

**HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2017
Birmingham City Hall Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Study Committee ("HDSC") held Thursday, January 26, 2017. Mr. Baka called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Paul Beshouri, Gigi Debbrecht, Patricia Lang, Michael Xenos

Absent: Gretchen Maricak

Administration: Matthew Baka, Senior Planner
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

2. ELECTION OF HDSC CHAIRPERSON

Motion by Mr. Beshouri

Seconded by Mr. Xenos to appoint GiGi Debbrecht as chairperson

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Beshouri, Debgrecht, Lang, Xenos

Nays: None

Absent: Maricak

3. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 5, 2016 HDSC MINUTES

Motion by Ms. Debbrecht

Seconded by Ms. Lang to approve the Minutes of May 5, 2016 as presented.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Debbrecht, Lang, Beshouri, Xenos

Nays: None

Absent: Maricak

4. 927 PURDY Historic Designation request

Mr. Baka announced the owner of the house located at 927 Purdy, Mr. Luis Barrio, has requested that the City Commission consider designating his home as a historic structure within the City of Birmingham. Previous City research indicates that the home is at least 100 years old. Mr. Barrio has submitted extensive research that he has done detailing the history of the home, It appears, based on the information that Mr. Barrio submitted, that the home is likely quite a bit older than 100 years. The process for designating a property or structure as historic is outlined in section 127-5 of the City Code, 'Establishing Additional, Modifying, or Eliminating Historic Districts.'

The first step in the process towards considering historic designation of this property is for the City Commission to pass a resolution directing the Historic District Study Committee ("HDSC") to commence with the creation of a study committee report as outlined in section 127-4 of the City Code, 'Historic District Study Committee and the Study Committee Report.'

The City Commission passed a resolution on March 14, 2016 directing the HDSC to conduct a study in accordance with section 127-4 of the City Code to consider the designation of 927 Purdy as a Historic Structure. The HDSC has been charged with producing a preliminary HDSC report in accordance with the criteria set forth in the City Code. Accordingly, the committee will need to complete steps 1 and 2, and then evaluate the research to determine if the criteria for evaluation referenced in the Code have been met. The committee will then make a recommendation to the City Commission as to whether it thinks the property should be designated as a historic home.

Mr. Baka promised to e-mail a section on evaluating properties from the *Manual for Historic and Architectural Surveys in Michigan*. He then passed around a framework of the report that he has started which contains information received from Mr. Barrio.

Discussion contemplated that the house was built around 1880. Chairperson Debbrecht recalled that she has seen an old hand-drawn map that might show buildings that existed in 1880. Mr. Baka noted that Mr. Barrio thinks his house was originally located on Pierce and was moved to Purdy in September 1945. However, if there was a house there before 1945 it would be an indication that it is not the same house.

Mr. Beshouri observed the National Park Services recommendations say structures that have moved from their original location generally do not have the potential to be historic districts unless they meet one of several specific criteria. The only criteria he could see that pertained to this house was the potential that it

housed a significant figure in history, J. Harry McBride, the mayor of Birmingham and also a businessman.

In response to Chairperson Debbrecht, Mr. Baka stated that the houses Mr. Barrio has submitted as being similar to his house are all designated historic. It was noted that Mr. Barrio has added changes to his house which include decorative elements. Photographic evidence of the house before and after changes were made would be good to send to the State Historic Preservation Office for their comments. Certainly Mr. Barrio's house represents an era of Birmingham that is dwindling. Only Birmingham can do the local designation. It is clear that Mr. McBride played a significant role in the City because the McBride Building is already designated historic.

It was noted that the committee should have their report back to the City Commission by March 14. It has to go to the State before it is evaluated by the City Commission, so this committee needs to ask the Commission for additional time.

Discussion concluded that the committee's job today is to focus on what is needed to complete the report. Chairperson Debbrecht and Ms. Lang volunteered to go out and photograph the site. Additional research is needed on the history of the McBrides to see it that justifies designation. Also, try to find verification of the house being moved to Purdy.

Chairperson Debbrecht indicated it would be a good idea to first contact Mr. Barrio to let him know they are coming. Also, he may have additional information.

Everyone agreed this house is worth considering for historic designation. Mr. Xenos added his concern is that if it is not designated historic the house will be torn down and the City will lose a piece of history.

Chairperson Debbrecht outlined the commissioners' responsibilities:

- Mr. Beshouri will research on line for material that can be used for the report;
- Mr. Xenos will visit the Birmingham Historic Museum and dig out everything he can find;
- Chairperson Debbrecht will try to find something from the map that she had mentioned; Further, she and Ms. Lang will make an appointment with Mr. Barrio to talk to him and photograph the site.

The group set Thursday, February 9th at 11 a.m. to reconvene.

4. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board members motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Matthew Baka
Senior Planner