



City of Saugatuck
Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes March 7, 2024, 6:00 PM
Saugatuck City Hall
102 Butler Street

Call to Order/Roll Call: Chair Straker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Straker, Vice-Chairman Paterson, Commission members: Cannarsa, Donahue, Gardner, Godfrey & Leo.

Absent: None.

Others Present: Director of Planning, Zoning, and Project Management Cummins, Deputy Clerk Williams.

Agenda Changes/Additions/Deletions:

Move item 8c “Continuation of Discussion of 2024 Goals” under Administrative Approvals and Updates to New Business, Item 7c.

Approval of Minutes for February 1, 2024:

Motion by Donahue, second by Cannarsa, to approve the minutes for the February 1, 2024, meeting minutes. Upon voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

Public Comments: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

A. 149 Griffith – Minor deviations from approved plans:

The applicant requests approval for a partial roof replacement and installation of vinyl siding along the rear side of a front parapet. All applications to construct, alter, repair, move, or demolish any structure or install or alter any signage or fence structure in a historic district

shall include the supporting plans and documents as specified by § 152.07 B. The applicant has provided specifications concerning the proposed roofing and siding materials. While the location of the siding was specified, the extent of the roof replacement is unclear (the application states “one whole section”).

Motion by Leo, second by Gardner to approve the roofing and siding project for the building located at 120 Butler Street in accordance with the plans and details submitted within the application materials. Upon voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

B. 230 Culver – Installation of Canvas and Metal Entry Structure:

The applicant requests a canvas and metal entry structure at 230 Culver Street, the home of Bowdies Chophouse. In 2018, the HDC considered a request to install pergolas on each side of a black canvas awning in front of the restaurant building. The approved elements do not currently exist on the site. The 12-6-18 minutes state:

P-HIS 18046 / 230 Culver Street – Pergola Addition: *A motion was made by Peterson, 2nd by Cannarsa, to approve Application P-HIS 18046 / 230 Culver Street for installation of two black metal frame pergola structures over the restaurant’s existing outdoor patio area. The motion included approving the vestibule entryway cover on a seasonal basis from about Halloween to Easter (removed completely between approximately Easter to Halloween), conditioned upon fire department approval. Upon voice vote the motion was carried unanimously.*

Motion by Godfrey, second by Gardner to approve the proposed temporary/seasonal canvas and metal entry structure in accordance with the plans and details submitted within the application materials. Approval shall be subject to the following conditions:

- *Temporary/Seasonal entry structure is approved for installation around November 1st and is requested to be removed no later than May 15th. Upon voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.*
- *The temporary entry structure material shall be constructed of materials previously approved by Chris Mantels, Deputy Chief/Fire Inspector.*

Upon Voice vote, motion was carried unanimously.

C. Discussion of 2024 Goals:

Chair Straker said that after their last meeting he went while it was still fresh in his head and tried to get some things onto a sheet of paper. He included these notes in the packet and told the Commission to take it as a starting point. He said that they should have around three major macro goals and a little bit of work on the charter for their goals for the team in 2024. He likes the idea of a post meeting survey that is super simple with like three questions such as, would you recommend this experience to someone else, yes or no? He says it is as simple as that and starts to get a baseline. He said that they can come up with the questions later. The group has also spoken about a newspaper spotlight, but he says that a quarterly spotlight is about as ambitious as he would like to go. They have also talked about thank you notes, and Straker said at the end of the meeting after they adjourn, they send them around to the

Commission and then mail them to the applicant. He said that they have talked about a rewards program which would need to be flushed out. He thinks training is self-explanatory. He appreciates that Commissioner Paterson has always had interest in diving deeper into guidelines and interpreting that.

Commission member Donahue thinks that they should focus on like three topics and know that they can accomplish them instead of coming up with a whole bunch of stuff that they aren't going to achieve.

Commission member Gardner said that he presented to Council last night to think about policies that they may want for the Historic District Commission. They are the policy body, and we will see if they come up with anything good. He thinks they may not get anything back as he says he doesn't think most of them understand what the Historic District Commission's role is in the community. He thinks it may be an opportunity for them to do a presentation at a Council meeting at some point or a guest speaker to talk to Council about what HDC does and doesn't do. He thinks there are some misperceptions about things that the Historic District Commission that the HDC used to do but doesn't do anymore.

Chair Straker asked Zoning Administrator Cummins about a year end summary and asked if he has done this since he has been here. Cummins said that Cindy did them on a regular basis. Chair Straker said that they were a pretty good baseline of the activity that the HDC completed that year, and it is a great report that goes back to Council noting what they have learned and shows that they are tracking information.

Commission member Cannarsa said that he particularly likes the purpose and said that it's really distinct. He said if they do a newspaper spotlight, it could be in italics at the bottom, it could be on the back of the inside of their Thank You cards, it needs to be something that they repeat because it is important. That is why they are here to remind themselves and other people while they are here.

Chair Straker said that in comparison to the thing that is on the back of their agenda, he was trying to stay away from what he thinks about the charter versus their purpose. He doesn't know if it's overlap or not. Maybe there are two different things, and they are doing the same thing, and can they get rid of one of them. He said that he almost feels like what is written on the back on page two was probably something written by either another commission or a state or Secretary of Interior. Something which doesn't make it right or wrong. It's just longer and a little more like they have the responsibility.

Commissioner Leo said that goes back to the original intent of the HDC to stop the demolition of the old cottages. Commissioner Gardner said that he understands where Leo is coming from, but he says that this is still the HDC's responsibility. Leo reiterated that they were trying to get the cottages removed so they could build three new houses and the Commission pushed back pretty hard on that.

Commissioner Cannarsa said that his point is, that they use the word carefully preserving in there, and this is something that someone would read, and he thinks they would stop reading that. He was referring to it terms of marketing, like something like this would be good to put up in front of people.

Chair Straker said that you can keep this because it's official and you could add to the end, say it in another way, or how they can do that. Commissioner Paterson added that this could do well in a trifold and it would do good in a courtroom. Straker asked the Commission if there was anything in the top section that they would like to add or delete. Commissioner Gardner said that he personally thinks that it is good. He said that he would take the next steps and put it into a grid and say, okay here are the dates and here is what we need to do. He said to just out some timelines around these and use a smart approach. Just so they can measure against this. Straker added that maybe there is an addition, once they understand policies from Council to that they may want to add and then just make sure that they are adding part of the goals and that there is a circle back at the yearly summary to educate.

The Commissioners then discussed Establishing Internal Champions and assigned each commissioner an area of focus:

1. Building Materials – John Cannarsa
2. External Communication – Will Donahue
3. Guidelines Expertise – Keith Paterson
4. Community Nuance – Russ Gardner
5. Learning/Trends from other Historic Districts – Laura Godfrey

Administrative Approvals & Updates:

- 149 Griffith – Minor deviations from approved plans.
- 435 Water – Signage.
- Reminder of training on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Communication: None.

Public Comment: None.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Godfrey: She says she frequently gets asked about mural and asked the Commission if there was a deadline for the removal. Zoning Administrator Cummins said that they evaluated options to remove the mural without damaging the structure. They are now waiting for a safer temperature range for the removal. Vendors are scheduling really far out at this time.

Commissioner Gardner: He said that his house needs the roof replaced and asked if that would need to be approved by the Historic District Commission. Zoning Administrator Cummins answered “yes”. He said that a clock that used to be displayed on the front of City Hall was found in the old Wilkins building. He is on a mission to get the clock back.

Adjourn:

Motion by Gardner, second by Leo to adjourn. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Chairman Straker adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Sara Williams,

Deputy Clerk