

Heritage Preservation Commission
April 14th, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers – City Hall

Call to Order and Roll Call

President Jess McCullough called to order the meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 12:03 p.m. on Monday, April 14th, 2025.

Attendance:

Attending: Ken Buehler, Kathleen Cargill, John Hest, Jess McCullough, and Kal Randa

Absent: Chris Adatte

Staff Present: Chris Lee and Sam Smith

Consideration of Minutes

Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting – January 13th, 2025 –

MOTION/Second: McCullough/Buehler approved

VOTE: (5-0)

Consideration of Matters Regarding Commission Action

N/A

Other Business/Presentations

Bardon's Peak Sign Language – Duncan Schwensohn, PE, City of Duluth

Commissioners: President McCullough gave a brief overview of this project to the new commissioners. The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) has been working with the Indigenous Commission (IC) on new language for the sign over at Bardon's Peak. HPC members want to make sure the proposed language is reflective of the entire history of the area. Communication between the two commissions had gone through city staff throughout this process.

Staff: Chris Lee stated that the IC members were given a sample of the work HPC members and city staff had compiled for review. Their commission has not had a quorum for the past few months, so they have not been able to make any final decisions.

They have reviewed some of the proposed languages, and they were looking to finalize things this month. Staff will work on getting the plaque together after the IC meets in the next couple of weeks. Any updates will be provided to HPC members as they come in.

Commissioners: Commissioner Cargill asked staff what the sign will say.

Staff: Lee responded that the language on the plaque will address some of the history of the area, including the importance of that area from the perspective of the local indigenous population. Lee offered to provide more details of the plaque language to commissioners after the meeting.

Commissioners: McCullough added that there is a report from the city website, and some of the proposed language for the sign was pulled from that report. Further discussion ensued amongst the commissioners regarding different indigenous language options, editing, and timeline for this project.

2021 Draft Historic District Design Guidelines

Staff: HPC considered the item of the Duluth Commercial Historic District Draft Guidelines. Chris Lee shared that the guidelines were designed for buildings within the downtown historic district. Since the district is on the national registry they cannot be officially adopted as part of the UDC but are on the web site as helpful guidelines for anyone to access. There was general discussion about whether any new local designations may come forward and Lee said that nominations to the local registry happen every couple of years. Lee informed the commissioners that with the demolition of the Pastoret Terrace and Kozy building there are funds set aside to help downtown businesses specifically in the historic district with repairs, renovations, and rehabilitation projects in the form possible grants or loans that will be available for revitalizing some of the historic district areas of downtown. If historic buildings have a preservation plan tied to them, this will become part of HPC review as part of the historic demolition construction permits. They are not on the city website yet, but staff will share them with commissioners when they are posted.

Commissioner Buehler Proposal

Commissioners: Buehler proposed the idea of moving an HPC meeting from the regular noon time to 4pm or 5pm at the St. Louis County Depot. This event would start with a public meeting, followed by a tour, and end with a reception. He would like to show the other commissioners about some of the things that have been happening in his realm and host a reception as an opportunity for the commissioners to get to know each other better.

Staff: Lee stated that this event would be noticed as a special meeting as it would be outside the normal meeting time. There will be no formal business to be discussed, but the tour would constitute as part of the business for that meeting. Staff will need some potential meeting dates for publishing purposes.

New Commissioner Welcome: Kathleen Cargill and John Hest.

Commissioners Cargill and Hest introduced themselves and each gave a brief synopsis of their careers and backgrounds as it relates to the HPC. The rest of the commissioners also gave brief summaries on themselves and welcomed the newcomers to the group.

Communications

Commissioners: Cargill asked staff if HPC commissioners receive notice for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) annual conference.

Staff: Lee responded that staff are invited to attend that meeting, but registration has not opened yet. He will look into HPC members attending that meeting as well, and will share more details as they become available.

Report of Final Disposition of Matters Previously Before the Commission

N/A

Reports of Officers, Staff and Committees

PC Liaison Update – Lee stated that there was a planning commission meeting last week on April 8th. Most of the agenda consisted of interim use permits for vacation dwelling units. The application for a temporary outdoor living space at Vineyard Church for the Safe Bay program was tabled until the May meeting.

There will be an application for an interim use permit for a laundromat and multifamily dwelling (adaptive reuse) at 2403 W 6th St coming forward at the May meeting. The subject building is also known as the Belanger Building. HPC commissioners are welcome to submit comments on the item or attend the meeting. Lee will provide updates as the project progresses.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully,

Jenn Moses – Manager
Planning and Development Division