

Michigan State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes May 29, 2026

Minutes of the State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting

Friday, May 29, 2026, 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 (arrived 10:09), Lane Demas, Sharon Ferraro, Lakota Hobia, Krysta Ryzewski, Ann Scott

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Ronald Staley (pre-excused)

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Martha MacFarlane-Faes, Nathan Nietering, 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 10:02 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda of the May 29, 2026 regular board meeting.

Motion: Anderson

Second: Hobia

Vote: 7-0

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 6, 2025

Board Comments: None

Motion to approve the minutes as proposed.

Motion: Ferraro

Second: Scott

Vote: 7-0

Daley arrived at 10:09

4. SHPO STAFF REPORTS & BUSINESS

a. SHPO Report – Ryan Schumaker & Martha MacFarlane-Faes

- i. Schumaker acknowledged and welcomed SHPO's two newest staff members, database archaeologist Elizabeth Longcore and historian reviewer Jenny Fulton. Both are reviewing infrastructure projects for Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) and participating in SHPO data cleanup.
- ii. Schumaker continued by providing an update on the SHPO initiative to integrate archaeology into National Register nominations. An internal workgroup continues to meet and is planning for how to efficiently include archaeology within the new Smartsheet submission system. On a similar effort, as part of an MEDC-wide agency goal to map internal processes, Todd Walsh and Nathan Nietering are working on documenting the National Register application process, and archaeology will be a component of that.
- iii. The Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation were presented on May 1st; six projects received awards this year. Thank you to the board members who were able to attend this special ceremony. It was great to have Governor Gretchen Whitmer and MEDC's CEO Quentin Messer Jr. attend the ceremony this year.
- iv. The National Council of SHPOs (NCSHPO) has established a Section 106 working group, and Deputy SHPO Martha MacFarlane-Faes and SHPO's compliance manager Scott Slagor are both involved. The goal is to proactively provide solutions to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) for how the Section 106 process can become more consistent and streamlined. MacFarlane-Faes noted that the group has met just a few times virtually so far and has additional meetings planned. The ACHP has its next business meeting scheduled for June 4, and Schumaker plans to attend virtually. Hobia noted she plans to attend the meeting in person.
- v. SHPO staff will be getting a tour of Michigan Central Station in Detroit in August.
- vi. In grant project updates, SHPO's project to study sites listed in the Green Book for Negro Motorists is making good progress and the team will soon identify which individual property will be nominated to the National Register as part of this effort.
- vii. The Notice of Funding Opportunity for the fiscal year 2026 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) dollars went out in late April; MISHPO submitted its annual application within a week and expects to get a response and approval soon. Michigan is awarded approximately \$1.4 million each year from the HPF under the current formula.
- viii. Earlier in the spring, SHPO issued a request for proposals for our grant project to study the architecture of Detroit architect Nathan Johnson. Eight proposals were received in response and we are in the final stages of selecting a preferred contractor to begin that work.

- ix. The Certified Local Government (CLG) FY2026 grant opportunity closed in February and we are close to publicly announcing this year's CLG grant recipients.
- x. Two Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (MLAP) grants are being awarded this year: \$60,000 to the city of Grand Haven for the south pier entrance light interior rehabilitation allowing the building to open to the public, and \$60,000 to the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum/Whitefish Point Lighthouse for repairs and partial replacement to the keeper's quarters roof.
- xi. The application deadline for our Michigan Rural Heritage subgrant program is June 8. We have received a high volume of inquiries.
- xii. MacFarlane-Faes continued the reports by thanking the board members for their earlier participation in establishing the goals and vision for Michigan's next Statewide Historic Preservation Plan (2027-2034). Those have been formally incorporated into the plan. A draft of their entire plan was available for public review and comment from mid-April until May 15, and we are reviewing those comments now to incorporate before handing it over to MEDC's Communications and Marketing specialists to design the plan and prepare it for printing.
- xiii. We've had a series of unrelated medical issues among our Tax Credit review specialists which have slowed review times somewhat, but we expect to be able to catch up with federal and state tax credit review times soon.
- xiv. All commercial state tax credits have been claimed for 2026, so this year only the residential state tax credit for homeowners is being offered. We are especially mindful of the volume and availability of state tax credits now as the existing legislation has a sunset clause as of January 2031, meaning all projects must be *completed* and their Part 3 application submitted and approved by that date. In the scope of a major rehabilitation project, this isn't a lot of time to begin a new effort from the ground up and expect to have it completed in time. We are starting to remind people that this program will end soon unless the program is extended or enhanced.
- xv. MEDC has a customer call center, and for the past year, general SHPO inquiries have been directed to the call center. Call center staff have been really great at directing these calls and answering frequent questions.

Relating to the "Green Book" project, Demas inquired if the sites being studied must actually be listed in an edition of the Green Book, or if sites can also appear in other Black travel guides of the era. Nietering, a co-project manager, responded that the initial plan was to focus solely on the ~220 properties listed over the thirty years of Green Book publication, but as additional research was done, we came to the conclusion that we should incorporate in properties that were listed in other African American travel guides, as they are all part of one coherent story on African American recreational tourism. This has added perhaps 15 additional sites to our list. Some of these guidebooks advertised to a more affluent traveler, and some of the properties listed in those books

still exist and some are already National Register-listed. This approach was supported by our National Register reviewer at the National Park Service.

Ferraro inquired if Review Board members are able to join the Michigan Central tour. Schumaker indicated he would find out if there is additional capacity on the tour.

b. Archaeology – Sarah Surface-Evans

- i. Surface-Evans summarized that since October 1, 174 new archaeological sites have been identified over 164,000 acres of surveyed land – a substantial increase over a normal year largely due to large multi-phase projects on U.S. Forest Service properties. This spring in particular has been busy.
- ii. For Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) compliance, in April SHPO repatriated some associated funerary objects from site 20ON84 to the Keweenaw Bay Indian Tribe. The ancestors were originally repatriated to the Tribe in the 1980s when the site was originally discovered, but for whatever reason the objects were separated and became part of the SHPO's collection. Archaeology staff are pleased that these objects have been reunited.
- iii. With the new staff supported by MIHI funding, we are making tremendous progress on archaeology database and GIS improvements, thanks in large part to the efforts of Lilly Ebarra and Elizabeth Longcore, database manager Diane Tuinstra, and MIHI project reviewer Nicole Raslich. Nicole has been processing a site backlog and entering the data into our new CRIS database system, working alphabetically by county. This site data in the database allows it to be entered into our GIS. Lilly and Elizabeth have been processing a lengthy list of data to be evaluated for quality control, generally the result of incomplete database records or missing geospatial data. Many of these are legacy records generated in the 1970s, 80s or 90s. More than 2,500 quality control cases have been closed as a result of this effort.
- iv. Public outreach has been especially busy this year. SHPO was deeply involved in the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) Conference in Detroit back in January, and also attended and presented at the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) conference in San Francisco. SHPO archaeologists also participated in a panel at the Michigan Historic Preservation Network conference earlier in May. Our archaeologists also give regular presentations to school and university classes.
- v. Michigan's 2025 state archaeology poster "[29 Bells: Remembering the Edmund Fitzgerald](#)" won second place in the Society for American Archaeology poster contest. The contest is typically dominated by a

couple of states that tend to win year after year, so breaking into the top two is significant.

- vi. We receive a lot of traffic on SHPO's archaeology webpages, so we are making some organizational updates online to help members of the public and specialists find the information they are looking for.
- vii. And finally, the SHPO archaeology staff wanted to recognize the Isle Royale National Park-Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and Grand Portage National Monument consortium on receiving a Governor's Award this year for their collaborative stewardship in archaeology. This kind of project sets the bar high for the work we like to see.

Schumaker acknowledged and thanked Grace Smith on the occasion that she is preparing to retire after presenting her final National Register nomination to the board today. In addition to years as a private consultant, municipal preservation specialist, and teaching students, Smith also served for a term as a member of the State Historic Preservation Review Board. Ryzewski echoed this thanks and acknowledgement.

5. NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

- a. **South Manitou Island Light Station, Life-Saving Station, and Village Historic District (Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation), Glen Arbor Township, Leelanau County**

Presented by Leah Edwards

Board comments: Hobia emphasized that she had significant concerns about the nomination and how it was approached as a cultural landscape, particularly in relation to consultation with tribes. The name *Manitou* literally means *Spirit* in Ojibwemowin. These islands are part of specific tribal stories, notably for the Grand Traverse Band. In the area of maritime history, the significance doesn't just begin two hundred years ago, but thousands of years before that. This is a living cultural landscape. The National Park Service has a trust responsibility to the tribes. Ryzewski indicated her confusion because the island is a Traditional Cultural Place (TCP), but most of the archaeological references relate to data obtained prior to 1983, when a significant amount of archaeology has taken place in this area in the ensuing forty years which is not addressed.

Ryzewski asked Edwards to describe the method(s) of tribal consultation and involvement in creating this additional documentation. Edwards responded that a draft of the nomination was sent to federally recognized tribes as part of the consultation process and, to her knowledge, no responses were received within the review period, and there was no additional tribal participation.

Scott commented that she has visited South Manitou while doing other archaeology work nearby and was enamored by the lighthouse and other visible resources, but was dismayed that the archaeology discussion was

primarily based on 1970s survey work with no discussion of any more recent research or discoveries. It was apparent there was no consultation with the SHPO's archaeology staff, nor, apparently, with the tribes. Ryzewski added that she was certain this area has one or more State Archaeological Site File reference numbers which are not included. Scott added that the lighthouse has its own site number, but this is barely touched upon. There is a lot of potential to address historical archaeology, let alone pre-contact history. Ryzewski added that lighthouse archaeology has been a vibrant area of research at various locations around Michigan for more than fifteen years, and this nomination does not tie any of this in. This nomination may have taken a cultural landscape approach, but it is far from comprehensive or complete.

Hobia reiterated that consultation is not a checkbox, it is a dialogue and conversation. SHPO has made dramatic progress in this area over the past ten years. If no response was received from the tribes, it's entirely likely it was sent to someone who no longer is in the appropriate position with each tribe, based on outdated contact information. Ryzewski highlighted that consultation should not happen after a nomination is written, either. She asked for a summary of review board recommendations.

Scott summarized that these include consulting with SHPO to understand archaeology that has taken place in this region, consult with the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, and Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and consider reviewing the Minong Mine National Register nomination as an exemplar of a cultural landscape nomination that emphasized Tribal participation.

Ryzewski asked Walsh how to proceed. Walsh responded that the board could make their motion with caveats for changes to make, but the changes the board is discussing in this case are more substantial than those the board typically requests. The safest thing to do may be to vote to not recommend approval, ask for revisions, and see it again.

Motion to not recommend the nomination of the South Manitou Island Light Station, Life Saving Station, and Village Historic District (Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation), but would welcome a revised nomination.

Criteria and Level: A&C, state & national

Motion: Ferraro

Second: Hobia

Vote: 8-0

b. LeMoyne Gardens Historic District, Inkster, Wayne County

Presented by Mason Martel

Board comments: Daley noted that the nomination doesn't really address a comparison with other similar public housing projects taking place at this time, particularly in Detroit. This could acknowledge the low rise, scattered site plan of Le Moyne as opposed to high-rise plans more common in places such as

Detroit or Chicago. Martel responded that most of the focus of this nomination was Inkster based and other public housing projects in Inkster are discussed, although they came later.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A, local

Motion: Demas

Second: Daley

Vote: 7-0 (Scott had briefly stepped out of the room)

c. **John and Nellie Vander Jagt House, Grand Rapids, Kent County**

Presented by Valerie van Heest

Board comments: None.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: C, local

Motion: Bollman

Second: Scott

Vote: 8-0

d. **Plymouth High School and Central Elementary School, Plymouth, Wayne County**

Presented by Grace Smith

Board comments: Ryzewski commended the adaptive reuse for the enormous community benefit now found in the new uses of the building and athletic property. Bollman noted the reverse retrofitting of the windows back to refill their original openings. At one point, the windows were minimized within their openings in an effort to be more energy efficient, which also changed the look of the building. More recently, the windows were reopened to their full extent with a more energy efficient variety, restoring this character defining feature. This is a great example of this transition. Walsh added it was interesting to read about the scale of community support and interest in the site, moreso than we see in many other former school properties and adaptive reuse efforts.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Bollman

Second: Ferraro

Vote: 8-0

e. **Crossman-Withee Farm, Marengo Township, Calhoun County**

Presented by Michael Mumaugh

Board comments: Scott supported the archaeological discussion in the nomination, notably the archaeological potential of the former sawmill site. She continued it's always good to see an oral history go one step further with research and exploration to try to confirm elements of the story. Hobia appreciated the historical context around early settlement and suggested more exploration into the history and uses of Rice Creek which adjoins the

property, so named because wild rice was once grown in the creek. She suggested Onyleen Zapata, the tribal historic preservation officer of the nearby Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi has been doing extensive research about rice growing around this area, which could be useful for building a broader historical context that could be utilized for other properties in this area. Demas commented that the discussion of the early automobile and other mechanization on the farm was particularly strong.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&C, local

Motion: Hobia

Second: Ferraro

Vote: 8-0

6. APPEALS

Ryzewski provided an overview of the role of the board in local historic district appeals.

a. Eric Hensley & Khanh Tran v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission

Procedural history presented by Stuckey

Board comments: Bollman summarized that this is just a bad situation, where the work that was done which damaged their windows beyond repairability was done without their permission by error. Scott noted the discussion revolved around the idea that a lot of nail were put in – but the photos did not support a large number of nails, and when additional photos were requested, they were not provided. Bollman asked if the new proposed windows did not include muntins, and Scott agreed that based on the quote included in the package the proposed replacement windows just didn't look like the ones which were going to be replaced. Anderson stated that the usual assumption is if any detail isn't provided on the plan, it's not going to end up on the building. He continued that the applicant was given an opportunity to provide additional information to help better prove their case, and refused to do so. Bollman found the cut sheets that demonstrated the proposed windows had a different light configuration than the existing.

Motion to affirm the decision that the rejection be upheld.

Motion: Bollman

Second: Anderson

Vote: 8-0

b. Steven Mamat v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission

Wright of AG addressed the board noting that petitioners may make formal oral arguments before the board only if the board gives express consent to

hear them. Normally, all oral arguments are heard before the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ), and the board only reviews the ALJ's decision if the petitioner files an appeal. In this case, the petitioner has made a formal request to make oral arguments before the board. To offer a fair opportunity for all sides to be heard, Austin proposed two potential paths: The board can vote to grant this request to allow oral arguments, and if affirmative can provide notice that these arguments will be heard at the next board meeting (September 25), or the board can deny the request, and consider the appeal as scheduled today based on the decision of the ALJ. Stuckey stated that historically, the ALJ has served as the sole fact finder, and the board serves an appellate role over that. The language that allows oral arguments directly before the board is legacy and has not been used in many years. A future policy for the board's consideration will remove this language and oral argument opportunity.

Board comments: Anderson summarized that the concern is twofold, first, that the board typically does not hear oral arguments, and second, that this formal request for oral argument happened yesterday, meaning that the opposing party doesn't have time to assemble their argument, and therefore the board's consideration of this appeal would be pushed to September. Stuckey also acknowledged that the board should consider whatever decision they come to today will set a precedent for other similar oral arguments in other cases, which will require developing policies to ensure fairness among all parties. Scott noted that she would prefer to review materials and a decision made by someone with a law degree, rather than make the decision herself. Demas noted that oral argument without introducing new evidence or the ability to ask new questions does not really have a point. Stuckey noted that the public comment portion of the meeting is now moved to the end of the meeting, to prevent the appearance that one of the parties may have an opportunity to try to state their case, before a board decision is made. Bollman noted that a review board decision isn't the end of the line, and there are still recourse opportunities if a petitioner feels aggrieved by the decision.

Stuckey explained that long ago, the board heard the arguments and held the hearing on local district cases such as these directly, but the practice has been in place for many years that the fact finding and oral arguments be handled by the Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (MOAHR). If the board decides to hear arguments, it would have to decide to bring the hearings back in house, since it would not make sense to do two hearings. Anderson asked how long ago MOAHR began hearing local historic district appeal cases. General consensus among the board and staff was that it was well over ten years ago. Anderson wondered about the institutional memory of why this change took place. Walsh noted that it likely happened during the Snyder administration as a new centralized function meant as a cost savings.

Motion to deny the hearing of oral arguments by the board in the case of Steven Mamat v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission.

Motion: Bollman

Second: Scott
Vote: 8-0

Procedural history presented by Wright

Board Comments: Bollman noted this is a similar case of retroactive approval, and while the new columns look good, they do not match the historic columns. Scott added that the petitioner appeared to argue that in other historic districts in the city, vinyl windows had been approved, but in reality each district has its own specific period and areas of significance, making each district unique from all others. It also appears that this owner was not familiar with the requirements for what it means to be in a local historic district. Ferraro noted that in many cases, homeowners can't or don't provide realtors with exact information about historic status, and then this information can't be passed on to potential buyers.

Motion to affirm the decision that the rejection be upheld.
Motion: Bollman
Second: Ferraro
Vote: 8-0

7. PUBLIC COMMENT & CORRESPONDENCE

Summary of Correspondence: Five letters of support were received, one for Le Moyne Gardens, one for Vander Jagt House, one for Plymouth High School, and two for the Crossman-Withee Farm. No letters of objection were received.

Summary of Public Comment:

a. Eric Hensley spoke regarding agenda item 6(a).

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

8. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

a. September 25, 2026, February 12, 2027

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Ferraro
Second: Anderson
Vote: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.
Minutes prepared by Nietering