

**HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2017**
Birmingham City Hall Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Study Committee (“HDSC”) held Thursday, October 19, 2017. Chairperson Gigi Debbrecht called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Gigi Debbrecht Board Members Jonathan DeWindt, Patricia Lang, Michael Xenos

Absent: Paul Beshouri

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

2. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 24, 2017 HDSC MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Xenos

Seconded by Ms. Lang to approve the Minutes of August 24, 2017 as presented.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Xenos, Lang, Debbrecht, DeWindt

Nays: None

Absent: Beshouri

**3. 361 E. MAPLE RD.
De-Designation Request**

Mr. Baka advised that the owner of the property located at 361 E. Maple Rd. has requested that the City Commission consider removing the historic designation of their building as a contributing historic resource within the City of Birmingham. The property owner has submitted an application to the Planning Board requesting to demolish the building as part of a redevelopment proposal.

As required by Section 127-5, Establishing additional, modifying, or eliminating historic districts, the City Commission issued a resolution on July 24, 2017

directing the HDSC to prepare a preliminary study committee report on the subject property in accordance with the Code and execute the additional steps outlined in that section in order to make a recommendation to the City Commission

On August 10, 2017 the HDSC held a study session regarding the request of the property owner. Accordingly, the committee agreed to the assignment of specific tasks related to preparation of the study committee report. Consensus was that each member would attempt to complete their research by the next meeting for further discussion.

On August 24, 2017 the HDSC met to further the discussion on 361 E. Maple Rd. At that time it was determined that they needed more time to seek out additional resources for the report. The committee agreed to meet again at a later date to be determined in the near future.

Mr. Xenos presented a list of the occupants of the Hawthorne Building at 361 E. Maple Rd. from 1937 to the present. He found it at the Birmingham Historical Museum.

Chairperson Debbrecht observed this area was pretty important in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. This building typifies the area's businesses at that time. She doesn't think it needs to be a requirement that the building is "cute" for it to be historic. Detroit was an important area and Grosse Pointe and Birmingham were the premier suburban areas back then.

Mr. Xenos thought the building has human scale. It gives the feeling of a small historic structure. Birmingham is losing its pedestrian scale and if we allow buildings like this to be torn down we are getting rid of this cute little downtown area and replacing it with big glass structures. In his opinion we should try to save these types of buildings.

Mr. DeWindt said Birmingham has parks and a great little downtown feeling. However, there aren't many historic buildings left.

Mr. Xenos noted they can't control the homes that are built in the neighborhoods but this is a chance to protect buildings like this downtown.

It was pointed out that if these historic buildings are picked off one at a time, eventually the fabric of the historic district is lost. There are very few buildings like this that remain pretty much untouched over the years.

Mr. Baka explained that the committee must go through the same process they went through to designate a building. He can assemble a report similar to the one for the home on Purdy. Ms. Debbrecht agreed to take a clear shot of the front facade.

Mr. Xenos said the owners need direction and he thinks the committee is ready to give that once the report is complete.

The consensus was to meet at a future date when a quorum can be present.

4. ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the committee members adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Matthew Baka, Sr. Planner