

# **Michigan State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes September 22, 2025**

## **Minutes of the State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting**

**Monday, September 22, 2025, 10:00 a.m.**

*Lake Michigan Room, Michigan Economic Development Corporation  
300 North Washington Square, Lansing, Michigan 48913*

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Devan Anderson, Daniel Bollman, Matthew Daley, Lane Demas, Sharon Ferraro, Lakota Hobia, Krysta Ryzewski, Ann Scott, Ronald Staley

### **BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

None.

### **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

Nathan Nietering, Haley Schriber, Ryan Schumaker, Sarah Surface-Evans, Todd Walsh, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Jon Stuckey and Austin Wright, Michigan Office of the Attorney General (AG)

### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT**

From list.

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Board Chair Ryzewski called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion to approve the agenda of the September 22, 2025 regular board meeting.

Motion: Anderson

Second: Staley

Vote: 9-0

#### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 30, 2025**

Board Comments: None

Motion to approve the minutes as proposed.

Motion: Ferraro

Second: Hobia

Vote: 9-0

#### **4. SHPO STAFF REPORTS**

- a. SHPO Report – Ryan Schumaker**
  - i. Schumaker acknowledged the state government budget impasse and indicated that the State Historic Preservation Office has been deemed non-essential. If the budget is not finalized before October 1, SHPO staff will go into a temporary layoff status.
  - ii. Schumaker acknowledged parent agency MEDC's mandatory return to office schedule went into effect at the beginning of September, allowing staff to continue to work a hybrid schedule, but requiring employees to be in the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
  - iii. Three historic districts from the May meeting were listed in the National Register in late August and early September - Evart, Alpena, and Auburn Hills (Grand Rapids).
  - iv. SHPO was awarded its delayed FY25 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grant money over the summer. The office has drawn down all of its allocated funding for FY25.
  - v. For FY26, the federal legislature has proposed funding the HPF at roughly the same level as FY25, counter to the president's budget proposal eliminating HPF funding. In news of other federal related changes, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's staff has been cut in half under the new administration.
  - vi. Schumaker discussed progress on SHPO's African American Civil Rights Program (AACR) National Park Service (NPS) grant to survey and nominate sites related to the African American Green Book for Negro Motorists. This has not been impacted by federal changes. The consultant has identified 39 Green Book resources still standing and is working on the historic context this fall.
  - vii. SHPO has been informed that the Underrepresented Communities Grant awarded from NPS to study the architectural works of Black architect Nathan Johnson is still on hold pending an administrative review at the federal level. We presently have no grant agreement in place for this project.
  - viii. We have identified an alternate funding mechanism for the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (MLAP) beyond just the lighthouse license plate. Since August, an online portal has been live where anyone can simply donate to the lighthouse fund. We will begin to market this new opportunity throughout the fall.
  - ix. The Certified Local Government (CLG) FY2025 grants were awarded in August to 6 communities: Battle Creek, East Lansing, Kalamazoo, Saginaw, Mason, and Detroit.
  - x. SHPO staff presented at a few partner events over the summer including a program in partnership with Michigan Main Street in Coldwater and also a presentation for property owners in Idlewild.
  - xi. SHPO is planning to submit four abstracts for the 2026 Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) conference in metro Detroit.
  - xii. Regarding the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan efforts, the last regional public meetings took place in early September in Petoskey and Marquette, and Marquette had particularly good attendance. We

have also held one of two virtual meetings so anyone not located near a regional meeting can still offer their input. The second meeting is coming up later this week on September 25 over the lunch hour. A preservation stakeholder meeting will take place in East Lansing on October 23, watch for your invitation soon.

- xiii. Also related to the statewide plan, the electronic survey offered to the public about their perceptions of preservation in Michigan had over 400 responses – so we have lots of good data to sift through.
- xiv. The outline for the remainder of the plan development will include a final report by our public engagement consultant Khamai Strategies summarizing all of the data gathered from the meetings, a draft of the plan available for public review and comment in spring 2026, and a final plan produced and published no later than January 1, 2027. This plan will cover the years 2027-2034.

**b. Archaeology – Sarah Surface-Evans**

- i. So far for FY25, 273 new archaeology sites have been identified in 49 counties, representing more than 20,000 acres of survey, a much greater number than a typical year. Much of this is coming from US Forest Service properties relating to their timber activities. Total numbers for this fiscal year will be finalized for the next review board meeting along with the archaeology program annual report.
- ii. Michigan has seen an increase in Section 106 undertakings, along with a large number of expedited 7-day reviews under Executive Orders 14154 and 14156. This is putting added pressure on review staff. Most of these projects are in rural areas that have not previously been surveyed.
- iii. SHPO archaeologists are working closely with MDNR's maritime archaeologist to assign state trinomial numbers to all of the state's underwater archaeology sites in the Great Lakes, which had previously used a separate numbering system. This has required a little bit of work to properly identify which county many of the sites are located in. 810 new trinomials will be assigned. Approximately half are new sites that have never been entered into SHPO's databases in the past.
- iv. SHPO archaeology staff have been researching remaining collections within state holdings that may be subject to the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), and assembling inventories. We are hopeful to initiate consultation on the 14 remaining NAGPRA related collections soon.
- v. We continue to input new site data into SHPO's Argus database, including survey documentation and other reports.
- vi. Digitization of the GIS archaeology layer is very recently complete, however, more than 3,000 sites or surveys need quality control/quality assurance before they will be able to be fully visible to qualified researchers and staff.

- vii. 3 new archaeology positions are currently posted through the end of September at SHPO, along with a single historian position. These limited term positions are being funded by the federal BEAD Act (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) through Michigan's MIHI office (Michigan High-Speed Internet Office). The new employees will help us review projects submitted under the BEAD Act, catch up on the backlog of data entry, and map sites and other records in the GIS.
- viii. Archaeology staff have participated in a number of outreach events and site visits over the past several months. Amy Krull spent a week on Isle Royale. Kate Frederick spent time at Pictured Rocks and the Bar Lake site in Munising looking for evidence of wild rice. SHPO staff also attended the Deep Mapping Institute at Michigan Tech and gave a guest lecture, attended a volunteer public archaeology day at the Warner Homestead site near Brighton, and we recently put together a special webinar for the FIRST LEGO Challenge kids competition, which this year is focusing on archaeology as its theme. SHPO put together a special webpage to share relevant content with kids and families and hosted the webinar, which included a presentation and Q&A component about the work archaeologists do in Michigan.
- ix. Surface-Evans concluded with the announcement that October is Archaeology Month, and Michigan Archaeology Day is approaching on October 18. We are putting together a month-long calendar of related events taking place across the state. This year's archaeology month poster will highlight the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking of the *Edmund Fitzgerald* and the importance of shipwreck preservation, using archival photos and original artwork by MEDC's graphic design staff. The poster will be supported by a webpage with additional content, as usual.

## 5. BOARD BUSINESS

### a. Archaeology and National Register nominations

Ryzewski summarized that over the past several months, there have been discussions between some review board members and SHPO staff with an interest in seeking to formalize the process by which archaeological history, or the potential for archaeological resources, can regularly be included in Michigan's National Register nominations as a standard section within each nomination. This process has happened informally for the past few years but has been largely dependent on internal workflows and staff capacity.

Hobia noted that this interest began when Dean Anderson, a former board member and previously Michigan's State Archaeologist, served on the review board. She highlighted that as has previously been discussed by the board, the National Register is primarily a planning tool, and including at least a

statement on archaeological history or potential would aid when a federal project comes along that requires Section 106 Review. Hobia continued that in 2024, nearly every nomination brought to the board had at least a paragraph or two about the site's archaeology and its context, prepared by SHPO archaeology staff, but this did not continue at the same level in 2025. She cited the Rosa Parks House as a recent example where gardening on the grounds added to the context of the property. After the chaotic year, it is understandable why this did not continue to the same extent, but looking at the nominations to be heard today, some of them could benefit from an archaeological discussion or context.

Ryzewski noted that it's not a requirement of the federal nomination process that archaeology be included in this way for Criteria A, B, and C nominations, but particularly in Michigan where historical archaeology has been a formalized field for nearly as long as the National Register has existed, adding archaeology to a nomination makes it a more complete document. A few years ago, separate from a formal review board meeting, it was discussed that nominations could be shared with SHPO archaeology staff to provide some information to include in nominations. This had the benefit of increasing the preservation of these sites and their resources, but also educating property owners and local historians about unseen history that adds to each place. The goal is to formalize a best practice to include archaeology that doesn't add extra time or burden to the nomination preparer or to SHPO staff.

Scott agreed that it is especially important to include archaeology to help dispel misconceptions that "everything has been destroyed," particularly in the cases of parking lots or green space, where only the top few inches have been disturbed. Ryzewski stated the board can make a recommendation to SHPO whereby nomination files are shared ahead of each meeting so that archaeology can regularly be included.

Ferraro noted that when reading the nominations prepared for today's meeting, she missed reading a statement on archaeology and noted its absence. In some instances it might just be a short paragraph, in other instances, something longer and more detailed, but it adds to the completed product. Schumaker noted that including archaeology is a priority but as the administrator of the office, he needs to assess this against the workloads of staff and all other office priorities. He continued that another concern is if this will be a new burden placed upon preparers, and if they have no knowledge of archaeology to make informed statements in a nomination, if the work then comes back to SHPO archaeology staff. There is immense value in this goal, but there are logistics to arrange. We would need to hold a meeting to discuss the logistics and responsibilities so the staff and the review board both have the same expectations.

Surface-Evans added there have been several recent instances where older nominations from decades past did not include archaeology, and now as modern projects take place triggering Section 106 Review, the archaeological

history has actually become more significant than the decaying above-ground resources. They added that the SHPO archaeology staff as a whole find adding statements about archaeology to nominations will be beneficial long into the future.

Anderson added that in the earlier informal discussions, it seemed like the board was all-in and appreciated that including archaeology would make the final project more complete, but asked if the review board has the ability to direct the staff and staff time to do specific tasks. Ryzewski responded this could be discussed at a forthcoming meeting.

Motion to create a best practices recommendation for including archaeological contexts within the National Register nomination process reviewing period.

Motion: Hobia

Second: Scott

Vote: 9-0

## 6. NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

### a. **Manistee Fire Station, Manistee, Manistee County**

Presented by Fred LaPoint and Tom Hernden

Board comments: Demas asked if the fire station were eligible at the state or national level of significance instead of local. Walsh responded that this would require a wider and more thorough historic context and analysis, which would be a big lift. One option would be to approve it today at the local level, and this would not preclude a future effort to do the work to elevate the level of significance in the future. Daley noted that the nomination text focuses very carefully on fire department history and development and could be strengthened by adding some more discussion about how this history fits into Manistee's growth and development. It is more than a magnificent building, it's part of something larger that transformed the city. Daley continued that while reading the nomination he kept wondering why this place survived when so many other historic firehouses have been lost or found other uses. Why did the public feel that preserving this building mattered? Bollman noted that so many other nominations being discussed today all note that a major fire changed the trajectory of development in those places and many downtowns look similar because they were built after a substantial fire event during this same period. Bollman complimented that the nomination talks about the supporting infrastructure such as the watch tower and call boxes show how much people in an earlier era thought about fire and fire protection.

Ferraro echoed the question of why this station has lasted for so long, and wondered if plans may have been presented as an alternative, even if they were not chosen. Manistee didn't choose the same course of action that so many others did. Demas added that in some places such as Chicago, old fire houses become monuments to the trauma of fires that changed the course of

history, but here in Manistee the monument remains in service. Staley noted the careful, intentional changes made to the building and new fire apparatus to be able to continue its use. Hobia shared that understanding that this is a community building and wondered how the Little River Band, which is headquartered in Manistee, has related to this building over the years. She wondered if Tribal members trained in the trades at places such as the Mt. Pleasant Indian Boarding School ever came home and were involved in local building construction or repair. Ryzewski added that this story of historic continuity has a throughline as there are several archaeological sites near this building and the Manistee River. She wondered what potential there is for historical archaeology on the green space to the immediate west of the fire house. La Point shared some history of a potential plan to replace the fire station in the 1970s-1980s and that the community ultimately voted in favor of investing in the historic fire house and scrapping the replacement plan.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Ferraro

Second: Scott

Vote: 9-0

**b. Saint Cecilia Music Society (Additional Documentation), Grand Rapids, Kent County**

Presented by Tiffany Novak

Board comments: Staley shared that the Christman Company did restoration work to the interior and exterior of the building in 1998, and a summary of this work has been shared with the SHPO staff to incorporate into the nomination. Hobia noted that in her role as the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians which is located nearby, this is an excellent example of where an archaeology context could add to the nomination for future planning. This was an area known for its Indigenous mound sites, and while many of those have historically been levelled, ancestors may remain not far underground. This would be an opportunity to highlight this potential and articulate which Tribes might have an interest if ground disturbance may ever take place in the future. Ryzewski agreed and noted one such mound site is known to be on the same block as this building. Novak indicated the St. Cecilia Music Center would be interested to build a Tribal connection and include relevant information if possible.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Demas

Second: Hobia

Vote: 9-0

**c. Cooley School, Cadillac, Wexford County**

Presented by Matt Dixon and Marcus Peccia

Board comments: Ferraro commented that the story of an older school

receiving a new building or addition in the 1960s designed by Trend Associates was an exact duplication of her childhood experience in Kalamazoo. Dixon highlighted that the planned rehabilitation of the school is a federal tax credit project. Daley expressed enthusiasm for the nomination and suggested the nomination could highlight some additional historical details relating to what was happening with Michigan schools in the 1920s, such as school and district consolidation, school funding tensions, and new design features of classrooms and school buildings during this period. Ryzewski inquired if it is known where the previous Cooley School stood on the property and how that relates to the existing building. Dixon responded that it was a frustrating aspect to the story but so far had remained unclear. Scott inquired if it was known what happened to the students while the new school building was being construction in 1923-24. Dixon responded that Cooley was the last of the 1920s schools built in the city and that it was likely students were temporarily attending classes in other schools or locations while this building was being finished. Hobia suggested a Tribal contact for another school nomination Dixon is working on.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Daley

Second: Staley

Vote: 9-0

**d. Detroit's LatinX Communities Multiple Property Documentation Form, Detroit, Wayne County**

Presented by Ian Tomashik and Angela Gallegos

Board comments: None.

Motion to approve the Multiple Property Documentation Form as presented.

Motion: Demas

Second: Ferraro

Vote: 9-0

**i. Bagley-West Vernor Historic District**

Presented by Ian Tomashik and Angela Gallegos

Board comments: Scott noted that her PhD focus was in Latin-American studies and complimented the nomination on its historic context. She also asked about the choice of "Bagley-West Vernor" Historic District instead of other options that may have further emphasized the LatinX community. Tomashik and Walsh responded that this naming was intentional, since the properties within this district may include other ethnic heritage or areas of significance exclusive of their LatinX connections, the naming leaves it open for more properties to be added in the future with additional historic contexts. Ryzewski noted her prior archaeological experiences in Corktown and nearby Clark Park and highlighted nearly 44 percent of parcels in this district are noted to be vacant and may represent opportunities for urban archaeological studies of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century time

period. She suggested the nomination include a mention of this archaeological potential in an area of the city where few archaeological studies have been undertaken. Hobia commented that in her mind this area continues to be a living cultural landscape that has a 20<sup>th</sup> century Tribal population as a place of migration.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A, local

Motion: Bollman

Second: Anderson

Vote: 9-0

**e. Zeeland Record Company Building, Zeeland, Ottawa County**

Presented by Tim Isenga

Board comments: Daley complimented the development of the historic context and the discussion of the poultry industry, and how Zeeland was at the geographic center for so many industries in west Michigan. He noted poultry was a byproduct of greenhouses and flower-growing, which were common on Dutch farms. Turkeys also became a growing, related business in west Michigan. Daley inquired if Zeeland Record Co. produced any catalogs for the local furniture companies. Isenga responded that he didn't know but had not found any reference to that type of work for the company.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A, local

Motion: Daley

Second: Staley

Vote: 9-0

**f. Washington Square Historic District, Holland, Ottawa County**

Presented by Nick Rolinski

Board comments: Ferraro highlighted that while the story of Washington Square is unique in its own way, it is also very mundane and common, and it's interesting to think about how deep the history is all around us, we just need to take some time to learn about it. Rolinski added that one of the aspects of the architecture program at Notre Dame is trying to design for human-scale and how Washington Square is living blueprint for how to create more places similar to this. Bollman added that the aerial images illustrate that Washington Square is a destination, yet it could just as easily have been another block of typical residential construction in this part of the city. Daley noted that the concept of an intact, small neighborhood commercial core is foreign to many history students and complimented the nomination on how it discussed the changes in shopping and retail patterns over time. Scott complimented the comparative analysis and exceptional graphics and maps. Hobia shared that this was an area of intense Odawa activity into the historical period and that the potential for archaeological discovery would be substantial here.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A, local  
Motion: Staley  
Second: Anderson  
Vote: 9-0

The board took a lunch break at 12:38 p.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

**g. Odd Fellows Hall, Midland, Midland County**

Presented by Becca Murphy

Board comments: Scott noted she lives in Midland and looks forward to paying more attention to this building when she is in the neighborhood. Daley added that he appreciated the context discussion of fraternal organizations and their growth during this period.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Motion: Scott

Second: Bollman

Vote: 9-0

**7. LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Presented by Haley Schriber

Ryzewski provided an overview of the role of the board in reviewing local historic district study committee reports.

**a. Irving and Olive Crane Kendall Dean House, Grand Rapids, Kent County**

Board comments: None.

**8. APPEALS**

Ryzewski provided an overview of the board's role in considering appeals of historic district commission decisions.

**a. S. Peter Basile and Somers Bush v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission**

Presented by Austin Wright

Board comments: Anderson noted that this seemed to be a by-the-book case, and that the applicant had several opportunities to revise and resubmit their application in a more approvable format and chose not to. The City seemed to be well within their policies and procedures. Bollman noted the commission actually provided deference to the idea of a wrap-around porch if an acceptable design had been submitted, but the end action seemed appropriate. Ferraro commented that most local commissions don't like demolition before their plans for replacement have been approved.

Motion to adopt the Proposal for Decision that the appeal filed in the case of S. Peter Basile and Somers Bush v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission be denied.

Motion: Demas

Second: Anderson

Vote: 9-0

**b. Nicolet Town Houses Cooperative Association; Joliet Town Houses Cooperative Association; Lasalle Town Houses Cooperative Association; and Lafayette Town Houses, Inc. v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission**

Presented by Jon Stuckey

Stuckey outlined the standard process by which appeals are accepted and processed before they come before the State Historic Preservation Review Board. Stuckey noted that in this case the question is if the Review Board even has jurisdiction to hear the appeal. Stuckey outlined the relevant sections of the Local Historic Districts Act (P.A. 169 of 1970).

Board comments: Ryzewski outlined the three possible actions the board could take: 1) to deny the appeal for lack of jurisdiction, 2) to hold a hearing where testimony would be presented, or 3) send it to an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) who will rule solely on the jurisdiction issue. Bollman stated that it seems clear that in the situation in which any citizen has an objection, it goes to circuit court, not to this board. An aggrieved applicant comes before this board, but anyone else goes directly to court. Anderson asked if the review board has any history of hearing appeals from non-applicants. Stuckey responded that no similar issues have come before this board since the current practice of the Office of the Attorney General assisting the SHPO with legal matters was established in 2019. Actual hearings with aggrieved applicants were once heard directly in board meetings, but no past similar issues of jurisdiction are known. Anderson asked to clarify that before the current process of ALJs hearing testimony was established, the review board took a more active role in the appeals process including hearing testimony as part of the meeting. Stuckey concurred. Demas asked if they are appealing the circuit court ruling. Stuckey responded that his understanding was that they are pursuing this in the court of appeals, but because the circuit court said they had not exhausted available remedies, the groups filed an appeal to go before this board. Hobia asked if it would be helpful to send this to an ALJ as a professional practitioner of the law for their ruling. Ryzewski confirmed in that case, an ALJ would determine if the review board has jurisdiction. Anderson asked if today's decision will set a precedent for any similar instances of non-applicants filing appeals that come up in the future. Stuckey responded that the board could put a delegation in place instructing the Office of the Attorney General to automatically deny a similar instance due to lack of jurisdiction. Stuckey continued that their office feels strongly that it is good for the board to be aware of such instances when they arise, however. Ferraro stated that P.A. 169 is crystal clear that this instance is not the jurisdiction of this board. Anderson asked if this was referred to ALJ, would they receive

background on how the legal matter ended up before them. Stuckey responded that briefs would be filed on the topic before the ALJ.

Motion to dismiss the petitioners' appeal, as the Review Board lacks the jurisdiction to hear the appeal under the Local Historic Districts Act.

Motion: Ryzewski

Second: Ferraro

Vote: 9-0

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENT & CORRESPONDENCE**

Summary of Correspondence:

A letter of support were received for the Cooley School nomination, and a letter of objection for the Bagley-West Vernor Historic District nomination. A letter was received from the attorney representing the Detroit Historic District Commission regarding item 8b, and a board member for the Nicolet Town Houses Cooperative Association sent additional materials for the board to consider regarding item 8b.

Summary of Public Comment:

NOTE: Comments offered by the public are limited to 2 minutes per speaker.

Rebecca Savage spoke in support of agenda items 6d and 6di and acknowledged other individuals who were involved in historic designation and research efforts in this area. Natalie Pruett, a board member for the Nicolet Town Houses Cooperative Association spoke regarding their position and perspective on agenda item 8b.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- a. Friday, December 12, 2025.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn: Anderson

Second: Bollman

Vote: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nietering