

**Historic District Commission
Minutes Of September 20, 2023**

151 Martin Street, City Commission Room 205, Birmingham, MI

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held September 20, 2023. Chair Henke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) Rollcall

Present: Chair John Henke; Board Members Natalia Dukas, Gigi Debbrecht; Alternate Board Member Steven Lemberg

Absent: Board Members Dustin Kolo, Keith Deyer, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Member Mary Jaye; Student Representative Ian Weinberg

Staff: Planning Director Dupuis; City Transcriptionist Eichenhorn

2) Approval of the HDC Minutes of September 6, 2023

09-29-23

Motion by Ms. Dukas

Seconded by Mr. Lemberg to approve the HDC Minutes of September 6, 2023 as submitted.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Henke, Lemberg, Dukas, Debbrecht

Nays: None

3) Courtesy Review

4) Historic Design Review

A. 138 W. Maple – Blakeslee Building (Postponed from August 16, 2023)

PD Dupuis presented the item. Keith Maziasz of Najor Companies spoke on behalf of the application. Both answered informational questions from the HDC.

HDC members' discussion was as follows:

- The paint might be able to be peeled;
- Alternatively, peeling the brick might prove too difficult;
- It did not seem that the brick had been painted five times;
- The proposal regarding the soffit was a good one, and helped restore the facade to its original shape;
- The proposed black color would modernize the building inappropriately;
- The effort to make the building accessible was appreciated. The building would have more of a historic feel if the handle section of the railing were wood; and,

- The HDC would be willing to compromise on the paint by permitting a color that was neither black nor a shade of grey.

09-30-23

Motion by Ms. Dukas

Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to approve the Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 138 W. Maple – Blakeslee Building. The proposed work meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 1, 2, 5, 9, and 10. As a condition of approval, the Historic District Commission will also require the following:

- 1. That the paint color should be assessed by City Staff prior to approval;**
- 2. The applicant must submit to the Commission a façade condition assessment upon the removal of the modern soffit material; and,**
- 3. Should any issues arise during the removal of the modern materials that could compromise the condition of the original material below, work shall immediately be stopped and the applicant shall inform the Planning Division of the issue.**

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Henke, Lemberg, Dukas, Debbrecht

Nays: None

B. 172 N. Old Woodward – National Bank Building

PD Dupuis presented the item. Stephen Ezra, builder, spoke on behalf of the application. Both answered informational questions from the HDC.

HDC members' discussion was as follows:

- The proposal was very good, and did justice to the historic building with the exception of the proposed black paint color;
- The plans would bring the building closer to what it was in 1919;
- As long as the entire cornice was not peeled, the applicant did not have to look for the transoms;
- Whatever was under the cornice should be documented, and if more than three feet needed to be removed the applicant should return to the HDC for further discussion; and,
- A paint color could be administratively approved as long as it was not black.

09-31-23

Motion by Ms. Debbrecht

Seconded by Ms. Dukas to approve the Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 172 N. Old Woodward – National Bank Building. The proposed work meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 1, 2, 5, 7, 9 and 10, with the following additions:

1. **When the damaged cornice is removed, if it ends up being more than three feet, be sure to inform the Planning Director and to return to the HDC for further review; and,**
2. **The paint color will be an administrative approval as long as it is not black; and,**
3. **Whatever is underneath the cornice should be described and photo documented.**

Public Comment

Viga Shneyders, owner of Viga USA, and Marlene Mansour, owner of Urban Wick Candle Bar, both raised concerns about the construction's potential impact on their businesses.

The Chair said that the applicant team would work with Ms. Shneyders and Ms. Mansour to try and minimize the impact on their businesses. He said that the applicant team should add signage from the affected businesses to the scaffolding. He also recommended that the City's Building Department consider issuing less parking to contractors.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Henke, Lemberg, Dukas, Debbrecht

Nays: None

5) Sign Review

6) Study Session

A. Historic Preservation Master Plan — Update

7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication

A. Pre-Application Discussion

B. Draft Agenda

C. Staff Reports

1. **Administrative Sign Approvals**
2. **Administrative Approvals**
3. **Demolitions**
4. **Action List**

8) Adjournment

No further business being evident, the HDC motioned to adjourn at 8:01 p.m.



Nick Dupuis, Planning Director



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist