



CITY OF THE VILLAGE OF CLARKSTON  
**Historic District Commission**  
Art Pappas Village Hall  
375 Depot Road  
Clarkston, MI 48346  
**Minutes Wednesday May 8, 2018 Meeting**

Meeting called to order by C. Johnston at 7:00 P.M.

Present: K. Berry, C. Johnston, J. Meloche, M. Moon  
Absent: R. Sowles.

Agenda approved with change by Johnston that the issue of 117 N Main application for review and approval be changed to general discussion of setback requirements since the applicant or agent for 117 N. Main was not in attendance and they may be making changes to their submitted plan. Item moved to Unfinished Business for discussion only: Motion to approve with amendment by C. Johnston, second by M. Moon; all ayes.

Announcements: Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) annual conference entitled Proactive Preservation is scheduled for May 17 through 19, 2018 in East Lansing, MI.

MHPN Basic Historic District Commission Training Workshop is scheduled for June 4, 2018 in Huntington Woods, MI.

Advanced Historic District Commission Training is planned for later this year.

Public Comments:

- 1) Peggy Pardee (Victorian Green Condominiums): Complaint about disrepair and general disorder of three properties on North Main Street: 180 North Main, 154 North Main and 130 North Main. She believes the poor state of repair reflects poorly on the Village and in one case may even be hazardous. Johnathan Smith, City Manager, offered to inform the City Building Official (Craig Strong) to check for violations of city ordinances. Cory Johnston to review to see if demolition by neglect is applicable since the properties are all in the historic district.
- 2) David Bihl: The purpose of the Commission is preservation of the Clarkston Historic District. To that end the Commission must use the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation; each of the 10 Standards must be met in every case. Guidelines for application of the Standards by Commissioners are derived from the Standards and are expert opinions. If a guideline states an opinion, it may not hold up in court. Therefore, Commissioners need to be careful in applying guidelines.

(Statements made during public comments are those of the speaker and not necessarily that of the commission or governing law until action is taken by the commission or other governing agency.)

Approval of the Minutes for the May 2, 2018 meeting: Motion to approve by C. Johnston, second by J. Meloche (with spelling correction in 2 locations); all ayes.

New Application for review and approval:

80 North Main Street – Replacement of damaged fence (like for like) and addition of a cedar arbor/trellis at the gate.

Motion to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness by C. Johnston, second by K. Berry with note that the non-historical free standing landscape structure could easily be removed. Ayes: K. Berry, C. Johnston, J. Meloche. Abstaining: M. Moon.

Unfinished Business for Discussion:

- 1) 117 North Main Street – Waiting for final word from MDOT concerning the curb cut for the proposed driveway. The property owner may ask for a continuance (postponement) of the application depending on MDOT requirements.

The issue of the setbacks from the street was addressed by commissioners (C. Johnston and J. Meloche) and interested parties of the public in attendance.

C. Johnston spoke with Rob McKay at Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concerning setbacks for infill in historic districts. Campbell could not comment on a specific issue before an HDC but offered some governing principles:

- a) Is there an exact character established (e.g., row houses)?
- b) If there is a hierarchy of setbacks, then this must be respected.
- c) Setbacks may change over time due to differing use.
- d) The HDC does not have the power to dictate a setback.
- e) An overall test is that if you were walking by, would the setback difference appear objectionable?

J. Meloche separately spoke with R. McKay obtaining the following information:

- a) Where infill is concerned, rarely is it absolute; very few are formulaic.
- b) One cannot determine new construction setbacks based solely upon existing nearby historic structures.
- c) One may view the range of setbacks within the district and see what can be deduced from that.

Public Comments:

D. Bihl: He and M. Luginski stated that they too talked to Mr. McKay at SHPO and stated that the HDC can rule on the infill setback based on an existing pattern in the HDC.

M. Luginski: Stated that separate areas within the historic district have a certain rhythm. These rhythms must be respected.

- 1) 12 South Main Street – Presentation by architect (Dan of Arch Revival) for Terry Milliken (who was not present) of final changes including:
  - a) Assessment and repair of storefront including removal of paint from existing brick of storefront; it was noted by the Commission that "sandblasting" is forbidden. The architect stated they would use a gentle procedure called media-blasting.
  - b) Original 1 ½ - 2' brick above street level will be maintained with repair or like-for-like replacement of vents.
  - c) Replacement of non-historic storefront windows using Hardi board trim over aluminum (therefore no visible aluminum caps).
  - d) Removal of current awning and restoration of upper non-historic windows and transom.
  - e) Rear construction for second entrance.

Public Comments: D. Bihl noted that if tuck-pointing were necessary, original materials should be used in the interest of longevity.

Vote postponed until special meeting Wednesday May 23.

- 2) 21 North Main Street – Presentation by architect for Terry Milliken (not present) of final changes including:
  - a) Addition of 2 dormers on south side (for additional light). C. Johnston noted this was mixing new construction with restoration. After discussion, the architect agreed to maintain the existing single dormer.
  - b) Removal and reconstruction of the north annex (of unknown vintage) but with hardi board siding instead of originally proposed glass. Handicap accessible entrance here since it is not feasible through central entrance (due to size and weight limitations).
  - c) Non-historic front windows will be changed to match those in 1900 photo of the building.
  - d) The central entrance (not handicap accessible) will be changed to mimic a barn door similar to 1900 photo.

Plans to be re-submitted with noted changes. Vote postponed until special meeting Wednesday May 23.

- 3) The preliminary budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year has \$1000 for the HDC which is greater than the \$500 budgeted in previous years. Johnston has researched the requirements and obtained a cost estimate for study and possible modifications to the historic district records and boundaries. This has been forwarded to the city council for consideration as it is a council action, not the HDC, and recommended by the City Attorney based on current legal challenges to HDC decisions. The Planning Commission is also looking into this.

Motion by C. Johnston to recommend the city budget and pursue a study and survey of the historic district and possible expansion based on any new findings. An estimate of cost from Commonwealth Heritage Group in Dexter, MI was provided for the council's consideration. Second by M. Moon. Motion carried with all ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 10:06 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Moon