

City of Portage – Historic District Commission
Wednesday, May 6, 2009 – 8:15 a.m.
Portage City Hall – Conference Room #2

Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 8:20 a.m. by Mark Reile.

Members Present: Tim Bunch, Michelle Dunlap, Jeanette Field, Kathy Fosmoe, Robert El Henicky, Rose Mary Higginbottom, Mark Reile, Susan Woerner, Amy Noonan, Youth Participant

Members Absent: Rose Mary Higginbottom

Guests Present: Mary Beth Block, Staff Liaison, Seth Giem, Historic District Homeowner, Tom Reaume, Historic District Homeowner

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the April 1, 2009 meeting were approved by consensus.

Announcements: HDC Account Balance as of May 1, 2009 was \$957.45.

Old Business:

1. **Project Leader Reports:**

Archives - No report.

Book Sales – Susan will follow up on the bar code with Barnes and Noble to be sure it scans accurately.

Community Awareness – An article appeared in the Portage Gazette, Saturday, May 9 edition inviting interested individuals to the annual Homeowners & Property Owners gathering.

Oral Histories - Michelle Dunlap interviewed Mike and Lisa Bogema as part of the information gathering requested for presentation of the annual award for historic preservation 2009.

Site Inspections - No report.

Newsletter – No report.

2. **2009 Homeowner's Gathering/Historic Preservation Award** – Mark reported that the Bogema's accepted the preservation award. He will research and prepare comments on the history of the Portage Historic District Commission for the evening meeting. Michelle will interview the Bogema's regarding their home, their project and introduce them. The order of speakers will be Mark, Michelle and then Mayor Strazdas presenting the award. Details discussed included the plaque for the Grain Elevator at Celery Flats and the Bogema's -- Mark will handle. Susan will confirm details with Shane at the Beacon Club on the menu. Rose Mary will continue with the follow-up phone calls for reservations. Mary Beth will prepare an addendum for "*Where the Trails Crossed.*" A quantity of the books will be available. Tim will take photographs. Ann Marie will handle hospitality and name tags. Jeanette will bring signs and the guest book. Photographs of the Bogema property will not be taken until their painting is completed this summer. Fees for the evening will be divided equally between the Beacon Club, the PHDC and the guest. Donations will go into the PHDC account and the Beacon Club will be paid by check from their invoice based on the number of guests.

1. **New Business:** Tom Reaume, property owner at 2106 Forest, attended the meeting and addressed the commission with his concerns regarding improvements to the exterior of the home. Until he received the letter from the city regarding a Certificate of Appropriateness for outside alterations required when you are a PHD property owner, he was unaware of his status. Prospective PHD property owners are to be notified of their status when purchasing from the existing homeowner. A detailed list of improvements was discussed and a suggested course of action was recommended by Mark Reile the representative architect on the commission.

After considerable options were addressed (outline to be available at the June meeting) the homeowner agreed to comply with the required request for a simple drawing and materials to be used for his first priorities which were windows for the porch. Historic photos of the property were studied and Mark's remarks suggested our first objective as a commission is to maintain existing properties -- not to be an obstacle. We want to keep the style of the home.

- Application to Mary Beth. This can be done by e-mail.
 - Mary Beth notifies Mark and he arranges a field trip with interested representatives from the commission.
 - A building permit will be required once an agreement is reached.
 - The commission is bound to make decisions and notify the homeowner within 60 days.
2. After the homeowner excused himself the discussion continued regarding legal notification to the prospective property owner. Kathy Fosmoe detailed situations with historic districts in Kalamazoo which are contiguous. Portage has a unique situation in that it is a non contiguous district.
 3. One suggestion was that each property receive a historic plaque. Further discussion was tabled until the June meeting.

Citizen Comments: Seth Giem indicated the Train Barn will continue to operate with limited hours. For details phone Seth.

Member Comments: Mark reported on a visit to the Herschleb residence at 7119 Oakland Drive and an incompatibility of finishes.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette S. Field

Next Meeting: June 3, 2009, 8:15 a.m. – City Hall Conference Room #2