

City of Portage – Historic District Commission
Wednesday, May 04, 2022 @ 8:30 a.m.
City Hall Conference Room 2

Call to Order:

Approval of Minutes:

*April 06, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Discussion:

Old Business:

*Draft sample letter to HD property owners

*Draft HDC Annual Report to City Council: May 24th, 2022 City Council Meeting

New Business:

Citizen Comments:

Member Comments:

Adjournment:

Materials Transmitted:

*FY 2021-2022 Historic District Commission Goals and Objectives

Please notify Biqi Zhao at 329-4475 or zhaob@portagemi.gov if you are unable to attend.

* Printed items within the agenda

City of Portage
Historic District Commission
Wednesday, April 6, 2022
City Hall Conference Room 2

Meeting Called to Order: 8:30am meeting started with Martha Deming Maytnier, Nick Meyle, and Laura Glass. 9:00am Jessie Duniphin joined the meeting, quorum was noted, and officer Martha Deming Maytnier officially called the meeting to order.

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

Members Absent (excused): Katie VanLonkhuyzen, Becky Lopez, and Suzanne M. Nemeth

Staff: Biqi Zhao, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning

Approval of Minutes: Jessie Duniphin made the motion, seconded by Laura Glass, to approve the March 2, 2022 meeting minutes as submitted; motion approved 4-0.

Discussion:

- Draft sample letter to HD property owners: The draft sample letter was discussed briefly with few clarifications. Martha Deming Maytnier proposed to continue this item to May HDC meeting when having more commissioners' attendance.
- HDC Annual Report discussion for City Council meeting: HDC will present the annual report to City Council in May 24th City Council meeting. Jessie Duniphin recalled that no formal written report was ever submitted in previous HDC annual report to City Council and report was done in oral presentation, but it would be nice to have a report as talking points. Staff Biqi Zhao responded to draft the HDC annual report.
- Green-A-Thon Event, May 1, 11:00am - 2:00pm: HDC agreed to participate in Green-A-Thon Event to support the celebration of Earth Day. Jessie Duniphin filled out the application in the meeting.
- City Hall Spring Exhibits: HDC reviewed each poster for final proof and made few corrections. Staff Biqi Zhao responded to send the corrections to Parks and Recreations Department.
- Historic Preservation Presentation: Staff Biqi Zhao asked HDC to contribute pictures for the flyer in Portager for Historic Preservation presentation on May 21st as staff couldn't get Steve Rossio's response. Martha Deming Maytnier presented her slide of Steve Rossio's photo published on the cover of Encore Magazine, and HDC decided to use this slide for the flyer of Historic Preservation presentation to be published on Portager.

New Business:

Public Comments:

Member Comments:

- Martha Deming Maytnier shared the information of "Find Grave". Jessie Duniphin asked if Martha Deming Maytnier have more copies to bring to Green-A-Thon event and encouraged HDC to bring history related information to the event table.
- Staff Biqi Zhao acknowledged Martha Deming Maytnier's hard work and in-depth research for Spring City Hall Exhibits. HDC commented tight deadlines given by Parks and Recreation Department. Staff Biqi Zhao responded that HDC might start working on exhibits ahead each year if Spring City Hall exhibits are routine contribution from HDC to Parks and Recreation Department. Jessie Duniphin

proposed late fall might be an early start to plan for next year's Historic Preservation month activities and preparation for City Hall Spring Exhibits.

Adjournment: Laura Glass left the meeting at 9:30am. There being no further comments or business, officer Martha Deming Maytnier adjourned the Historic District Commission meeting at 9:43am.

Respectfully submitted,

Biqi Zhao AICP, Ph.D.
Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning

T:\COMMDEV\2021 2022 Department Files\Board Files\Historic District Commission\Minutes\HDC Meeting Minutes April 6 2022.docx

DRAFT



January 30, 2022

Dear Homeowner:

Greetings from the Portage Historic District Commission, your home has a history. In 1991, to safeguard and maintain the cultural history of the City of Portage, a local historic district was created, which includes 40 historic properties within the City of Portage.

To help guide owners through the process of making any exterior changes to their properties, the City of Portage established the Portage Historic District Commission. The Commission consists of nine Portage residents appointed by the City Council. Members of the Commission are owners of historic properties and volunteers interested in the importance of maintaining the city's historic heritage. The Commission meets the first Wednesday of each month at 8:30am at Portage City Hall. All owners of designated historic properties and any interested Portage residents are welcome to attend these public meetings.

The Portage Code of Ordinances, Chapter 38, <https://tinyurl.com/HP-Ordinance>, explains and defines ownership responsibilities for the preservation and maintenance of historic properties in the City of Portage.

- 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: <https://tinyurl.com/COA-Application>
- Rehabilitation projects for designated historic properties may qualify for tax incentives from both the state and federal governments. Tax incentives are determined by adherence to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards of Rehabilitation: <https://tinyurl.com/NPS-Standard>

The Commission congratulates you on being one of the few to own one of Portage's historic district properties. We are looking forward to working together with you to preserve our City's history.

Sincerely,

Portage Historic District Commission Department of Community Development

Katie VanLonkhuizen, Chair
Suzanne M. Nemeth, Vice Chair
Martha Deming Maytnier, Secretary
Becky Lopez
Jeremy P. Custer
Jessie Duniphin
Laura Glass
Nick Meyle

Biqi Zhao, Ph.D, AICP, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning

CITY OF PORTAGE

COMMUNICATION

TO: City Council

DATE: 04/25/2022

FROM: Biqi Zhao, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning

SUBJECT: FY 2021-2022 Historic District Commission Report

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is pleased to submit the following accomplishments based on FY 2021-2022 Goals and Objectives adopted on November 3, 2021:

1. HDC continues to safeguard the heritage of the city through the exterior preservation of the historic district by evaluating and considering applications for Certificates of Appropriateness and to identify and evaluate potential historically significant structures in the City of Portage Historic District. HDC received none of Certificates of Appropriateness application by the date of the report. HDC updated FY 2021-2022 Goals and Objectives, HD property owners' contact list, and assignment to commissioners to monitor properties within historic districts.
2. Increase visibility and public awareness of the Portage Historic Preservation.
 - a. HDC continues with book sales of *Where the Trails Crossed* and *This Place Called Portage: Its Past & Present*. HDC advertise and sell them in 2021 Fall Festival, Spring City Hall Exhibits, Green-A-Thon, and other historic preservation and/or City events.
 - b. HDC continues to support the historic educational programs with area youth via Portage Public Schools, the Portage Community Center and other outlets. HDC is reaching out youth group through youth committee liaison volunteering in historic preservation activities and HDC participates programs held by Youth Advisory Committee.
 - c. HDC continues communication and cooperation with similar historical organizations in the local community. HDC shares other cities' best practices in historic preservation and discusses their approaches for Portage Historic Preservation, and HDC also follows State Historic Preservation Tax Credit reinstatement process.
 - d. HDC continues to observe the May National Preservation Month in conjunction with the Portage Historic District May Event. HDC holds historic preservation presentation on May 21st, 2022, at Grain Elevator of Celery Flats. HDC collaborated with the Parks and Recreations Department to provide content and implement a City Hall Exhibit in May related to preservation in alignment with National Preservation Month.
 - e. HDC coordinates preservation initiatives with education, citizen participation, history, public art, digital engagement, and other programs. HDC created StoryMap for Historic District online and participates Earth Day festival called "Green-A-Thon" on May 1, 2022.
3. HDC will continue to work with Portage District Library to maintain a Library exhibit wall of framed photos representing the history of Portage and add new materials periodically.
4. HDC continues in advising City Council in areas / subjects under the purview of the Historic District Commission.

5. HDC provides education to HD property owners. HDC is drafting a letter to be sent to HD property owners to better inform and assist them about property ownership, requirements, and information within the Historic District.

Attachment: Final FY21-22 G&O HDC

T:\COMMDEV\2021 2022 Department Files\Board Files\Historic District Commission\May042022HDC\Draft HDC Annual Report to City Council FY21-22 rev.docx

DRAFT

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
2021 - 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

1. Safeguard the heritage of the city through the exterior preservation of the historic district by evaluating and considering applications for Certificates of Appropriateness. Identify and evaluate potential historically significant structures in the City of Portage Historic District.
2. Increase visibility and public awareness of the Portage Historic Preservation.
 - a. Continue with book sales of *Where the Trails Crossed* and the Portage Historic District Trading Cards.
 - b. Continue to support the historic educational programs with area youth via Portage Public Schools, the Portage Community Center and other outlets.
 - c. Continue communication and cooperation with similar historical organizations in the local community.
 - d. Continue to observe the May National Preservation Month in conjunction with the Portage Historic District May Event.
 - e. Coordinate preservation initiatives with education, citizen participation, history, public art, digital engagement, and other programs.
3. Maintain a Library exhibit wall of framed photos representing the history of Portage. Continue to add new material periodically. This exhibit will be on display at the Portage District Library.
4. Present a Preservation Award to a property owner who has met the criteria as established by the Portage Historic Commission.
5. Advise the City Council in areas / subjects under the purview of the Historic District Commission.
6. Present a written report to the City Council in May in conjunction with National Preservation Month.
7. Provide education to HD property owners.