

FLINT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
May 1st, 2025

Commissioners Present

Stephanie Wright, Chair
Michael Hurley
Beverly Davis
Megan McAdow
Samantha Farah

Staff Present

Max Lester, Zoning Coordinator
Dalton Castle, Planner I
Willie Wallace, Assistant City Attorney

Commissioners Absent

Kurt Neiswender, Vice-Chair
Cade Surface

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wright called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present. The meeting was held in-person in the City Council Chambers as well as via Zoom conferencing.

Megan McAdow, present
Beverly Davis, present
Michael Hurley, present
Kurt Neiswender, absent

Stephanie Wright, present
Samantha Farah, present
Cade Surface, absent

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Hurley seconded the motion.

M/S – Davis/Hurley

The motion carried by voice vote.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND DISPOSAL:

Draft minutes for the April 3rd, 2025 meeting were presented.

Max commented that the page numbers are incorrect and these will be fixed.

Commissioner Farah made a motion to accept the minutes of April 3rd, 2025 with the minor corrections noted by staff. Commissioner McAdow seconded the motion.

M/S – Farah/McAdow

The motion carried by voice vote.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairperson Wright opened the floor for public comment. No one spoke. Chairperson Wright closed public comment.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS/NOTICES TO PROCEED:

Case No: HDC 25-02 (CoA)
Applicant: Insurance Repair Pros
Property Owner: Lisa Weaver
Location: 221 W. First Ave. (PID # 40-12-487-001)

Commissioner Hurley asked about the different roofs shown in the provided images. The applicant responded that their intent is to remove the carport while only repairing the roof on the south facing side. Commissioner Hurley asked if the roof and gutters would be replaced to match the existing materials. The applicant confirmed the new materials will match existing materials. Three windows will also be replaced with built to match windows.

Commissioner McAdow asked if there is any indication of when the carport dates back to. The applicant responded that the carport is not original, and he estimates it was constructed sometime in the late 90s. The applicant added that it is falling over and it is not something the property owner wants to rebuild, also stating they understood if a new carport is wanted, they will need to come back to the HDC.

Commissioner Farah asked for confirmation of which areas of the roof will be repaired and that materials will match. The applicant responded that both tier sections of the south facing roof will be replaced and that they were able to determine the exact type of shingles currently on the roof.

Commissioner McAdow asked if the carport is considered a non-contributing structure. Max stated they did not look into the carport as it was not noted in the application, however, the carport is not mentioned in the attached district survey as a feature of the property.

Commissioner Farah made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for HDC 25-02 as submitted and referenced above, with an amendment to allow the demolition of the carport. The work as proposed meets "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation," in particular standard numbers five and nine. Chairperson Wright seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, yes
Beverly Davis, yes
Michael Hurley, yes
Kurt Neiswender, absent

Stephanie Wright, yes
Samantha Farah, yes
Cade Surface, absent

M/S – Farah/Wright

The motion carried via roll call vote.

Case No: HDC 25-03 (CoA)
Applicant: The Genesee County Land Bank
Property Owner: The Genesee County Land Bank
Location: 309 W. Fifth Ave. (PID # 40-12-430-003)

Travis Gilbert of The Genesee County Land Bank spoke on this request. Mr. Gilbert stated the Land Bank is requesting the addition of a sign mounted on a pillar near the entrance to the residential complex, noting the sign details were included with the application.

Commissioner Farah asked if the request is just for the addition of the sign. Mr. Gilbert responded affirmatively. Commissioner Davis asked if the sign would be illuminated. Mr. Gilbert stated the sign itself does not have illumination, but they are proposing a light on top of the sign pillar.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for HDC 25-03 as submitted and referenced above. The work as proposed meets "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation," standard number nine. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, yes

Beverly Davis, yes

Michael Hurley, yes

Kurt Neiswender, absent

Stephanie Wright, yes

Samantha Farah, yes

Cade Surface, absent

M/S – Hurley/Davis

The motion carried via roll call vote.

Case No: HDC 25-04 (CoA)
Applicant: Ralph Vincent, of Carriage Town Ministries
Property Owner: Carriage Town Ministries
Location: 605 Garland St. (PID # 40-12-476-037)

Dr. Chris Townsend, Executive Director at Carriage Town Ministries, spoke on this request. Ralph Vincent of Carriage Town Ministries and Brady Wendling of Goyette Mechanical were also present.

Dr. Townsend explained the location of the generator, stating it is not an addition to the building itself but is located in the University Ave. yard. They are seeking approval from the HDC and Zoning to be able to hook up the generator.

Chairperson Wright asked what considerations were made for the placement of the generator and whether other locations were considered such as the back of the property. Mr. Wendling said they primarily considered the existing gas and electric service line locations which come up at this corner of the building. Dr. Townsend added that they received a grant to help cover the costs of the generator, but the project cost is about \$81,000 over the amount covered by the grant which was another consideration as a non-profit. Dr. Townsend said that once the additional shrubs are in place he believes the generator will be less noticeable.

Commissioner Farah asked for their expected timeline to install the shrubs. Dr. Townsend stated that once they have approval to keep working they will proceed with landscape installation. Commissioner Farah commented that the generator is visually obtrusive and prominently placed, adding the landscaping should be a part of the application. Max clarified that Attachment A shows current photographs of the generator while Attachment E is an approved Zoning waiver which brings in the landscape requirements as shown in Attachment F.

Commissioner Davis stated that the generator is brand new and is not too obstructive in the current location, especially with the addition of the proposed landscaping. Commissioner Davis added that a non-profit facility of this size needs the generator for their operations.

Commissioner Hurley asked if there was a generator on site previously. Dr. Townsend answered that there was not a generator previously at this location.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for HDC 25-04 as submitted and referenced above. The work as proposed meets "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation," standard number nine. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, yes

Beverly Davis, yes

Michael Hurley, yes

Kurt Neiswender, absent

Stephanie Wright, yes

Samantha Farah, yes

Cade Surface, absent

M/S – Hurley/Davis

The motion carried via roll call vote.

Case No: HDC 25-05 (NtP)

Applicant: Jon Mason

Property Owner: Larry & Denola Miller

Location: 728 N. Grand Traverse St.

Jon Mason spoke on this request. Mr. Mason stated this is an additional home requested for demolition with money granted through the Carriage Town Neighborhood Association. Mr. Mason stated the structure is unsafe and is in the process of collapsing. The structure is on the emergency demolition list.

Commissioner Hurley asked where the money came from to complete the demolition. Mr. Mason replied that the Carriage Town Neighborhood Association received money from City Council through ARPA grants, with Neighborhood Engagement Hub acting as the fiduciary. Commissioner Hurley asked if there is an estimate for the total cost of demolition and any remediation. Mr. Mason said they were qualified for up to \$50,000 to complete the work, but the final cost may vary closer to \$45,000.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to issue a Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-05. The work is not appropriate; however, the following condition prevails, “the resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or the structure’s occupants.”

Commissioner McAdow asked about the previous best practices for photographically documenting properties requested for demolition. Mr. Mason answered that typically photographs are taken inside and outside of the structure and a structural analysis is given, but these details are difficult to obtain for this property because it is too dangerous to enter. Commissioner McAdow reframed the question as a practice of documentation less on the side of applicants but on the side of the City and the HDC, where the most recent Carraige Town Survey is from 1995. Max responded that the initiative to become a “Certified Local Government” through the State Historic Preservation Office is in part to open the City to funding and technical assistance to complete new cultural resource surveys.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, yes

Beverly Davis, yes

Michael Hurley, yes

Kurt Neiswender, absent

Stephanie Wright, yes

Samantha Farah, yes

Cade Surface, absent

M/S – Hurley/Davis

The motion carried via roll call vote.

Commissioner Davis asked where the money was applied for within the City, be it Planning and Development, Building and Safety Inspections, or another department. Mr. Mason said he wasn’t sure how exactly the funds were applied for, only that he knew non-profits could submit an application during a certain time frame.

OLD BUSINESS:

Administrative Review Reports

Max provided copies of two administrative reviews signed by the Chair for demolitions of structures that were completely lost in fire events, with only the foundations remaining. These were HDC-A 25-01 for 326 Lyon St. (PID # 40-12-487-005) and HDC-A 25-02 for 316 Lyon St. (PID # 40-12-487-006).

Max clarified that their intent is to still send applications to the HDC where there are portions of a structure still standing, or if the structure had additional significance other than the time period.

NEW BUSINESS:

SHPO Declaration of Location Form Report

Max presented a SHPO Declaration of Location Form that was submitted for 755 S. Saginaw St. and completed by staff. No action is required by the commission. Max used information from the preexisting State historical marker in their review.

Chairperson Wright asked what makes a structure eligible for a State historical marker and who manages the program. Max stated there is an application process and that certain work can make eligible properties ineligible if historical significance is lost. Commissioner Hurley added that the cost of the markers are paid for by the property owner. Commissioner McAdow confirmed the information given by staff and Commissioner Hurley.

Commissioner Davis asked staff who created the “Historic Civic Park Renaissance Plan”, and who changed it from “Historic Civic Park”. Max responded that Michigan State University students drafted the plan as part of their course curriculum. Commissioner Davis asked where the previous versions are located if the copy received says “final”. Max answered that it is likely with the students or their professor. Commissioner Davis asked why the Urban Renaissance Center had so much input on the student project and commented on multiple signs that appeared in Civic Park without HDC approval. Max stated they would need to speak with the Community Planner that worked with the MSU students about the project. Commissioner McAdow stated it sounds as though the signs should have gone through HDC approval and that she was under the impression that the project was only a project, not to be implemented. Chairperson Wright added that she believes the signs are separate from the student project because the signs have a University of Michigan logo whereas the students were with Michigan State University.

Max asked Commissioner Davis to send them information regarding the location of the signs to assist them in following up on the discussion. Commissioner Davis commented on the Urban Renaissance Center and her belief that they have overstepped by allowing these signs to be placed without coming to the HDC. Commissioner Hurley asked who approves signage. Max responded that Zoning typically reviews signage unless it is within the City right-of-way. Commissioner Farah asked about the kind of process that may be followed to have the signs reviewed by the HDC retroactively. Assistant City Attorney Wallace stated he would pass the Commission’s concerns to the HDC’s assigned representative to determine the options for moving forward.

Commissioner McAdow stated there may be multiple student projects being referenced in discussion as she recalls University of Michigan students presenting panels years back within a church. Chairperson Wright recalled a request to add signs around Civic Park in relation to Commissioner McAdow’s recollection, but there was no formal approval given for installing the signs. Commissioner McAdow suggested this may have been back in sometime around 2019. Commissioner Davis spoke on her opposition to the terms “Renaissance”, “Village”, etc. being used for historic Civic Park.

This item will be kept under Old Business.

Chairperson Wright noted there is an active violation issue on the Capital Theatre for signage installed without approval. Max stated the violation notice is sent to the property owner, not the tenant.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Farah made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner McAdow seconded the motion.

M/S – Farah/McAdow

The motion carried via voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.