

FLINT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

July 3, 2025

Commissioners Present

Stephanie Wright, Chair
Kurt Neiswender, Vice-Chair
Michael Hurley
Beverly Davis
Cade Surface
Samantha Farah

Staff Present

Max Lester, Zoning Coordinator
Dalton Castle, Planner I
Joshua Cambri, Assistant City Attorney

Absent:

Megan McAdow

ROLL CALL:

Vice-Chairman Neiswender called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was held in-person in the Zoning Division Conference Room as well as via Zoom.

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

Stephanie Wright, absent (*arrived at 7:05 pm*)
Samantha Farah, present
Cade Surface, present

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Surface made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Farah seconded the motion.

M/S – Surface/Farah

The motion carried via voice vote.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND DISPOSAL:

The June 26th, 2025 draft meeting minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Vice-Chairman Neiswender opened the floor for public comment. No one spoke.

(continued on next page)

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS/NOTICES TO PROCEED:

Case No.: *HDC 25-10 (NtP)*
Applicant: *Teresa Gillotti of the Genesee County Land Bank Authority*
Property Owner: *The Genesee County Land Bank Authority*
Location: *2321 Humboldt Ave. (PID # 40-02-401-032)*
Request: *Demolition of structure.*

Teresa Gillotti spoke as the applicant on behalf of the Genesee County Land Bank Authority ("GCLBA"). Matt Monk and Suzy Ferguson of the GCLBA are also in attendance. Ms. Gillotti gave background on these requests, stating the properties were selected for demolition through the prioritization process that occurred in 2022. Some of the properties for review have been before the Historic District Commission ("HDC") previously and the condition on some of those have changed due to fires. Ms. Gillotti stated that she looked at the State Equalized Value and Zillow values for properties in and around Civic Park; many properties were valued in the range of \$25,000 to \$40,000. There is a 2,500 sq.ft. house on Basset Pl. that recently sold for approximately \$100,000.

Ms. Gillotti explained that many properties come to the GCLBA after the County Treasurer forecloses them and the properties fail to be sold at auction. Some properties are foreclosed due to a lack of clarity about the heirs or legal owner of a property once the original owner passes away. Efforts are being made to prevent foreclosures and to locate the legal owner of properties that have been foreclosed.

Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked Ms. Gillotti if there was any additional information she would like to provide for 2321 Humboldt Ave. Ms. Gillotti responded that this is one of the properties that was previously before the HDC and has since sustained significant fire damage.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the requested Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-10. The work is not appropriate; however, the resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or the structure's occupants. Commissioner Surface seconded the motion.

Commissioner Surface asked when this property was transferred to the GCLBA. Ms. Gillotti responded it was received in 2011. Commissioner Surface asked when this property was last presented to the HDC. Ms. Gillotti stated she does not have that date with her. Commissioner Surface asked if there were any actions taken to stabilize the property to prevent or slow further damage. Ms. Gillotti said she is not sure if stabilization actions were taken after the previous HDC denial. Commissioner Hurley noted the structure was damaged by a fire after the previous denial. Commissioner Davis asked if the property is currently on the emergency demolition list. Max responded that the property has been on the emergency demolition list since August 20th, 2020. Commissioner Surface asked for clarification if the list is created by the City of Flint Building & Safety Inspections Division. Max confirmed this is true.

Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

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

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

M/S – Hurley/Surface

The motion carried via roll call vote.

Commissioner Hurley asked for clarification about whether houses that come into the possession of the GCLBA have first sat vacant for some period of time prior to foreclosure proceedings. Ms. Gillotti confirmed that foreclosure does not begin until after three years of non-payment of taxes, then the property is auctioned by the County Treasurer. Once a property is transferred to the GCLBA an inspection is conducted to classify the property.

Commissioner Davis asked what the timeline is from HDC approval to demolishing the structure. Ms. Gillotti responded that these specific properties would go out to bid around late summer with the demolitions occurring sometime between winter to early spring. Commissioner Farah asked if there is any time sensitivity to demolish these properties now. Ms. Gillotti stated the funding for these properties is more flexible on timeline than ARPA funded demolitions. Commissioner Surface asked for clarification on the typical cost for demolishing a structure. Ms. Gillotti stated that demolitions for properties that have a structure burned to the foundation can cost around \$25,000 while full structures may cost around \$30,000 including abatement.

Commissioner Surface asked if there have been any type of stabilization or preservation processes considered and pursued with the same vigor or repetitiveness as demolitions. Ms. Gillotti stated there is high interest in a broad demolition program for GCLBA properties, especially for properties located adjacent to occupied structures, which has informed their identification and prioritization efforts. Ms. Gillotti continued, stating there is a separate rehabilitation program which does received some funds. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority has the MI Neighborhood Program that has allowed for some new construction and some rehabilitations. Ms. Gillotti stated she is not involved in making the decisions for rehabilitation candidates; however, she believes the GCLBA prioritizes homes that are easier to rehabilitate and resell. Commissioner Surface asked how the neighborhood factors into the decision-making process for selecting homes for rehabilitation. Ms. Gillotti stated she does not know but can get an answer back to the HDC at a later date.

Commissioner Farah asked if the Civic Park neighborhood association had been made aware of the plans for demolition. Teresa stated Carma was not present tonight, but she believes that Carma attempted to reach out to the neighborhood association but was unable to get in contact. Commissioner Davis stated the neighborhood association was not contacted.

Case No.:	<i>HDC 25-11 (NtP)</i>
Applicant:	<i>Teresa Gillotti of the Genesee County Land Bank Authority</i>
Property Owner:	<i>The Genesee County Land Bank Authority</i>
Location:	<i>2409 Humboldt Ave. (PID # 40-02-401-025)</i>
Request:	<i>Demolition of structure.</i>

Ms. Gillotti spoke on this request. She stated this structure has not burned but the front porch has collapsed, the roof is collapsing, and there are holes in the siding. Mr. Monk stated pieces of the roof are missing which has allowed water to leak into the house and deteriorate the foundation. Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked if these houses were all acquired by the GCLBA around 2011 to 2012. Ms. Gillotti responded that some were acquired between 2011 through to 2018. Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked if this was a slate roof. Mr. Monk answered that he believes it is. Commissioner Farah said she would be interested in hearing from the Civic Park neighborhood association about demolishing homes like this which have not sustained significant fire damage. Commissioner Farah also posed an open question whether the HDC's current tasks with the State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") would give more information that would be relevant to reviews like this. Max stated they reached out to SHPO staff following the previous meeting with questions that were raised; however, they have not yet received a response.

Commissioner Davis asked if these homes are contributing structures, noting that as more and more structures are removed the district's integrity is weakened. Max responded that a resource survey would be needed to determine the integrity of the Civic Park district. Commissioner Surface said it was his understanding that a district can retain its

integrity even if only 1% of the original structures remained, though this is if infill in keeping with the district's period of significance is also in place. Commissioner Hurley responded that the condition of a structure could have an impact on whether that structure is contributing. Commissioner Surface stated he believes that the condition is not usually a justification in and of itself to warrant demolition. He noted that it appears that the structures have deteriorated over time after coming into the possession of the GCLBA. He continued by saying the rebuild cost is a tough consideration as well because it is very hard to sell a new house for the cost of building the house. Commissioner Surface said the minimum standard he is looking for is that the reason or need for demolition is not due to a self-created problem and that the GCLBA has made every possible effort to offload the structure in a way that favors restoration before demolition.

Commissioner Davis asked if her husband, Maurice Davis, could speak as a member of the Historic Civic Park Preservation Association. Max stated they believe the Commissioners may ask him specific questions. Joshua Cambri, the Assistant City Attorney liaison to the HDC, asked Mr. Davis if he could speak directly about the property being reviewed. Mr. Davis responded yes. Mr. Cambri stated it might be appropriate for him to speak about this property. Mr. Davis began speaking by stating he was formerly on the HDC. Max said it would be appropriate for the Commissioners to ask Mr. Davis direct questions. Mr. Davis continued saying the local historic district was shrunk around the Haskell Center Civic Park School. Mr. Davis expressed concerns about demolition and asked if the remaining local district will stay protected by the HDC after further demolitions occur. Max stated that as a staff member it is not appropriate for them to directly answer questions from the audience. Commissioner Surface responded that he guesses that because structures are individually designated there might be a pathway for some type of protection. Max added to Commissioner Surface's response, stating Civic Park has local, State, and Federal boundaries, and the State boundaries were reduced in 2013. Max said they have not seen documentation showing the local boundaries were changed. Mr. Davis spoke about seeking funding from SHPO and learning about the shrinking boundaries leaving only the local district protected by the HDC. Mr. Davis spoke about a demolition order that was placed on a property he owns in Civic Park. Commissioner Hurley added that to formally dissolve or reduce a local historic district, a study commission must be formed to gather information and give a recommendation based on the data, similar to creating or expanding a district.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the requested Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-11. The work is not appropriate; however, the resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or the structure's occupants. Commissioner Hurley seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked if he could second a motion as the acting Chair. Max stated they believe he can because of the small size of the Commission. Commissioner Davis said she has visited these properties and they are at the point where they need to be torn down. Commissioner Hurley noted that previously roll call votes had a random order for calling names to prevent any one person from voting first continuously. Max said staff could read the roll call in random order moving forward. Commissioner Hurley expressed his hope that there was a glimmer of hope in these structures. He added that some of these structures were denied for demolition previously and have since deteriorated further. Commissioner Davis spoke about the neighborhood when there were houses lining the streets with residents actively living in them. Over time people moved out, some residents lost their homes, and homes burned down. She said that it is sad to see your neighborhood disappear, but she believes this structure needs to be demolished.

Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, absent
Beverly Davis, yes
Michael Hurley, no
Kurt Neiswender, yes

Stephanie Wright, absent
Samantha Farah, no
Cade Surface, no

***M/S – Davis/Hurley
The motion failed via roll call vote.***

Commissioner Davis asked what the next step is for this property now that it has been voted down. Commissioner Hurley stated the property owner can appeal the decision to SHPO.

Chairwoman Wright joined the meeting at 7:05 PM.

Chairwoman Wright spoke on the difficulties with getting the funding needed to rehabilitate these homes when funding is prioritized to new developments, even if the property can be acquired for next to nothing. She believes a broader discussion needs to be held to come up with a strategy that addresses these neighborhoods. Commissioner Hurley asked if anyone has an expectation this structure will improve moving forward. Commissioner Surface said that is an important question, but he believes it is separate from the vote that was made. Commissioner Surface spoke on the successes in Carriage Town with rehabilitating degraded structures and his belief that Civic Park deserves the same attention. Potential solutions may need to be requested from others locally and from SHPO. He continued by referencing the specific standards that are used to make a decision for demolition and expressed doubts that this structure is beyond saving. Commissioner Davis asked if those projects in Carriage Town were able to receive money through grants or loans. Commissioner Surface said the GCLBA was able to do that.

Max noted that the ordinance requires that a denial from the Commission requires stated reasons for the denial, and a record of the denial is to be transmitted to the applicant. Max suggested that if the Commission intends to deny the request, a motion for denial should be made with the reasoning clearly stated. Commissioner Farah started a motion and asked Commissioner Surface for assistance with the wording. Commissioner Surface suggested additional language for the motion. Commissioner Farah accepted the amendment to her motion.

Commissioner Farah made a motion to deny the requested Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-11 because the structure is contributing to the Civic Park historic district despite its condition and sufficient evidence has not been provided to demonstrate that the demolition is necessary. Commissioner Hurley seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Neiswender asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, absent
Beverly Davis, yes
Michael Hurley, yes
Kurt Neiswender, no

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

M/S – Farah/Hurley
The motion carried via roll call vote.

Vice-Chairman Neiswender indicated that he needed to leave the meeting at 7:18 PM.

Case No.: HDC 25-12 (NtP)
Applicant: Teresa Gillotti of the Genesee County Land Bank Authority
Property Owner: The Genesee County Land Bank Authority
Location: 2310 Forest Hill Ave. (PID # 40-02-404-016)
Request: Demolition of structure.

Ms. Gillotti spoke on this request. This is another property that has been before the HDC previously and was rejected for demolition. This structure is standing but has sustained fire damage since that time. Chairwoman Wright recalled this may have been before the HDC three or four years ago. She recalls the HDC did not have detailed rehabilitation cost information or interior pictures to approve a demolition at the time. Commissioner Hurley recalled that the structure appeared intact from the photographs shown in the previous review.

Mr. Monk stated when he first pulled up to this house he believed it was one that could be saved until he saw the interior fire damage. The first-floor joists were damaged significantly and are unsafe. Mr. Monk confirmed the gas, water, and sewer lines were cut and plugged.

Chairwoman Wright made a motion to approve a Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-12. The work is not appropriate; however, the resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or the structure's occupants. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Wright asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, absent	Stephanie Wright, yes
Beverly Davis, yes	Samantha Farah, no
Michael Hurley, no	Cade Surface, no
Kurt Neiswender, absent	

M/S – Wright/Davis
The motion failed via roll call vote.

Commissioner Surface made a motion to deny the requested Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-12 because the structure is contributing to the Civic Park historic district despite its condition and sufficient evidence has not been provided to demonstrate that the demolition is necessary. Commissioner Farah seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Wright asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, absent	Stephanie Wright, no
Beverly Davis, yes	Samantha Farah, yes
Michael Hurley, yes	Cade Surface, yes
Kurt Neiswender, absent	

M/S – Surface/Farah
The motion carried via roll call vote.

Commissioner Hurley asked procedurally why two motions are made rather than one larger motion. Max stated it is easier for staff to record the motions in the minutes and keep the reasoning for the motions clear. Mr. Cambri clarified Max's reasoning that when a motion fails that particular motion has been denied but does not necessarily mean the application has been denied outright. Additionally, to comply with the ordinance requirement to provide a reason for denial the dedicated denial motion is clearer. Commissioner Hurley expressed confusion as to why the demolition requests are following the process of receiving a failed approval vote prior to a denial vote. Commissioner Farah stated she believes the Commission could begin with a vote to deny given reasoning instead of beginning with an approval motion. Max added that when a vote to approve fails there is still an opportunity for another motion for approval to succeed. While a failed approval motion could be considered indefinitely tabling the request, the reasons given for approving the request may not align with the reasons given for denying the request. Commissioner Davis stated that the commissioners can begin with a motion to deny if that is their intended decision instead of beginning with a motion to approve.

Case No.: HDC 25-13 (NtP)
Applicant: Teresa Gillotti of the Genesee County Land Bank Authority
Property Owner: The Genesee County Land Bank Authority
Location: 2406 Forest Hill Ave. (PID # 40-02-404-008)
Request: Demolition of structure.

Ms. Gillotti spoke on this request. She stated like the other properties this structure has a cracking foundation and siding issues. Commissioner Davis stated she visited this structure and did not see any major issues. Chairwoman Wright read a letter from a neighbor to this property, Christopher Roth of 2402 Forest Hill Ave., in support of the requested demolition. Mr. Roth noted in his letter that the property was unaddressed by the owner after it sustained fire damage.

Mr. Monk stated there was a significant amount of water in the basement which has now crumbled the basement floor. Mr. Monk stated someone must have plugged the drain because several feet of water sat in the basement long enough to freeze and unfreeze multiple times. There was also a minor fire in the structure.

Commissioner Surface made a motion to deny the requested Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-13 because the structure is contributing to the Civic Park historic district despite its condition and sufficient evidence has not been provided to demonstrate that the demolition is necessary. Commissioner Farah seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Wright asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

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

Stephanie Wright, no
Samantha Farah, yes
Cade Surface, yes

M/S – Surface/Farah
The motion carried via roll call vote.

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Case No.: HDC 25-14 (NtP)
Applicant: Teresa Gillotti of the Genesee County Land Bank Authority
Property Owner: The Genesee County Land Bank Authority
Location: 2338 Delmar Ave. (PID # 40-02-403-012)
Request: Demolition of structure.

Ms. Gillotti spoke on this request. She recalled the ICF International survey conducted around 2012 which evaluated the historic integrity of structures in Civic Park. She stated the study listed this structure as noncontributing. The GCLBA received the property in 2011. Chairwoman Wright noted what looked like water intrusion and a portion of the roof coming off in the pictures. Commissioner Surface asked if there was reasoning given for the classification in the ICF report. Ms. Gillotti said she only saw the summary information. Commissioner Farah asked if the classification was made based on deterioration, the physical structure, or another factor. Max replied that they believe the report provided general criteria to determine each classification, but specific reasoning was not provided for individual parcels.

Commissioner Surface made a motion to deny the requested Notice to Proceed for HDC 25-14 because the structure is contributing to the Civic Park historic district despite its condition and sufficient evidence has not been provided to demonstrate that the demolition is necessary. Commissioner Hurley seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Wright asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Megan McAdow, absent	Stephanie Wright, no
Beverly Davis, yes	Samantha Farah, yes
Michael Hurley, yes	Cade Surface, yes
Kurt Neiswender, absent	

M/S – Surface/Hurley
The motion carried via roll call vote.

Chairwoman Wright suggested the GCLBA and the HDC hold a sperate meeting to discuss Civic Park more broadly to understand various approaches to addressing properties with structural issues, as well as the prior activities and information the HDC would like to see when reviewing demolition requests to ensure all reasonable efforts to save the structure have been made. Commissioner Farah expressed her concern in determining what it will take to break the cycle of demolition and said she is interested in meeting with the GCLBA again to have that discussion. Commissioner Surface reiterated his understanding of the standards and the role of the HDC to ensure applications for demolitions are more developed. Commissioner Davis stated her appreciation for everyone in attendance for their time and attention towards Civic Park. She would like to explore any opportunities for the GCLBA to receive funding to stabilize these homes, prepare them for someone to purchase, and preserve the historic integrity of Civic Park.

OLD BUSINESS:

Administrative Review Report

Max noted the attached administrative approval of HDC-A 25-03, for vinyl window decals at 130 E. Second St. (PID # 41-18-129-001).

By-Laws Update

Max stated there was no update available for this item.

Certified Local Government Program – SHPO

Max stated they made edits to a draft revision of the local historic districts ordinance and sent them to Hailey at SHPO for review and feedback. Max will bring this to the HDC once feedback has been given noting it aligns with the State's Local Historic Districts Act. Commissioner Hurley asked if the HDC would need to approve the proposed changes. Max responded that the HDC will make a recommendation to City Council as an ordinance update.

Historic Civic Park – Signs Erected w/o HDC Review

Max noted Mr. Cambri was not in the room but stated they did not believe he had an update available. Commissioner Farah asked if notices had gone out. Max responded that most of the signs appear to be on City property which complicates the normal process. Mr. Cambri returned and confirmed he does not have an update for this item at this time but could have it ready for the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Terms and Appointment

Chairwoman Wright asked if the members with expired terms needed to be re-approved by the mayor if they would like to continue. Max stated at this time commissioners with expired terms may continue to serve those terms. Max noted staff received information from two residents interested in serving on the HDC. The mayor's role is to review the information and make an appointment which is voted on by the City Council. Max also noted that the HDC could have up to nine members if the ordinance is updated to allow it.

Commissioner Surface asked about the current enforcement procedure for properties in a historic district and what can be done to prevent issues from occurring rather than reacting to them. Max explained the enforcement process. Zoning staff will inspect a property following a reported violation. If a violation is present staff will collect evidence and send a violation notice letter to the property owner with a timeline and set of necessary actions to be completed. Commissioner Surface asked what would happen if an issue were not resolved. Max stated that depending on the specific property and circumstance, staff may send a second letter or work with Building & Safety Inspections to issue a ticket. Chairwoman Wright asked who absorbs the fine if the owner no one appears in court for the ticket. Max stated the tickets are issued to the property owner.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Wright/Hurley

The motion carried via voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.