

**Historic District Commission Meeting
Wednesday, February 4, 2015 @ 8:15 a.m.
Portage City Hall – Conference Room #2**

MINUTES

Called to Order at 8:23 a.m.

Present: Mark Reile, Larry Ahleman, Russ Randall, Suzanne Nemeth, Katie VanLonkhuyzen, Fred Grunert, Amanda Croft (YAC), citizen Mick Lynch and Erica Eklov (SL). City Manager Laurence Shaffer was also present.

Absent: Christine Broberg and E. Jim Ebert (excused), Jamie Jager (unexcused)

Old Business:

- 1) Following introductions, Mark began with a summary a review of the action plan submitted by the HDC to City Council regarding recent concerns. Mark asked CM Shaffer if he would provide his opinions on it.
 - a. CM Shaffer expressed his appreciation of historic preservation and desire to lead such initiatives with support and action.
 - b. Mark discussed reasoning for inviting CM Shaffer to attend an HDC meeting and hear all members' input personally.
 - c. Mark asked Erica to summarize the contact with the City Attorney regarding potential tax credits – she recommended looking at a grants or loan option.
 - d. Mark asked CM Shaffer regarding the likelihood of available funds for HDC support
 - e. CM Shaffer mentioned administrative inquiry with City Attorney regarding historic easement possibility.
 - f. Katie expressed support for funding incentive option for HDC and preference for reward-type format (with funding parameters outlined).
 - i. small regular incentives while stressing regular maintenance efforts
 - g. Larry asked about possibility of student volunteers and potential trades program(s)
 - h. CM Shaffer requested HDC member to establish priorities of HDC and district before returning to City Council and discussing resources/possibilities.
 - i. Mark discussed possibility of prioritizing properties (i.e. demolition by neglect, properties surrounded by modern development, etc.)
 - j. CM Shaffer suggested cross-examining when prioritizing properties.
 - k. With prioritized list, detail what is needed to address concerns and estimate level of funds needed to address each concern (illustrate how much funding assistance is needed and where).
 - l. There was discussion of collaboration with Community Development on monitoring and enforcement.
 - m. Katie wants to examine promotion of new homeownership (i.e. when a property is listed, how to attract best buyer candidates).
 - n. Mick Lynch expressed an interest in creating an awareness initiative for prospective buyers to advertise what's entailed in historic property ownership (as a resident perspective).
 - i. disclaimer on potential costs at the outset
 - ii. suggested informational flyer on "what to consider"
 - o. Mark mentioned a more proactive monitoring approach
 - p. CM Shaffer relayed that an inventory of resources and liabilities is key
 - i. include in online records
 - ii. publicity / advertisement is the next step
 1. Include as part of administrative funding request

- q. Fred suggested an asset prioritization approach similar to what PPS just performed (planning with scores – less personal)
 - i. need to ID categories to judge
- r. Mark suggested polling original or previous commissioners (include as May event?)
- 2) Members reviewed and approved the January meeting minutes.
- 3) Mark requested Erica to give an update on each of the ongoing code enforcement property locations.
- 4) Commission elections were discussed
 - a. Christine was recommended as secretary and Suzanne voiced interest in the vice chairperson position
 - b. Larry motioned, Katie seconded and the vote was approved

New Business:

- 1) 3821 West Milham application
 - a. Mark summarized the proposal and prior site history
 - b. Larry asked Mick (owner) about restaurant potential and location
 - i. also asked about plans for barn
 - 1. Mick relayed a new roof and concrete floor are planned for spring 2015
 - 2. structural spot supporting with roof rafters is also planned for spring/summer 2015
 - 3. Mick mentioned a desire to store classic cars in the barn once work is done
 - c. The Study Committee parameters were reviewed, the proposed timeline and requirements
 - d. Mick inquired on scope of HDC/HDSC's review (site or proposed development for new parcel)
 - e. Mark requested clarification from Mick on the proposed property boundaries
 - i. discussion regarding the site plan ensued
 - f. Mick expressed a desire for full HDC support
 - i. his only concern remains with the integrity of the west boundary and natural screening
 - ii. Mick mentioned future plans for the historic site – if a restaurant option was feasible he would have modern additions incorporated and located on the west election, which could serve as additional screening
 - g. The Study Committee was convened and the review formally transferred to the HDSC for a special meeting set on February 18th.
 - h. The next HDC meeting was moved from March 4 to March 11 to accommodate the additional scheduling of the HDSC business.

Citizen Comments: No additional comments (Mick Lynch).

Member Comments: None.

Adjournment: 10:10 a.m.