

**Historic District Commission
Minutes Of July 16, 2025**

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

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held July 16, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair Keith Deyer; Board Members Timothy Collins, Gigi Debbrecht, Natalia Dukas; Alternate Board Member Steven Lemberg

Absent: Chair Dustin Kolo; Board Members, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Member Mary Jaye

Staff: Planning Director Dupuis; City Transcriptionist Eichenhorn

2) Approval of the HDC Minutes of June 18, 2025

07-08-25

**Motion by Collins
Seconded by Debbrecht to approve as submitted.**

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Collins, Deyer, Lemberg, Debbrecht, Dukas

Nays: None

4) Courtesy Review

5) Historic Design Review

6) Sign Review

7) Study Session

A. Historic Preservation Master Plan

PD Dupuis presented the item and answered questions from the HDC.

HDC members made the following comments:

- Despite occasional resident concerns to the contrary, historic designation actually results in relatively few limits for owners. It also increases property value by approximately 15%.
- There is a finite number of old houses. They can be preserved as a part of history while other properties can also evolve.
- A background with the benefits and importance of historic preservation should be provided to the City Commission prior to the submission of the Plan.
- An overlay district could make sense. It would help maintain neighborhood character while allowing for diversity of style. There could also be resistance from some residents.

- Collaborating with Wallace Frost owners towards historic designation would be worthwhile.
- Public education about historic preservation is important.
- Creating citywide financial incentives for preservation would be very useful. Other financial incentives beyond the City could also be available.
- The Heritage Home program also helped increase publicity about historic properties. The program may have only been paused due to the cost of the plaques at the time.
- A list of suppliers, vendors, tradespeople, and professionals who have worked on historic properties would be helpful to owners. Maintaining a list of reviews from Birmingham historic property owners of these individuals or businesses could also be helpful.
- Clarifying some of the common misunderstandings about historic properties would be useful.
- Since demolition fees are tied to the City's costs for their processing, it is unlikely that they could be raised in order to discourage demolition of older homes.
- The HDC should aim to take one action this year in order to build momentum.
- More of these proposals lean towards residential over commercial. It might be reasonable to allow the Plan to only pertain to residential.

8) 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

D. Communications

The Board briefly discussed the email from the Steins that may be found in the evening's agenda packet.

8) Adjournment

No further business being evident, the HDC motioned to adjourn at 7:43 p.m.



Nick Dupuis, Planning Director



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist