

**VILLAGE OF THIENSVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

DATE: Tuesday, June 22, 2021

LOCATION: 250 Elm Street
Thiensville, WI

TIME: 6:00 PM

Fire Department Training Room

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Abraham called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Chair:	Jennifer Abraham	
Commissioners:	Angelina Apostolos	Ronald Heinritz
	Philip Eckert	Nathan Matson
	Mary Giuliani	Joseph Miller
Attorney:	Tim Schoonenberg	
Director of Community		
Services/Public Works:	Andy LaFond	

III. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

- A.** Angelina Apostolos, Philip Eckert and Nathan Matson, Appointed to the Historic Preservation Commission by the Village Board

Chair Abraham recognized the new members of the Commission and thanked them for getting involved in the community.

IV. UPDATE REGARDING ORDINANCE 2021-02 AND PRESENTATION FROM ATTORNEY SCHOONENBERG REGARDING CHARGE OF HPC

Chair Abraham noted that discussions over the past few months resulted in an update to the Village Ordinance related to the Historic Preservation District which was approved by the Village Board on June 21, 2021. Village Attorney Tim Schoonenberg is in attendance to outline those changes.

Attorney Schoonenberg shared that there are several areas affected by the Ordinance changes. The Village Board approved the appointment of two Village Trustees to serve on the Historic Preservation Commission. The Village Board will also appoint the Chair and will need to be confirmed with a two-thirds vote of the Village Board.

The change in Section 2 addresses the concept where Village staff can approve routine applications. This is on the agenda tonight. These routine requests can only be approved pursuant to the policy the Commission adopts.

Another change clarifies that the Code is written in a way that the Historic Preservation Commission only has the power to approve or deny Certificate of Appropriateness applications. In the past, there have been conditional approvals. What should occur is a denial with reasons for the denial and then allowing the applicant to return. This gives the applicant the option to appeal to the Village Board or to come back and re-apply to the Historic Preservation Commission.

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Chair Abraham noted that screening provided by Director LaFond and the Commission's guidelines will allow applicants to be more prepared.

Commissioner Heinritz noted stipulations usually occurred because the applicant was not prepared. The stipulations were not put on arbitrarily; they always were agreed upon by the applicant and the Commission. Attorney Schoonenberg noted he remembers answering questions where there was a stipulation and the applicant wanted to appeal it; there was nothing in the Code to allow an applicant to appeal a decision by the Commission.

V. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Open to any resident or taxpayer on items not subject to a public hearing: Please be advised per §19.84(2), information will be received from the public. Village policy limits a three (3) minute time period per person, with time extension by the presiding official's discretion or a vote of 2/3 of the Board or Committee; be further advised that there may be limited discussion on the information received, however, no action will be taken under public comments. Written comments on agenda items are encouraged to be sent and addressed to the intended body by noon on the day of the meeting. Comments received timely will be forwarded to all members of the body. If you wish to speak, you **must** pre-register by emailing the Village Clerk at alanglois@village.thiensville.wi.us by 4:00 PM on the day of the meeting or by signing in immediately prior to the meeting.

Chair Abraham noted that the area for Citizens to be Heard has been adopted by the Village Board. Public comment now will be taken during this period.

Bob Blazich, 627 Lake Bluff Road - Mr. Blazich shared that he has lived in the Village for about 45 years, is President of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society and was a member of the Historic Preservation Commission for at least 10 years. Mr. Blazich welcomed the new members of the Commission and thanked Ron Heinritz for his many years of service as steward of the Village's three Historic Districts. Mr. Blazich is very concerned with the actions being reviewed at this evening's meeting. In his opinion, the Commission is becoming irrelevant and more work is being piled on Village staff. By his reading, the Commission would only be activated if property owners want to paint unpainted surfaces or install raw aluminum or vinyl windows or doors and recommended that the wording be changed to - raw aluminum shall be referred to the Commission for approval. In addition, Mr. Blazich believes demolition needs to be retained in the Commission's duties. Mr. Blazich stated the stewardship of the Village's Historic District is not a cold, bureaucratic activity - it is an art that requires a deep appreciation of the unique and historic character of each element within the Village's Historic Districts.

VI. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- A. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 6, 2021 at 6:00 PM

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. February 2, 2021

MOTION by Commissioner Miller, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Heinritz to approve the February 2, 2021, Minutes. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. BUSINESS

- A. Review and action regarding Certificate of Appropriateness, Painting Bricks on Building White, New Windows with Grids, Wood or Faux Wood Over Planter Boxes, New Lighting, Painting Trim Gray and New Awning, Becker Design, Neil and Amy Becker, 137 Green Bay Road (Approved Conditionally at Plan Commission on June 8, 2021 Contingent on HPC Approval.)

Chair Abraham noted that the Plan Commission approved this project on June 8, 2021 contingent on approval by the Historic Preservation Commission due to Plan Commission meeting prior to the Historic Preservation Commission this month.

Neil and Amy Becker, owners of Becker Design, were in attendance. Plans include erecting a metal awning. This will not exceed the size of the existing awning. Plans also call for painting stone and putting wood on the planter boxes. The horizontal wood planters complement the 1950s-era building.

Chair Abraham noted that this is an interesting building. It is in the Historic District, but the Commission's definition of historic is customarily the first building or first thing that was there. A key element is how this fits into the neighborhood. One comment that repeatedly has been brought up is discouraging people from painting natural brick. Ms. Becker said much of the brick on the building is now painted peach. There is no sign for the business on the front of the building because they would like to update the exterior first. Plans call for a subtle metal sign. Chair Abraham asked about the type of faux wood material that might be used. The wood is not painted, but the material is the same color all the way though. Mr. Becker noted that it will be easier than real wood to maintain.

Commissioner Heinritz noted that the building was built in the 1950s with no thought at the time to conforming with other buildings in the Historic District. The stone on the building is not found anywhere else in the Village. Commissioner Heinritz has no objection to painting it, likes the design and is supportive of the use of faux wood for the flower boxes. While it is not necessarily historic, Commissioner Heinritz finds the proposed design very attractive.

Commissioner Miller added the design will be a big improvement, both in terms of the design and the colors. Commissioners Giuliani, Matson and Apostolos support the proposed updates. Commissioner Apostolos inquired about the shade of white. Mr. Becker is considering a soft shade of white.

MOTION by Commissioner Heinritz, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Giuliani to approve Certificate of Appropriateness, Painting Bricks on Building White, New Windows with Grids, Wood or Faux Wood Over Planter Boxes, New Lighting, Painting Trim Gray and New Awning, Becker Design, Neil and Amy Becker, 137 Green Bay Road. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- B. Review and action regarding Certificate of Appropriateness, Re-Roof Main Building and Garage, Same Color and Shingle that is Currently on the Building, Greg Mueller Upholstery, Greg Mueller, 121 South Main Street.

Mr. Mueller was not present. Chair Abraham noted that other Village bodies require the applicant to attend the meeting at which an item is considered; Historic Preservation has not in the past. Director LaFond added that the work already has been completed on this project. Commissioner Heinritz does not believe applicants should have to appear for routine maintenance items. Chair Abraham noted that this particular situation might be handled at the staff level in the future. Commissioner Giuliani inquired if expiration dates will be put on Certificates of Appropriateness; they have not in the past. Chair Abraham suggested the Certificate be valid for a year after the final step in the Village approval process. Director LaFond suggested this policy be considered at the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

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MOTION by Commissioner Heinritz, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Apostolos to approve Certificate of Appropriateness, Re-Roof Main Building and Garage, Same Color and Shingle that is Currently on the Building, Greg Mueller Upholstery, Greg Mueller, 121 South Main Street. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- C. Review and action regarding Certificate of Appropriateness, Tuck Pointing/Brick Repair, Bricks to Match Existing Bricks as Much as Possible, Old Thiensville Landmark, Van Mobley, 136 Green Bay Road

Van Mobley, owner of the Old Thiensville Landmark at 136 Green Bay Road was in attendance. The original Thiensville State Bank Building was built in 1910 and Mr. Mobley has completed a number of improvement projects on the building. This year's project is tuck pointing and brick repair. Two estimates from different contractors have been obtained. The contractors have different opinions on the amount of work that is necessary. The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for either and will decide which option to pursue. Both contractors are very reputable and come highly recommended. The bricks will blend in with the original bricks.

MOTION by Commissioner Heinritz, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Giuliani to approve Certificate of Appropriateness, Tuck Pointing/Brick Repair, Bricks to Match Existing Bricks as Much as Possible, Old Thiensville Landmark, Van Mobley, 136 Green Bay Road. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- D. Review and action regarding Certificate of Appropriateness, Complete Replacement of Building Roof and Painting of Wood Surfaces, Thiensville Homeowner's Association (TVHOA), Condo Association, Clyde Bingman, Treasurer, 208-234 Elm Street

Clyde Bingman was in attendance representing the TVHOA Condo Association. Initially, there was a 20-year plan to replace all of the roofs on the Elm Street condominiums. The roofs have deteriorated to the point where there are serious leaks in some of the condos and soft spots in some of the roofs. Kingdom Contracting provided a very favorable bid. They will use a shingle that is nearly identical to what is on the roofs now. A contractor also has been lined up to replace wood surfaces on the buildings that also have started to deteriorate. This is about five years sooner than was anticipated for this work, but the end result will be an upgrade to the appearance of the buildings and the safety of the units. Samples of the shingle were available for Commissioners to examine. The paint color will be identical to the existing paint, and work is scheduled to begin next week.

Chair Abraham commended the condo association for the upkeep it has undertaken. Director LaFond noted he and Mr. Bingman have discussed the placement of dumpsters while the work is underway. Mr. Bingman noted the contractor is using a wagon-style dumpster so materials will be removed from the site on a daily basis. It is anticipated the work will take 10 days.

MOTION by Commissioner Miller, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Heinritz to approve Certificate of Appropriateness, Complete Replacement of Building Roof and Painting of Wood Surfaces, Thiensville Homeowner's Association (TVHOA), Condo Association, Clyde Bingman, Treasurer, 208-234 Elm Street. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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E. Review Sample Guidelines and Discuss the Process of Developing Guidelines for Village Staff Approval Process

Chair Abraham noted that all Commission members received materials related to historic preservation in Thiensville and several other Wisconsin communities.

Chair Abraham asked Director LaFond to address the proposed changes in the Historic Preservation guidelines. Director LaFond noted that when changes are drafted, only the portion that is changing is included. The proposal is in addition to 18 pages of guidelines that already exist.

Chair Abraham noted it is important for Commissioners to understand what Director LaFond will do at the staff level and what the Historic Preservation Commission is tasked with. The purpose of having Director LaFond involved in the approval process is that the Commission will not need to approve things that are intuitively obvious. This is not meant to replace what the Commission does; it is meant to make things more efficient for applicants.

Director LaFond noted the Village adopted a similar policy for the Plan Commission. For instance, a fence that conforms to Village Code can be approved at the staff level rather than make the applicant apply, wait a month and then attend a meeting. At the Plan Commission level, this has increased customer satisfaction and compliance with the Code. The Village would still issue a Certificate of Appropriateness and it would be included in the annual report to the Wisconsin Historical Society. With Plan Commission, anything that becomes somewhat unordinary, the Village Planner will refer it to the Plan Commission. The simple approvals go to the Plan Commission under Staff Reports - members are made aware of the project and the action taken.

Director LaFond added that oftentimes property owners who have been in the District for a while undertake a project and ask for forgiveness rather than permission. Members of the Commission get frustrated that work has been completed. Chair Abraham noted there is limited recourse when activity occurs before a project is approved.

The Plan Commission sometimes will conduct a consultation with an applicant. This has occurred a few times with the Historic Preservation Commission. Someone with a larger project can present their project to the Commission so they have a clear idea of what is allowed.

Chair Abraham noted that she believes the Commission should remain more involved with signage applications. Commissioner Heinritz added the signage in the Historic District is very good. The Village Sign Code does refer to the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission can require signs to be smaller but cannot approve signs to be larger than the Code allows. Commissioner Heinritz strongly believes the Commission should stay involved with signage in the Historic District.

Commissioner Heinritz noted he also would like to retain control over painting. Chair Abraham stated that if a property owner is repainting the same color, this is something that could be handled at staff level and then reported to the Commission. Commissioner Matson inquired if there ever had been issues when someone came before the Commission wanting to repaint their building the same color. Certificates of Appropriateness are required for repainting the same color. Commissioner Eckert, who owns a business in the Historic District, noted that staff review for painting the same color makes sense and changing the color should go before the Commission.

Chair Abraham summarized that the majority of Commissioners are in favor of allowing staff approval if the owner of a historic building wants to repaint the same color - otherwise it should come before the Commission. Commissioner Heinritz added that the Commission can provide guidance about completing work in a historically acceptable manner.

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Chair Abraham inquired about the policy regarding siding. Director LaFond indicated that proposals could be either approved at the staff level or come before the Commission.

Chair Abraham asked if there were other projects that Commissioners believe were appropriate for staff review. Commissioner Heinritz added that if work needed to happen before an upcoming meeting due to contractor availability, this could be approved at the staff level and added that if time allowed he would like to see such items reviewed by the Commission.

Commissioner Giuliani questioned if items approved by staff would be reported to the Commission. Director LaFond noted they would. Chair Abraham added the process will be similar to the Staff Report that is on every Plan Commission agenda.

Director LaFond will make the changes that were discussed and present updated staff approval guidelines at the next meeting.

Chair Abraham suggested that once the design guidelines are completed that they be sent to every property owner in the Historic District. Director LaFond also suggested sending the approved guidelines to property owners as well and that noted that different guidelines could apply to Main Street and others to Green Bay Road.

Chair Abraham would like the main focus of the next meeting to be continuing the discussion about the proposed Ordinance change and the design guidelines.

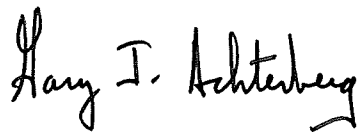
IX. STAFF REPORT

No report.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Commissioner Giuliani, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Heinritz to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 PM.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Prepared by,



Gary Achterberg
Administrative Assistant

Submitted by,



Amy L. Langlois
Village Clerk/Deputy Treasurer