



MICHIGAN CITY

INDIANA

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Monday, August 25th, 2025 – 6:00 P.M. (LOCAL TIME)

Common Council Chambers City Hall, 100 East Michigan Boulevard

- M I N U T E S -

- **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dalton at 6:02 pm.
- **ROLL CALL** by Ms. Wendy Vachet (Director of Public Works, non voting):
 - Present were Ms. Joyce Dalton, Mr. William Espar, Ms. Sheree Wilson, Mr. Lawrence Zimmer, Ms. Pat Matsey, Ms. Amy Bowman (late), Ms. Rose Tejeda, Ms. Deb Parcell (Indiana Landmarks Advisor, non-voting), and Mr. Steve Hale (Legal Advisor, non-voting).
 - Not present were Ms. Dee Haddad and Mr. Greg Coulter (City Council Liaison, non-voting).
- **APPROVAL OF TODAY'S AGENDA:** Ms. Matsey made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Hurt seconded, and all present members voted in favor of the motion.
- **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR JULY:**
 - Mr. Hale suggested corrections to the minutes. On page 1, item 4, "agenda" should be changed to "minutes." On page 3, in the fifth bullet under the paragraph beginning "Mr. Zimmer asked...", the reference should be "left" rather than "middle." On page 4, under New Business, the first line should reflect the correct spelling of Ms. Wilson's first name.
 - Mr. Espar made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Hurt seconded, and all members present voted in favor.
- **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:** Read by Ms. Matsey
- **CORRESPONDENCE:** None
- **CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA):**

- COA #2025-035 – 714 Pine St. – Porch, roof, and balcony repair
- Ms. Bowman arrived. Ms. Parcell stated that the applicant proposes to replace the first-floor porch railing, repair the roof over the first-floor porch, and restore the second-story porch. The owner proposes a new railing system designed to reflect the period in which the house was built, sourcing spindles and handrails to match the originals. Porch beams and pillars will be retained and repaired. The porch roofing material will be replaced with metal due to the low slope. Built-in gutters will be replaced with conventional gutters. Deteriorated wood porch materials will be replaced.
- Ms. Parcell stated the Finding of Fact: Deteriorated porch materials should be repaired or replaced. Replacement spindles should be of similar size and design. Composite materials may be considered if paintable with a non-shiny finish. A metal porch roof would be minimally visible from the street and should be standing- or flat-seam.
- Ms. Parcell reported that she met with the applicant and Sue Downs (Building Commissioner) the previous week regarding the first-floor porch railing. Ms. Parcell reported that Ms. Downs agreed the first-floor railing may be repaired and retained, while the second-floor railing must be replaced to meet code. However, two deck railing sections must be replaced with similar materials.
- Regarding the second-floor porch, Ms. Parcell explained that it is deteriorated, and Ms. Downs agreed that if the replacement railing is built to code, the existing first-floor railing sections may remain.
- The applicant selected replacement materials that were approved by Ms. Parcell and are included on the pre-approved list. Ms. Parcell noted that when she prepared her staff report recommending a 30-day extension to obtain specific design and, she did not yet have the materials selections. Now that she has them, she recommended the Commission either vote to approve the specific materials or vote to allow final staff approval.
- Mr. Zimmer asked what is meant by “similar” materials, expressing concern that someone might choose a style inconsistent with the time period. Ms. Parcell responded that the submitted materials are appropriate, with the exception of the Fypon product, which she recommended against. Mr. Zimmer emphasized the importance of selecting a railing consistent with the period and style of the house.
- Ms. Tejeda inquired about the roofing material for the second-floor porch, asking whether standing-seam or flat-seam metal had been chosen. The applicant explained that they plan to use TPO membrane roofing, which replicates the functionality and structure of the existing roof. The applicant confirmed the material is black rubber, not metal.

- Ms. Wilson asked who the contractor would be. The applicant responded that Mitch Mickus Builders would handle the construction, and Moore Construction would complete the roofing.
 - Ms. Vachet recommended supporting Ms. Parcell's request to allow final approval of the materials by staff.
 - Ms. Wilson made a motion to approve COA #2025-035 – 714 Pine St., as presented, subject to final spindle approval by Ms. Parcell as to material and style (both floors), and on the height for the second floor. Mr. Zimmer seconded, and all members present voted in favor.
 - Mr. Hale requested that a roll call vote be conducted for all future COAs.
 - Ms. Dalton conducted a roll call vote, and all members present voted aye. The motion carried 8–0.
- **MAINTINENCE REVIEW**
 - COA #2025-031 - 309 E. 6th St – Roof repair
 - COA #2025-032 1012 W. 7th St. – Roof replacement
 - COA #2025-033 – 519 Washington – Deck, fence and parking pad
 - COA #2025-034 – 218 E. 8th St. – Reroof
 - COA #2025-036 – 1016 Wabash – Reroof
 - COA #2025-023 - 507 E. 10 St. – Reroof
 - Ms. Vachet noted for the record that staff approved roof repairs earlier at 909 Franklin and 718–26 Franklin, both due to storm damage.
 - Mr. Hale recommended a roll call vote be conducted. Ms. Dalton then called for a roll call vote to approve the maintenance report read by Ms. Vachet. All members present voted in favor, 8–0.
 - Mr. Zimmer asked whether applicants are required to present color choices to staff when requesting roof replacements. Ms. Vachet explained that she reviews materials and colors in accordance with Ms. Parcell's guidance. Ms. Parcell clarified that the guidelines focus on roofing materials rather than color for asphalt shingles, but colors are considered when metal roofing is proposed. She added that if the Commission wishes to establish a pre-approved color list, that could be done. Mr. Zimmer expressed concern about avoiding black roofing.
 - Ms. Wilson commented that, given the wide range of building inventory, black might be acceptable in certain situations. Ms. Parcell agreed, noting that if a roof is not visible from the street, color is not a significant concern.
 - Ms. Vachet stated that the Commission will continue reviewing the design guidelines in more detail at a later meeting and will add this issue to the list for consideration.

- **COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Ms. Vachet suggested that the commission consider forming an ad hoc committee, and possibly a communications and outreach committee, to further discuss how we want to use the website and other communication tools.
- **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - **Paint Workshop:** Ms. Dalton announced that the paint workshop is scheduled for October 11th, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Michigan City Police Station community room.
 - Ms. Parcell asked if a price had been set. Ms. Dalton replied that \$5 was previously suggested, payable via Eventbrite or at the door.
 - Ms. Tejeda asked if the workshop was for the public or the commission. Ms. Dalton clarified that it is open to the public.
 - Ms. Matsey made a motion to set the price at \$5. Ms. Wilson seconded, and Ms. Dalton conducted a roll call. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0.
 - The commission agreed to have Ms. Galante create the flyer.
 - **GIS Analysis:** Ms. Vachet reported that some property ratings have changed since the national register nominations.
 - Ms. Parcell noted that the state recommends surveys for Certified Local Governments every 5–10 years, and the national register survey is now over 10 years old.
 - Ms. Parcell stated she would begin surveying, documenting the reasons for each rating to provide justification if challenged. She suggested that a part-time staff person could help format the survey according to city needs.
 - Ms. Wilson asked what rating would be given to new construction that reflects the historic period. Ms. Parcell explained that while there could be contributing new construction, it is uncommon.
 - **List of Contractors:** Ms. Vachet emphasized the need for a published list of contractors.
 - She asked Ms. Parcell to prepare a list, clarifying that while the city cannot promote specific contractors, the list would serve to identify those who are qualified and licensed with the city.
 - **Meeting Dates & COA Updates:** Ms. Vachet noted that an updated COA application and additional information on the COA review process and statement of purpose are now available on the website.
 - Ms. Vachet added that several meeting dates for the remainder of the year currently fall on holiday weeks and will be adjusted internally.

- Mr. Zimmer asked if website updates would include the contractor list and additional resources. Ms. Vachet confirmed they would and welcomed suggestions, provided they align with design guidelines.
 - Mr. Hale pointed out that the September meeting date listed as Tuesday, September 23rd was listed on the application. Ms. Vachet clarified that this came from an old COA application. She asked Ms. Galante to update and reschedule the meeting dates for adoption at the next commission meeting
- Work session with UEA and RDC: Ms. Vachet noted significant overlap between the Historic Districts, UEA, and RDC and plans to explore this further before presenting recommendations to the commission.
 - Ms. Tejeda asked about the purpose of the proposed work session. Ms. Vachet explained that it would help define roles, identify areas of overlap, and understand the impact between groups. She added that UEA provides grants for home repairs, some of which fall within the historic district.
- Letter to RDC
 - Ms. Vachet reported that the commission has not yet received a formal response from the RDC and will follow up.
- 813 Franklin Building (Old Hokkaido)
 - Ms. Vachet provided an update that the owners are still selecting a replacement door. The chosen design will require staff approval and then be sent to Deb for her input.
- **NEW BUSINESS**
 - Ms. Vachet thanked Mr. Granquist for his service on the board and welcomed two new commission members, Ms. Wilson and Ms. Tejeda.
 - Fee Implementation: Ms. Vachet announced that beginning September 2nd, the historic COA application fee will be implemented.
 - This information will also be posted on the website.
 - The fee has already been approved by City Council.
 - Design Guidelines Review: Staff is reviewing the guidelines, correcting broken links, and making edits.
 - Ms. Vachet noted that updates will continue and invited the commission to suggest additional content, such as guidance on paint colors or other topics they feel should be included.
 - 817 Washington; Ms. Vachet highlighted a strong application for a property purchase and historic restoration project at 817 Washington.

- The applicant has previously explored other properties in the city and prepared a complete COA application, which was reviewed with Deb during a pre-consultation.
- Ms. Vachet noted that this serves as a strong example of how applications could be prepared in the future and called it a positive change of pace.


- **COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMENT**

- Ms. Vachet emphasized the importance of prioritizing safety in all discussions. She noted that the building code is set at the state level and stated she will not support anything that compromises safety, including window requirements. She referenced the back-and-forth regarding 631 Spring Street, which ultimately had a positive outcome, but stressed that emergency egress windows are essential to ensure residents can safely exit their apartments. She concluded that while aesthetics are important, they should never take precedence over safety.

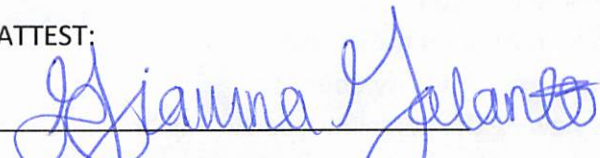
- **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

- **ADJOURNMENT:** Ms. Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Bowman seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor.


Joyce Dalton (Chairwoman)

ATTEST:


Gianna Galante (Executive Assistant/HPC Liaison)