

**Historic District Commission
Minutes Of March 16, 2022**

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

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held Wednesday, March 16, 2022. Vice-Chair Keith Deyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) Rollcall

Present: Vice-Chair Keith Deyer; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht, Natalia Dukas, Dustin Kolo, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Student Representatives Meghan Murray, Charlie Vercellone

Absent: Chair John Henke; Alternate Board Members Steven Lemberg, Cassandra McCarthy

Administration: Nicholas Dupuis, Planning Director
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

03-15-22

2) Approval of the HDC Minutes of February 2, 2022

Motion by Mr. Willoughby

Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to approve the HDC Minutes of February 2, 2022 as submitted.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

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

Nays: None

03-16-22

3) Courtesy Review

None.

03-17-22

4) Historic Design Review

A. 320 Martin St. – Birmingham Post Office

PD Dupuis summarized the item.

Vice-Chair Deyer said he still had concerns about the part of the addition that would overhang the historic structure, and concerns about the general massing of the proposed addition.

Mr. Kolo noted that the "Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" document's recommendations that apply to the proposal call for a dense environment as long as the scale matches the surrounding buildings, which he felt this proposal does.

Mr. Willoughby concurred with Mr. Kolo, adding that he appreciated the thread park between the church and the building in the design.

Ms. Debbrecht and Ms. Dukas said they liked the thread park as well.

Mr. Willoughby continued that he thought the overhang fit well with the historic building.

Vice-Chair Deyer said his primary concern was the height of the proposed addition relative to the historic building. He said that if all other aspects of the design were maintained and the addition were three stories he would be in favor.

Mr. Willoughby noted that the overlay standards allows buildings in the area to be five stories, so this addition would be appropriate since nearby buildings are likely to scale up as well. He said that allowing the post office building to be preserved while allow the City to grow meets the HDC's responsibility for historic preservation.

Mr. Kolo stated that the proposed massing is appropriate for the building's location according to the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) standards as well.

Ms. Lang said she now supported the proposal after the applicant's presentation at the February 2, 2022 HDC meeting.

Mr. Kolo said he was unsure about the overhang, since the SOI standards call for the addition to look like infill and a separate building.

Ms. Dukas said that after consideration, she found the massing to be borderline but ultimately appropriate, especially given Mr. Kolo's point about the addition looking like a separate building. She said that while she would prefer a smaller overhang, the present overhang did not make the project unacceptable.

Kevin Biddison, architect, spoke on behalf of the project.

In reply to Vice-Chair Deyer, Mr. Biddison stated the awning could function as the sign band.

PD Dupuis noted signs on the awning would be limited to 18 inches in height.

In reply to Vice-Chair Deyer, Mr. Biddison confirmed he would submit a sign plan for the project's Planning Board review.

Motion by Ms. Debbrecht

Seconded by Ms. Lang to approve the Historic Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 320 Martin St. – Birmingham Post Office. The proposed addition meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

standard numbers 1-5, 9, and 10. The applicant must address any sign band issues with the Planning Department and provide the Planning Department with photometric plans.

Vice-Chair Deyer said that the overlap between the overlay and the historic district in this case was ~~creating~~ was causing a conflict ~~in this case~~, and that he would not be voting to support the motion. He said a three-story addition would be much more appropriate.

Motion carried, 5-1.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Debbrecht, Lang, Kolo, Dukas, Willoughby

Nays: Deyer

03-18-22

5) Sign Review

None.

03-19-22

6) Study Session

A. CLG Grant – Historic Design Guidelines – RFP Responses (Information Only)

PD Dupuis summarized the topic. He explained he provided the RFP responses for the HDC's review and that the full discussion on the topic would occur on April 6, 2022.

Vice-Chair Deyer commented that he did not want to sacrifice any important work items to save money, and that he is hoping to select a consultant with the proper credentials and the capacity to complete the project.

B. Bates St. Historic District Signage (Update)

PD Dupuis summarized the topic.

03-20-22

7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication

Both Vice-Chair Deyer and Ms. Lang raised the issue of demolitions. Vice-Chair Deyer noted that the 2040 Plan draft was calling for more affordable housing while the City's affordable housing stock is being demolished, and Ms. Lang said she would like to stem the tide of demolitions in the City.

PD Dupuis and Vice-Chair Deyer welcomed the new student representatives.

A. Pre-Application Discussions

PD Dupuis asked if he could administratively approve a proposed stairwell and window change at 100 N. Old Woodward.

There was HDC consensus that an administrative approval would be fine in this case.

There was brief discussion of having the HDC visit the 100 N. Old Woodward site to see the progress.

B. Draft Agenda

C. Staff Reports

- 1. Administrative Sign Approvals**
- 2. Administrative Approvals**
- 3. Demolitions**
- 4. Action List 2022**

03-21-22

8) Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Willoughby

Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to adjourn the HDC meeting of March 16, 2022 at 8:23 p.m.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

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

Nays: None



Nicholas Dupuis
Planning Director



Laura Eichenhorn
City Transcriptionist