

## CITY OF MISHAWAKA

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION April 4, 2017

A regular meeting of the Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission was held Tuesday April 4, 2017.

**Meeting was called to order at City Hall at 4:00 pm.**

Commission members in attendance: Mike Bultinck, Terry DeMaegd, Dave Eisen, Doug Merritt, Nancy Seidler, and Kate Voelker. Advisory members present: Alan Grzeskowiak, Shirley McAlister, Thomas Morris, and Jason Stoller. Staff: Christa Hill. Normain Heights Neighbors: Ruth Pavich, Mary Beth Torma, Jerry Enders, Rachel Fredenburg, Jim Penn, Dick Barnette, and Michael Peli.

Doug Merritt pointed out an error in the word "deemed" under Historical Marker Guidelines. Dave Eisen made a motion to approve the March 7, 2017 minutes, as amended, seconded by Kate Voelker.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING**

**HPC 17-01 A Conservation District for Normain Heights. The District is legally described as: Lots 4-316 Normain Heights, Lot 1 Normain Heights 1<sup>st</sup> Minor, and Lot 1 Main McKinley Corrective Plat, City of Mishawaka, Penn Township, St. Joseph County, State of Indiana.**

Doug Merritt first acknowledged the neighborhood for coming to us and working with us for the past year. A revised version of the guidelines was circulated with the agenda. Christa Hill read the following **recommendation:**

In 2002, Normain Heights was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Many residents thought this designation protected against the demolition of houses, however, the National Designation is an honorific designation.

In April 2016, after it was announced the City had acquired and planned to demolish the house at 2340 N Main, a group of Normain Heights residents approached the Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission looking for a way to protect additional homes in the neighborhood from being demolished. With guidance by representatives from Indiana Landmarks, the Conservation District sounded like a good option. A Conservation District requires a certificate of appropriateness for 1) the demolition of a building; 2) the moving of a building; and 3) the construction of a new building. This also includes houses that are damaged by a natural disaster; tornado or fire.

In October 2016, approximately 30 neighborhood residents met with representatives from the MHPC, Indiana Landmarks, and Mishawaka Common Council was held at Liberty School to discuss the Conservation District and how it would affect residents.

The staff recommends in favor of a Conservation District for the area identified as Normain Heights.

These recommendations are based on the following reasons:

1. The Conservation District will require a certificate of appropriateness for 1) the demolition of a building; 2) the moving of a building; and 3) the construction of a new building, allowing the MHPC to review these activities and their consistency with the surrounding neighborhood.

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2. The Mishawaka Zoning Ordinance standards, such as setbacks, building height, etc. will still be in effect.
3. The history of the Normain Heights neighborhood has been documented by past historic designations at the national level and in the 1995 survey.

It should be noted that the Conservation District is the first phase of a full Historic District. The first phase continues and does not elevate to a full Historic District if a majority of the property owners in the district object to the commission, in writing. The objections must be received by the commission not earlier than one hundred eighty (180) days or later than sixty (60) days before the third anniversary of the adoption of the ordinance.

Doug asked for questions from the Commission. There were none. Doug opened the public hearing.

Michael Peli, 121 St. Lo, asked if painting his house would require approval. The answer was no. What if he wants to connect his house to his garage. The City already has zoning and building ordinances to help define placement and size and issue permits. The Board of Zoning Appeals would hear variances to those ordinances, separate from the HPC.

Ruth Pavich sent an email with a list of revisions. Christa made the changes to the Acknowledgements list before it was sent out. The word "contributing" will remain because it has a specific definition in relation to historic categories. This is the term that is used in the 1995 survey and the 2002 National Register application. On page 12, we the term "attached" garage will remain. Dick Barnette and Mary Beth Torma confirmed their houses have a garage attached by a breezeway. Is the five year review different than the vote in three years? Yes, at three years the state law mandates a vote. At that time, if the district elevates to a full historic district, we will discuss the guidelines at that time. Doug Merritt believes this is a living document and would like the opportunity to revise it every five years. Mike Bultinck asked why they weren't at the same time. We will have to address the guidelines in three years when the vote happens. The vote in three years only happens once. Terry DeMaegd asked how the guidelines could be different for each historic district. Kate Voelker expressed, from conversations with Indiana Landmarks, guidelines can be written how the HPC sees appropriate. Doug compared Riviera Place to Old No. 4. Those guidelines may not be the same. The guidelines for the Normain Heights Conservation District is recognizing historical intent and offering education for someone who would like to restore their home. Ruth Pavich reiterated the neighborhood is only supportive of a Conservation District. If it were to fail the vote in three years, they would like to keep it as broad as possible. Doug pointed out on page 17 the term task force since the association is no longer active.

Kate wondered if this five year interval should put in our policies for other districts. Terry wants to know if Riviera Place wants to make changes? Mike Bultinck thinks they could come to us, like the Normain Heights neighbors have, it is just not automatic. Christa Hill will add the state law for the three year review. Remove NHCD and replace with District Guidelines. This way, the five year review will happen whether it stays a conservation district or goes to a full historic district.

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Kate Voelker made a motion to recommend approval of the Conservation District with the addition of the legal language from Indiana Code and revisions to be made every five years in either form. Dave Eisen seconded.

Anything that existing when the ordinance is approved by the Common Council is grandfathered. This is set to be heard by the Common Council on May 1<sup>st</sup>. We invite all of the Normain Heights residents here to attend that as well.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### A. Historic Districts/Plaques

Kate Voelker asked specifically the plaque for the Eberhart MAujor house and also generally what is left. Dodge Old People's House has given us approval to put it up. Christa will provide a list of the plaques remaining. What about the large bronze historical markers? Christa found First Bridge in the basement of City Hall. St. Joseph Ironworks is listed as missing. Kate asked if the City could reinstall these?

Roger Shields with Redevelopment will add the Normain Heights one to the Summer of Service project list to be repainted. Others may be added depending on condition and manpower.

##### B. Public Relations & Community Education

The Heritage Festival is September 3.

Doug Merritt has a slab of granite from Old No. 4 we would like to present to new station #4 as a picnic table. If anyone on the HPC is willing to help transport, he will share the credit of the donation as "on behalf of the HPC". Mike Bultinck asked how large it is? 4'x6', and ready to be installed.

##### C. Administration

Christa Hill asked Kate Voelker if she could contact Bryan Tanner regarding the need to update Appendix A in the handbook. Christa could reformat if given the information.

##### D. Staff Notes

Christa Hill shared an email from Restore Michiana about their 2017 Workshop Series.

#### OLD BUSINESS

##### Historical Marker Guidelines Program

Jason Stoller revised the guidelines based on discussion at last month's meeting. The tiers were replaced with categories. The term "priority" was removed. The 50 year deadline was made clearer. All applications will be viewed by the full Commission in October and a public hearing will be held in January, so they could be installed in May. The Commission would need to follow the same process. Add check box to the application form that the owner was notified. They will be notified my mail during the process. Christa Hill would like public hearing to be added to the process, so it triggers a legal advertisement.

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**Additional Preservation Award Nominations**

Cliff Zenor added Chuck Lehman at 510 Lincolnway East with the Award for Adaptive Reuse. We approved this new addition. Doug Merritt did not have enough information for the house he suggested, so we will pass for this year. Doug will do some homework. We will proceed with nominations as presented. The date before Council is TBD.

**National Preservation Month Signs**

Doug Merritt signed a letter to be sent to possible front yards for signs. They will be available for pick up at the next meeting and placed the first week in May. If anyone has signs in their garage, please bring them back. Christa Hill will include Normain Heights task force. Kate Voelker suggested adding the award winners and any past award winners.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Mike Bultinck informed Commissioners of his involvement with renovations to Mishawaka High School. He will bring a PowerPoint to the next meeting. Christa Hill will check if this counts towards our CLG.

Kate Voelker asked about the bench in Battell Park. It was mentioned at a past meeting. It is surrounded by orange fence and is a real safety issue.

Doug Merritt and Old No. 4 will be featured on the HGTV show "You Live in What". Everyone is invited to a watch party. Possibility of having a larger party at the Battell Center.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Dave Eisen at 5:45pm, seconded by Terry DeMaegd.

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Doug Merritt, Chairman

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Christa Hill, Secretary