Holyoke Historical Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
September 11, 2017

Attendance:  
Richard Ahlstrom (Chairperson), Paola Ferrario, Joe Paul, Ali Puffer, James Sheehan, Frances Welser, Jean Jonker (Associate)  
Absent: Christopher Gauthier (Alternate), Dan Fitzgerald (Associate), Olivia Mausel

Municipal Staff: Debbie Oppermann (OPED), Barbara Bou (OPED)  
Others: Seth Crocker, Daphne Board, Lauren Cook

1) Call to order: Richard Ahlstrom called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2) Public Hearing 120-126 Walnut – see attached minutes

3) Review of 7-26-17 and 8-14-17 minutes

Preservation Plan - Debbie Oppermann asked to discuss item e. on the agenda, Preservation Plan, at this time in the meeting. Unanimous approval to move item e. Debbie stated that the final draft version emailed to the Commission on Friday (9/8) needs to be reviewed by the them no later than Sunday 9/17 so that she can provide all comments to the PVPC to make final revisions and print the plan. She offered two options for review: a. have the commissioners read the plan individually and convey comments directly to her or b. schedule a meeting between now and then to review the document collectively. Option a. was selected. Debbie further explained that Marcos Marrero, OPED Director will present the plan to the DGR subcommittee of the City Council on 9/25.

4) Western MA Historical Commission Coalition Meeting - The meeting will take place on 10/24 at Gateway City Arts from 10-2 p.m. (cost = free) with a canal tour given by Bob Comeau at 12:15. A decision will be made to hire a bus to take a more extensive tour of the canals or make it a walking tour. A typical agenda for these meetings includes a presentation on a topic of interest, such as historic tax credits or doing an inventory on a small budget and it's a great opportunity for discussion with both professionals and nonprofessionals from the region working on historic preservation.

5) Old Business:

a. Mater Dolorosa – The Historic District Commission completed and submitted its Preliminary Report on the church property for a single building historic district to MHC on 8-25-17. MHC provided clearance for a public hearing on August 30th. Barbara Bou and Debbie Oppermann have scheduled a hearing room at the Senior Center for October 30th, the earliest possible date that the hearing can be held.
b. Community Preservation Committee – The committee convened for their first meeting on 8/29. Kevin Jourdain presided as temporary chairperson. Their next meeting is scheduled for 9/18.

c. Preservation of City Hall portraits – no update for this meeting.

d. Medal of Honor Project *

e. Preservation Plan – discussed earlier in meeting

f. Bylaws Review & Revise update – Although the bylaws have been revised in accordance with changes directed by the Commission, certain items have not been check by the City Solicitor’s Office. This item will be discussed at the October 4, 2017 meeting.

g. Native American Project –

h. Cynthia Woods Mitchell grant *

* Debbie Oppermann reported that the projects listed here as d. and h. will be managed by others, not the Historical Commission. This decision was the result of the OPED Director realigning tasks of the Commission with the priority strategies identified in the May 4th strategic planning session. While the effort to apply for the funding is greatly appreciated and the grant awards very valuable to the City, implementation of The Medal of Honor project (erecting a monument to 3, Holyoke, Medal of Honor recipients) is best managed by the Parks & Recreation Dept. in conjunction with the War Memorial Commission and the Cynthia Woods Mitchell grant (funding for a consultant to survey the condition of City Hall including mold and the murals in City Council chambers) by the Director of Public Works.

6) New Business

a. Mrs. Gerrmann, owner of 1329 Northampton Street requested a letter from the Commission stating that the property, which is currently undergoing rehabilitation, is not subject to Historical Commission review. Although the 1780, Federal style home is listed on Holyoke’s Historic Inventory, it is not located in a local historic district and therefore, not subject to any review related to the age or historic nature of the building.

b. St. Paul’s, 485 Appleton Street, has requested a plaque noting their historic property. At the present time, there isn’t a Commissioner available to do this work. Staff will work with the church to get a plaque as time permits.

7) Next Meeting- October 4, 2017

8) Adjourn: a motion was made by Joe Paul to adjourn the meeting at 7:55, seconded by Ali Puffer – passed unanimously.

Submitted by,

Debbie U. Oppermann