

**Historic District Commission
Minutes Of August 16, 2023**

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

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held August 16, 2023. Chair Henke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) Rollcall

Present: Chair John Henke; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht, Natalia Dukas, Dustin Kolo, Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Members Mary Jaye, Steven Lemberg; Student Representative Ian Weinberg

Absent: Board Members Keith Deyer, Patricia Lang

Staff: Planning Director Dupuis; City Transcriptionist Eichenhorn

2) Approval of the HDC Minutes of August 2, 2023

08-24-23

Motion by Mr. Kolo

Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to approve the HDC Minutes of August 2, 2023 as submitted.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Henke, Debbrecht, Kolo, Jaye, Lemberg, Dukas, Willoughby

Nays: None

3) Courtesy Review

4) Historic Design Review

A. 298 S. Old Woodward – Daxton Hotel

PD Dupuis presented the item. Ryan Zemmin spoke on behalf of the request. Both answered informational questions from the HDC.

08-25-23

Motion by Ms. Dukas

Seconded by Ms. Jaye to approve the Wall Art application for 298 S. Old Woodward – Daxton Hotel.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Henke, Debbrecht, Kolo, Jaye, Lemberg, Dukas, Willoughby

Nays: None

B. 138 W. Maple – Blakeslee Building

PD Dupuis presented the item. Keith Mazias of the Najor Companies spoke on behalf of the request. Both answered informational questions from the HDC.

HDC members' discussion was as follows:

- The plans would modernize the historic building, rather than enhancing the historic aspects. The photos from the 1920s and '30s demonstrated a center entrance. The building may have been originally constructed with red common brick. There were several instances where the brick needed to be tuck pointed across most of the alleyway. Painting the building black would prevent it from looking more historic. The present paint might be able to be removed. The columns were likely added later. The need for ADA-compliant access was understandable;
- The building is one of the oldest and most historic buildings in the City, and it would be more appropriate to update the plans to better reflect that fact;
- The historical soffit, with or without an awning, could be replicated. If that occurred, creating an ADA-compliant entrance would be acceptable;
- The plans significantly altered the proportions of the building versus the older photos of the building, notably with respect to the top of the windows and the top of the parapet;
- While the applicant was attempting to improve on the present design of the building, the HDC's aim was to try and restore as much of the historicity of the building as possible;
- It would be preferable for the applicant to consider a more historic color instead of black;
- The applicant could do limited deconstruction of the soffit while in communication with PD Dupuis to see what options might be available; and,
- There may have been transom glass on the historic facade.

08-26-23

Motion by Ms. Dukas

Seconded by Ms. Jaye to postpone the Design Review application and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for 138 W. Maple – Blakeslee Building to September 20, 2023 and to authorize partial investigation of the historical features that are hidden right now.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Henke, Debbrecht, Kolo, Jaye, Lemberg, Dukas, Willoughby

Nays: None

5) Sign Review

6) Study Session

A. Historic Preservation Master Plan — Update

To be further discussed on September 6, 2023.

7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication
A. Pre-Application Discussion
i. 172 N. Old Woodward

HDC consensus was that the request should be submitted as a design review.

- B. Draft Agenda**
- C. Staff Reports**
 - 1. Administrative Sign Approvals**
 - 2. Administrative Approvals**
 - 3. Demolitions**
 - 4. Action List**

8) Adjournment

No further business being evident, the HDC motioned to adjourn at 7:49 p.m.



Nick Dupuis, Planning Director



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist