

**Historic District Commission
Minutes Of March 17, 2021**
Held Remotely Via Zoom And Telephone Access

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held Wednesday, March 17, 2021. Chair John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) ROLLCALL

Present: Chair John Henke; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht; Keith Deyer, Natalia Dukas, Dustin Kolo, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Member Steven Lemberg; Student Representative Charles Cusimano (all located in Birmingham, MI except Dustin Kolo, who was in Northville, MI and Patricia Lang who was in Harbor Springs, MI.)

Absent: Alternate Board Member Cassandra McCarthy; Student Representative Elizabeth Wiegand

Administration: Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist
Leslie Pielack, Museum Director

03-029-21

2) Approval Of Minutes

Motion by Ms. Dukas

Seconded by Ms. Lang to approve the HDC Minutes of March 3, 2021 as submitted.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Dukas, Lang, Willoughby, Henke, Kolo, Deyer, Debbrecht

Nays: None

03-030-21

3) Courtesy Review

None.

03-031-21

4) Historic Design Review

A. 361 E. Maple - Hawthorne Building

Chair Henke reviewed the background of this item.

CP Dupuis presented the item.

Chris Longe, architect, and Victor Simon, owner, were present on behalf of the application.

While many HDC members spoke positively about the proposed design, most of the HDC members still agreed that the plans for 361 E. Maple insufficiently preserved the historic nature of the building. A number of members commented that the plans might have been more appropriate if one or two additional stories were proposed instead of three, given that the original historic building is only one story.

Mr. Willoughby opined that the National Park Service Guidelines for exterior additions are only recommendations, not requirements for updates to buildings.

While Chair Henke and CP Dupuis concurred with Mr. Willoughby, Chair Henke noted that the plans must meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

Mr. Longe argued that while technically historical, many aspects of the building actually held no historical significance. He said the plans preserved all aspects of the building that were of any real historical significance.

In reply to Chair Henke's asking if any aspect of the building beyond the facade would be preserved in the current plans, Mr. Longe said he would have to test the foundation to see how much of it could be used as-is.

Like the last discussion of this item, it was again noted that the HDC could not endorse plans that advocate only for the preservation of a historic building's facade.

Chair Henke advised Mr. Simon that he could appeal the HDC's decision to the State Historic Preservation Office if the HDC did not issue a certificate of appropriateness for the project.

Chair Henke also addressed a voicemail he received from Mr. Simon. He said Mr. Simon intimated that Chair Henke was not in favor of this project because of a work or social relationship with Melvin Kaftan, owner of 369 E. Maple, who has voiced his opposition to Mr. Simon's plans for 361 E. Maple in the past. Chair Henke stated that he has no relationship, professional or social, with Mr. Kaftan. He clarified for the record that his only opposition to Mr. Simon's plan for 361 E. Maple was on the basis of the plan itself.

Mr. Simon spoke in favor of his application.

Public Comment

Tim Stoepker, attorney for the Kaftans, reviewed his memo to the HDC regarding the Kaftans' objections to the plans for 361 E. Maple.

Melvin and Geri Kaftan spoke against the proposed plans for 361 E. Maple.

Motion by Mr. Deyer

Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to move that the Commission deny the Historic Design Review application for 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building because of failure to

comply with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation number(s) 1, 4, 9 and 10.

Motion carried, 6-1.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Debbrecht, Dukas, Lang, Henke, Kolo,

Nays: Willoughby

03-032-21

5) Sign Review

None.

03-033-21

6) Study Session

None.

03-034-21

7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication

A. Pre-Application Discussions

B. Draft Agenda: April 7, 2021

C. Staff Reports

1. Administrative Sign Approvals

2. Administrative Approvals

3. Demolitions

4. Action List - 2021

03-035-21

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Debbrecht

Seconded by Mr. Kolo to adjourn the HDC meeting of March 17, 2021 at 8:19 p.m.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Debbrecht, Kolo, Dukas, Lang, Henke, Deyer, Willoughby

Nays: None

Nicholas Dupuis
City Planner

APPROVED