



# City of North Tonawanda

## Historic Preservation Commission

City Hall

216 Payne Ave.

North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Regular Meeting May 21, 2018

### Minutes

Present: April Gampp, Jay Soemann, Joe Fonzi, Rae Proefrock, Amber Holycross., Linda Hayes

Absent: Dennis Pasiak

Guest: Austin Tylec, North Tonawanda Alderman at Large

Meeting called to order 6:03pm.

Motion to approve March meeting minutes with the addition of meeting adjourned/spelling error fixed.

1<sup>st</sup> April Gampp

2<sup>nd</sup> Amber Holycross

All in favor

  6   Aye      0   Nay

140 Main St. (The Earth House) – Vinyl banner sign presented that will be mounted with backing and wood trim. The sign will be above the front door, edges lining up with interior edges of windows on second floor, centered below existing pole for old hanging signage. Business owner expressed this signage will be for a 1-3 year period as the business stabilizes after their move from Lockport to North Tonawanda.

Joe discussed new zoning for signage in code update, eventually there will be a size limit in proportion to the building.

Motion to approve sign

1<sup>st</sup> Joe Fonzi    2<sup>nd</sup> Jay Soemann

  6   Aye      0   Nay

Business owner noted that they will be painting the front door a light purple color. Lumber City Development Corporation incentives were explained to the business owner.

Old business discussed

Amber reported on Nathan Taylor communication. He forwarded an e-mail from James, they are waiting for the National Parks Service to release funding pending that money is granted. Rae introduced next steps include deciding who we are hiring for the completion of the first stage, the decision will be made after the amount granted is determined. The goal of the Lumber Baron Historic District was explained to Austin including the tax benefits available for homeowners/landlords. There will be at least 15% credit against an individual's taxes, 35% for landlords. In summary, the tax incentives encourage correct updates and rehabilitation.

Amber reiterated amount estimates for the district proposal: About \$20,000 for the consultant that will include the survey, completion of designation, and filing. Amber went over the hours and amounts presented in the grant application. Rae discussed the need for about \$8,000 for further applications, the need for about \$2-3,000 from the City of North Tonawanda. Louisa/Pinewoods and Bennett Street discussed as possible future designations. Originally these areas were considered with the current proposal but do not fit with the contemporaries of the Lumber Baron District.

Austin raised a question of why historic district designation is important. Kristin offered to provide further information about the economic benefits of preservation. Rae pointed out that there are all benefits to the community and city. Joe noted that the most difficult aspect is the lack of enforcement available with historic standards.

New business discussed

Commission terms discussed. Jay introduced the idea of considering Kristin as an appointment to replace Dennis Pasiak when his term expires. Joe will consult with the city attorney if this is possible. Joe will also ask to be reappointed in July as his term expires later this year. Kristin expressed interest in accepting if it does not interfere with being secretary.

Amber introduced discussion of NYS Preservation local laws. She consulted with Christiana Limniatis of Preservation Buffalo Niagara who recommended that we review our wording. Rae brought up the Secretary of the Interior's standards and concerns that without a rewrite anyone can do anything to their building. Joe would like to keep the standards as guidelines as if any changes were introduced the standards would have to be presented and approved by the city council. Amber asked the question of what are impacts needed? Joe offered the option of amending. April raised the question of if we could depend on the new building code to promote the NYS Model of Local Preservation Law. Amber will ask for information for the next meeting.

Amber introduced the idea of NTHPC on Social Media that would promote local businesses in the historic district, progress, commissioner stories, and promoting general benefits of historic preservation. It is a simple and effective way to engage more of the community. Kristin would be responsible for setting up and maintenance. Joe will check with the city attorney if we need any permissions, as the commission is a representative of the city. Kristin will make a mock up of the

page for the next meeting. Rae suggested more documents relating to historic preservation added to the city website in addition to updating information on the commission.

Dennis Garland, owner of a historic home on Tremont, spoke in support of more information.

Joe raised the issue of certain historic properties falling into disrepair, proposed a warning letter be sent, ensure that code enforcement has made owners aware. Joe identified Tully's building (American Skin Art, 44 Webster St.) to receive a letter for siding and trim problems and Murphy's building for general disrepair. April brought up vinyl signage on display at Reb Apparel (115 Goundry St.) that will also need a letter. Rae noticed that the Vapor Room (70 Webster St.) looks to be in a state of disrepair. Joe will discuss with the city attorney about issuing letters.

Motion to adjourn 7:09pm

1<sup>st</sup> Jay Soemenn      2<sup>nd</sup> Amber Holycross

  6   Aye        0   Nay