnier recommended that HDC further review the drafted letter and give comments in next meeting to finalize the letter. Katie VanLonkhuyzen recommended to mail a copy of the book ‘Where the Trails Crossed’ along with the letter to HD residents. HDC agreed to do so. Martha Deming Maytnier questioned if change of painting colors needs HDC review. Katie VanLonkhuyzen responded if change of painting colors, yes; if repainting with the original color, no. Katie VanLonkhuyzen also recalled a serious HP violation regarding a property owner installed a vinyl siding not only change of the material but the style, and HDC had to request the property owner for total replacement of the newly installed siding.

Other Items:

Old Business:

New Business:

Public Comments:

Member Comments:

- a. Katie VanLonkhuyzen asked staff the procedure for replacement of commissioner who had three unexcused absences in 2021. Katie VanLonkhuyzen and Nick Meyle stated that in the City Council meeting for their term renewal, three citizens showed interest in being Historic Preservation Commissioners. Staff Biqi Zhao responded that she emailed the request after December 2021 meeting and will follow up.
- b. Nick Meyle acknowledged HDC that he will no longer work in the Library soon in spring, but still be on the commission. HDC wished him best luck and hope he can still help Historic Preservation Month and City Hall Spring Exhibition with his resources in the library before his departure.

- c. HDC inquired that if hybrid or remote meeting option is available to increase the attendance of the commission due to covid concern. Staff Biqi Zhao responded that all the public meetings are required in person so far and will further check the City's policy.
- d. Katie VanLonkhuyzen and Jessie Duniphin inquired the process for change the HDC regular meeting time from 8:15am to 8:30am. Staff Biqi Zhao responded to check the City's process.
- e. Staff Biqi Zhao made the copies of the previous assignment map. HDC discussed and assigned all the HD properties to individual commissioner for routine watching.

Adjournment: There being no further comments or business, Laura Glass moved, seconded by Nick Meyle, to adjourn the Historic District at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Biqi Zhao AICP, Ph.D.
Senior City Planner

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