

# Michigan State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes September 24, 2021

## Minutes of the State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting

Friday, September 24, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

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

### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Dean Anderson, Devan Anderson, Rhonda Baker, Daniel Bollman, Kemba Braynon, Matthew Daley, Lane Demas, Janet Kreger, Krysta Ryzewski

### BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None.

### STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Amy Arnold, Brian Grennell, Alan Higgins, Martha MacFarlane-Faes, Nathan Nietering, Mark Rodman, Todd Walsh, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Jon Stuckey, Andrew Fillmore, Michigan Office of the Attorney General (AG)

### MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

From list.

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

Board Chair Kemba Braynon called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda of the September 24, 2021 regular board meeting.

Motion: Baker

Second: Demas

Vote: 9-0

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 21, 2021

Board Comments: Kreger sent along minor edits to the minutes in advance of this meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes with minor changes as proposed.

Motion: Kreger

Second: Bollman

Vote: 8-0

Abstain: Demas

**4. UPDATE TO CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY – Jon Stuckey/Andrew Fillmore**

Motion to approve the policy as presented.

Motion: Kreger

Second: Baker

Vote: 9-0

10:17 NOTE: The audio-recording of this meeting suffered a technical failure and does not begin until this time.

**5. MISCELLANEOUS BOARD BUSINESS**

- a. Board member Dean Anderson raised the prospect that the Review Board might develop a policy to require nominations brought before it to include a statement about the archaeological potential of each property. He noted that even though all of the nominations considered for today's meeting are above-ground properties, two in particular call out the potential for archaeological discovery. Kreger asked how it was that these two particular nominations came to include this information. Kreger also asked Walsh if including this information would raise any questions with the National Register unit at the National Park Service (NPS). Walsh responded that it would not raise such questions. Walsh also offered that in attending a previous training session with NPS, NPS had both praised and encouraged several states who were reliably including this type of information. Walsh added that in any grant-funded nomination projects administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), it requires that the consultant address archaeological potential in their nomination, regardless of the type or significance of the resource.

Bollman asked if including such information might encourage amateur individuals to try to retrieve such archaeological resources from listed sites, or if including them would raise the awareness overall of the value of archaeology. Walsh added that this might play out differently depending on if the property is privately or publicly owned. Dean Anderson stated that if the statements are not overly precise, it may be more of a statement of the likelihood than that an archaeological site may be present, adding that his goal is to increase awareness. Ryzewski added that the State Archaeological Site File is a public body of knowledge so an interested person might be able to get the detailed information even if it is not included in a nomination. Ryzewski went on to point out that in Michigan, instead of focusing on ancient sites that are hundreds or thousands of years old, much of the recent energy in this field has been to discover and learn from sites that are perhaps just fifty or more years old. Ryzewski stated that she would strongly favor encouraging applicants to include an acknowledgement of archaeological potential. Dean Anderson asked for further discussion on this topic and inquired why including archaeology could not be a mandate. Walsh stated that it may not be the Board's role as the specifics of the program fall under the State Historic Preservation Officer. Further discussion will follow.

- b. Kreger noted the 2022 Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) conference will take place May 11-14 and be on location in Holly. She also highlighted that the MHPN Fall Benefit is coming up on October 3 and will honor new lifetime achievement awardees Sharon Ferraro and Pam O'Connor of Kalamazoo.

**6. SHPO STAFF REPORT – Mark Rodman and Martha MacFarlane-Faes**

Braynon introduced Michigan's new State Historic Preservation Officer, Mark Rodman, who started in the role on July 12.

- Rodman acknowledged that the SHPO is preparing to hire four positions: Senior Archaeologist, Limited Term Staff Archaeologist, Section 106 Program Manager, and Limited Term Cultural Resource Management Specialist. Interviews will take place over the next month with the goal of having new staff starting in their roles by the beginning of 2022.
- Incremental progress is being made to digitize SHPO data and to enable public access. The pandemic has highlighted this issue to SHPO's parent agency MEDC, where so many other programs function well in a remote, fully-electronic environment.
- The initial public comment phase for the new State Historic Tax Credit took place in July, and changes made to the rules as a result of those comments were incorporated in mid August. Rodman encouraged board members to review the most recent draft rules for the latest version. It is difficult to know the timing of the next steps, but the goal is to have a required public meeting before the rules are finalized. The exact date of the public meeting is not yet known, but board members will be informed as soon as it is known.
- MacFarlane-Faes continued the report by sharing that there will be a renewed focus on assisting Local Historic Districts starting in 2022 in alignment with the expected launch of the new tax credit program.
- Several communities have expressed an interest in participating in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program and are in various places in the application process.
- Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program grants are due to our office by November 19.
- In addition, SHPO has received several recent grant awards, including an NPS Underrepresented Communities Grant for the National Register nomination of Vaughn's Bookstore in Detroit, a separate NPS Civil Rights Grant to survey African American housing in Inkster. In total, SHPO has received over \$679,000 in grants relating to civil rights since 2016.
- In addition, MISHPO was the recipient of a \$750,000 Paul Bruhn Preservation Grant from NPS which will create a subgrant program in Michigan designed to assist smaller maritime communities with preservation initiatives starting in 2022. This presents an important collaboration opportunity with some of our other program partners within MEDC's Community Development unit. Also, SHPO has some funding to help resolve outstanding Native American Graves Protection

and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) issues and help establish procedures for our office to more effectively handle NAGPRA related issues.

- Mike Hambacher (SHPO Staff Archaeologist) acknowledged the potential for a growing archaeological partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and the exciting opportunities that may come as a result. He also emphasized the continued focus on Section 106 Reviews and the enthusiasm for the forthcoming new staff to help relieve some of the pressure on a single archaeology staff member.
- Hambacher also shared the upcoming October 23 Michigan Archaeology Day, which will take place outside in the parking lot of the Michigan History Center in Lansing as a response to continued Covid-19 concerns.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

Individual letters of support were received in support of the Whitcomb Hotel nomination, the Sutton House nomination, and the Fulton Manor nomination.

## **8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Summary of Public Comment:

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

- Pam O'Connor – agenda item 9h, State Theatre Additional Documentation – spoke in support of the additional documentation presented today.
- Chad King – agenda item 9c, Malcolm X House nomination – spoke in support of the nomination presented today.
- Paul Robinson – agenda item 9f, Prince Hall Grand Lodge nomination – spoke in support of the nomination presented today.
- Crystal Linton – agenda item 9c, Malcolm X House nomination – spoke in support of the nomination presented today.
- Arthur Edge – agenda item 9c, Malcolm X House nomination – spoke in support of the nomination presented today.
- Ambassador Shahbazz – agenda item 9c, Malcolm X House nomination – spoke in support of the nomination presented today.
- Geonisha Washington – agenda item 9c, Malcolm X House nomination – spoke in support of the nomination presented today.

## **9. NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS**

- a. Whitcomb Hotel, Saint Joseph, Berrien County**  
Presented by Gabrielle Begue

Board Comments: Kreger inquired how it obtained the name Whitcomb Hotel. Begue responded that it remains a mystery as no substantiation was found for the historic name. Kreger suggested that this fact should be included in the

nomination. She continued with an appreciation of the discussion in the text of proto modernism. Dean Anderson suggested including language in the integrity section about the removal of the mineral bath facilities, as this is mentioned in the Summary Paragraph but not further.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Dean Anderson

Second: Bollman

Vote: 9-0

**b. Nathan Esek and Sarah Emergene Sutton House, Northfield Township, Washtenaw County**

Presented by Cheri Szcodronski

Board Comments: Kreger asked why criterion B was not considered in addition to criterion C in this nomination due to Nathan Sutton's active roles in this county and in the state legislature. Szcodronski responded that this was considered early on, but research determined that other members of the Sutton family and other nearby early settlers also served in similar capacities in the early politics in this part of the state, and Nathan's experience did not rise above the level of service of other individuals during the same time period. Walsh indicated he had discussed this with Szcodronski and that the key to criterion B is also exceptional significance, and it did not appear that he met this level of significance. Kreger also mentioned that the period of significance time period is not always in agreement throughout the document and this should be reviewed for consistency.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: C, local

Motion: Kreger

Second: Baker

Vote: 9-0

**c. Malcolm X House, Inkster, Wayne County**

Presented by Tareq Ramadan

Board Comments: Demas acknowledged the hard work to bring this nomination forward and pointed out the irony of the nomination being used to make the case that 1953 was a turning point in the life of Malcolm X, when back in 1953 it was the federal government itself (the FBI) that essentially made that determination by formally putting him under surveillance starting in that year. Ramadan added that FBI records played an important role in constructing the story presented in the nomination. Ryzewski noted the nomination at state level of significance and the high level of comparative analysis to other sites around Michigan, essentially allowing the reader and future researchers to retrace the steps of Malcolm as he

traveled around the state. Demas noted that the Martin Luther King House in Montgomery, Alabama is on the National Civil Rights Trail and he was unsure if any Malcolm X site was on that trail, but this might be an opportunity. Ryzewski asked if the house deserved National level significance. Walsh responded that it would need a national-level context to substantiate this, which is certainly possible but would be an additional quantity of work to undertake. Kreger noted that in previous nominations with significance in African American history, a section of the text briefly discussed how the level of integrity is considered differently than as has been considered in the past, and that this language was not included in this nomination. Walsh responded that this specific language came from the Civil Rights Movement and the African American Experience in 20th Century Detroit multiple property documentation form, and as this site is in Inkster, that language cannot be used so specifically in this case. Walsh added that this nomination highlights the deepening significance of social history in that while the house is lacking finishes, the house still tells the story.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&B, state

Motion: Demas

Second: Ryzewski

Vote: 9-0

**d. Walbri Hall, Bloomfield Township, Oakland County**

Presented by Brian Grennell

Board Comments: Kreger noted that on page 20, the discussion moves from discussing auto body production to the Briggs beauty ware line with a scant mention of Walter Briggs' purchase and ownership of the Detroit Tigers baseball team, and wondered if that topic should be given slightly more discussion. She noted on page 26 the suggestion that revival-styles were very limited and suggested that this be revised. Kreger also questioned the analysis stating the Hall relates to its landscape much like a Prairie-style house would, which is incorrect. Walsh indicated all three areas would be reviewed and revised. Ryzewski found the story of Judson Bradway to be fascinating and was glad to see this included as a counterpoint to his earlier work in the city of Detroit.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Ryzewski

Second: Devan Anderson

Vote: 9-0

**e. Fulton Manor, Grand Rapids, Kent County**

Presented by Grace Smith

Board Comments: Kreger appreciated the balance of discussing the austerity in the design of the complex, and also added that additional photos might be needed to better support the beautiful designs of the courtyards.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A, local

Motion: Kreger

Second: Devan Anderson

Vote: 9-0

**f. Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Detroit, Wayne County**

Presented by Kevin Bell

Board Comments: Ryzewski noted there is also an archaeological site known as the “Prince Hall Site” and at first thought they might be related, but it turns out the archaeological site is across the neighborhood on Prince Hall Place, near the Prince Hall Apartments, and wondered if there was any connection between the Lodge facility discussed in this nomination and the enclave across the neighborhood. Bell was not certain but agreed it was worth researching. Kreger noted that on page 18 there is a reference to the McDougall neighborhood not being racially integrated and inquired what the neighborhood’s reaction was to the lodge moving to this building in 1951. Bell indicated from his conversations with earlier members he was not familiar with any neighborhood negativity.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, state

Motion: Daley

Second: Demas

Vote: 9-0

**g. Mount Clemens Public Library, Mount Clemens, Macomb County**

Presented by Alan Higgins

Board Comments: Kreger wondered if it was the input of Carnegie as to the restrained, but complete, classical influence of the design of the building. Higgins agreed. Bollman pointed out that this is the second property being considered for nomination today which was in some way influenced by mineral baths. Walsh recognized Higgins for the very thorough research and thanked him for the service he has done for other communities which have Carnegie libraries by his extensive and thorough historic context presented here.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Bollman

Second: Kreger

Vote: 9-0

**h. State Theatre (Additional Documentation), Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County**  
Presented by Luis Pena

NOTE: A Review Board vote is not required for Additional Documentation, but this project was brought to the Board as the theatre was first determined National Register eligible in 1983, and the present owners recently removed the objection raised in 1983 and asked to proceed with formal listing.

Board Comments: Kreger inquired why it wasn't formally listed in 1983. Pena responded that the then-owners had closed the theatre the year before and thought that a historic designation would make it more difficult to sell or reopen, and filed the objection.

**10. LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS – Amy Arnold**

**a. Wayne County Community College Local Historic District,  
Detroit, Wayne County**

Board comments: None.

**11. APPEALS**

a. None.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

January 28, 2022

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn: Devan Anderson

Second: Baker

Vote: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nathan Nietering