

# Michigan State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes May 19, 2023

## Minutes of the State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting

Friday, May 19, 2023, 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, Daniel Bollman, Matthew Daley (10:04 a.m.), Lane Demas, Sharon Ferraro, Lakota Hobia, Krysta Ryzewski

### **BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

None.

### **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

Amy Arnold, Amy Krull, Mara Lancaster, Martha MacFarlane-Faes, Nathan Nietering, Todd Walsh, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

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

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

Board Vice Chair Krysta Ryzewski called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

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

Motion to approve the agenda of the May 19, 2023 regular board meeting with the amendment to remove election of the Board Vice Chair as an agenda item.

Motion: Ferraro

Second: Devan Anderson

Vote: 9-0

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 20, 2023**

Board Comments: None

Motion to approve the minutes as proposed.

Motion: Demas

Second: Dean Anderson

Vote: 8-0 Abstained: Hobia

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

a. SHPO Report – Martha MacFarlane-Faes

MacFarlane-Faes highlighted the recent awardees of the Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation on May 4. The Certified Local Government program is currently reviewing applications from four prospective communities: Coldwater, Flat Rock, Cheboygan, and Norwood Twp. in Charlevoix County. The program has grown tremendously under the leadership of CLG program coordinator Alan Higgins. Alan has recently accepted a promotion to become the office's Grants Specialist/Budget Manager, and he will continue to operate in both roles until the CLG position is backfilled. Two recipients were announced for this year's Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program grants: Rock of Ages Light off the shore of Isle Royale, and Eagle Harbor Light on the Keweenaw Peninsula. We have not publicly announced the award recipients of this year's CLG grant awards, but letters of intent have been sent for projects that will include historic resource survey, monument conservation, National Register updates, and repairs to designated historic resources.

MacFarlane-Faes introduced Mara Lancaster as the new coordinator for the state tax credit program, who started in February. The state tax credit program has been fully committed in the large commercial category for projects in Detroit and Grand Rapids. 2022 small commercial and residential projects are being reviewed and 2023 applications will be reviewed starting this summer. There is discussion that an effort will be made to increase the cap for the state credit program in the legislature, which would be highly beneficial for this program which is oversubscribed.

MacFarlane-Faes also shared details about a proposal by the DNR to create an office of the state archaeologist within DNR. This language has been included in the (FY24) budget passed by the House, but is not in the budget approved by the Senate. House Bill 4290 proposes to staff and fund an office of the state archaeologist in DNR. This proposal was not something that the SHPO had been consulted on nor apparently were some other stakeholders. What this means for SHPO and archaeology more broadly in Michigan is obviously something of great concern. The proposed office would have six FTE employees including positions which appear to duplicate some work currently done by SHPO, including managing state archaeological collections, state site files, and as the voice for archaeological expertise at the state level. MacFarlane-Faes reiterated that archaeology was formally transferred into the SHPO in 2009 under an executive order and archaeology has been fully integrated into SHPO programs and operations beyond what is required for specific federal programs. At this time, the SHPO is objecting to this legislation as it stands.

Board member Dean Anderson, retired State Archaeologist of Michigan, voiced that there was never intent to do anything detrimental to archaeology in the SHPO. For years, the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) worked closely with the SHPO and OSA staff conducted the archaeology business of the SHPO, primarily Section 106-related. Staffing was constantly an issue and while more staff members were added to the SHPO, these were in other disciplines not including archaeology. Fast forward to today and the SHPO does have

archaeologists on its own staff. In 2019, the then-State Historic Preservation Officer sent a memo to the director of the Michigan History Center/DNR suggesting DNR hire its own archaeology staff while SHPO archaeologists focused on federally-required programs in the office. In the past couple years, the DNR did hire an archaeologist, in addition to an existing maritime archaeologist. The intention of this legislation was get the OSA and the position of State Archaeologist into state statute, which it has not been, and to bolster the archaeology work done on state land, with adequate funding and staff to accomplish the work.

Ryzewski added that the professional archaeological community in Michigan is exceptionally collegial and the archaeological record of the state is tremendous, and it is in everyone's best interest to elevate archaeology in the state. This proposal seems to be rooted in a pre-pandemic model of conducting archaeology business. This could benefit from further discussion, as not all professional or avocational archaeologists or affinity groups have yet voiced support for this proposal. Many questions still remain for those doing the work and those who would work directly with them. There has been a huge push since SHPO hired three archaeologists within the past two years to better integrate archaeology into historic preservation like never before, including taking advantage of resources within SHPO programs and outreach.

Dean Anderson added that at this time, only the House budget bill has been completed. A separate policy bill will follow which will spell out the exact details or how the work will be done and who will do it.

Hobia, speaking from the tribal historic preservation perspective and thinking in terms of government to government consultation, noted that while the initial idea was discussed among a wider stakeholder group before the pandemic, it was highly surprising and concerning when this proposal was brought forward with no additional discussion or involvement. The Michigan Anishinabek Cultural Preservation and Repatriation Alliance in 2019 passed a resolution to support establishing an OSA in Michigan but the intent was not to separate the OSA from the SHPO. Potawatomi lands extend across several states and the Gun Lake Tribe has run into issues in other states where their archaeologist is in a separate agency from their SHPO. It can quickly become a marathon of trying to get information about just a single site. It would be best to have continued consultation with the Tribes so that we may express what we've seen and learned from dealing with similar situations in other states.

b. Archaeology Report – Amy Krull

Thus far in FY23, 84 new site numbers have been issued for sites around the state, over 700 project reviews have been processed by one of our three archaeologists. SHPO is currently involved in an inadvertent discovery at Fort Wayne and are also involved in consultation projects on several long term projects elsewhere around the state. SHPO provided comments on the proposed

revisions to National Park Service Bulletin 38 regarding Traditional Cultural Places (TCPs), in concert with Todd representing the National Register program. We have recently interviewed 4 candidates for a project position for archaeology data digitization and hope to make a selection soon. SHPO has created a new bulletin series "Archaeology Answers," to better engage with the public and answer commonly asked questions, which we hope to distribute at outreach events and make available on the SHPO website. Dr. Sarah Surface-Evans presented a program at the Port Huron Museum in April and a separate program to the Michigan Archaeological Society in March. Two archaeology sessions were presented at the Michigan Historic Preservation Network conference last week on Mackinac Island. SHPO is also working with the board of the Packard Proving Grounds historic site to help facilitate creation of an archaeological management plan. Upcoming events include a presentation at the annual cultural resource training for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a division of USDA, followed by a geophysical workshop. Archaeology will also be presenting at the Detroit Housing Department's workshop in June relating to Archaeology in Section 106. Later in the summer, we will host a data workshop for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers to discuss data sharing. Archaeology Month will take place in October this year, with a statewide archaeology poster planned to launch that month, theme TBD.

## **5. PUBLIC COMMENT & CORRESPONDENCE**

Summary of Correspondence:

Individual letters of support were received in support of the Vaughn's Bookstore nomination, Holcomb School nomination, Dean House nomination, First Congregational Church nomination, Besser House nomination, and Frances Harper Inn nomination. One letter of no objection was received for Sligh Furniture.

Summary of Public Comment:

None.

## **6. NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS**

### **a. Second Baptist Church (Additional Documentation), Detroit, Wayne County** Presented by Melanie Markowicz and Katie Cook

Board Comments: Demas indicated he had small suggestions but would share these with National Register staff directly. Demas also asked if there were historically Black churches in Michigan listed at the National level of significance. He continued that the congregation predates the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Walsh responded that to his knowledge no historically Black Michigan churches were listed at that level. Walsh continued that to his knowledge no context has been completed for African American churches to understand those which may have the highest significance under this theme. Nominations can be

amended, however, if such a context were written to help better assess congregations such as Second Baptist.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&B, state, criteria consideration a.

Motion: Devan Anderson

Second: Hobia

Vote: 8-0

**b. Vaughn's Book Store, Detroit, Wayne County**

Presented by Melanie Markowicz

Board Comments: Daley pointed out that beyond the demonstrated ethnic significance of Vaughn's, this common Detroit building type has so frequently been obliterated with street widening and revitalization projects across the city over the decades. Daley complimented the preparation of the nomination.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A&B, local

Motion: Daley

Second: Dean Anderson

Vote: 8-0

**c. Irving & Olive Dean House, Grand Rapids, Kent County**

Presented by William Lafferty

Board Comments: None.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: C, local

Motion: Bollman

Second: Daley

Vote: 8-0

**d. Samuel D. Holcomb School, Detroit, Wayne County**

Presented by Kristine Kidorf

Board Comments: Daley stated that he had previously worked with the Redford Township Historical Society, which has a metanarrative that the City of Detroit "tore off" this neighborhood, and efforts documented to attempt to lure Detroit into annexing this neighborhood where there had been such uncontrolled growth. Holcomb is kind of the last of these schools which were annexed that hasn't been demolished or altered so dramatically that little original design remains. Ferraro added that this is a unique example of a single story school at a time when everyone else was building two- and three-story school buildings.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.  
Criteria and Level: A&C, local  
Motion: Dean Anderson  
Second: Devan Anderson  
Vote: 8-0

**e. Sligh Furniture Co. Building, Grand Rapids, Kent County**  
Presented by Shannon Winterhalter

Board Comments: None.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.  
Criteria and Level: A, local  
Motion: Daley  
Second: Hobia  
Vote: 8-0

Note: The board took a lunch break from 12:04-12:32 p.m.

**f. First Congregational Church, Wyandotte, Wayne County**  
Presented by Laurie Neal

Board Comments: Ryzewski noted her appreciation for the early background history and context which went back to before European settlement and felt that added to the nomination.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.  
Criteria and Level: C, local, criteria consideration a.  
Motion: Ferraro  
Second: Bollman  
Vote: 8-0

**g. Herman & Hattie Besser House, Alpena, Alpena County**  
Presented by Michael Mumaugh

Board Comments: Bollman appreciated the detailed discussion of the fabrication of the material. Ferraro wished there was a close up photograph of a single block to see the fractured detail. Mumaugh responded that there was one in the nomination but not included in today's presentation. Ferraro added that she always appreciates seeing closer details of new construction materials and technologies.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.  
Criteria and Level: B, local  
Motion: Ferraro

Second: Daley

Vote: 8-0

**h. Frances Harper Inn, Detroit, Wayne County**

Presented by Karren Yurgalite

Board Comments: Demas highlighted that this was an excellent nomination that may help to save this resource. So many sites related to women's history of any ethnicity have been lost, that this is such an important place. The nomination highlights the growing call for government support in addition to community support. So many New Deal programs excluded those who worked in domestic service and that detail could be added. In the context of a place like Detroit, this exclusion detail wasn't an issue confined to the South. Daley added that many times properties like this simply melt away as new investment and development might take over a street or neighborhood. Even though the house design isn't special in and of itself, it is representative of a geography in the city which is dramatically lost in many places. Walsh shared that both of these board member comments highlight the era in which the National Register program appears to be in at this time focusing on social history, elevating these stories which up until now have not been told. Ferraro added that seeing both this property and Vaughn's where the condition and integrity are challenged but the history has been fully documented is great to see. The NAPC is offering a webinar later this month titled "Not Another Integrity Debate," discussing properties the changing issues of significance and integrity. Ryzewski asked about the future of the property. Yurgalite responded that it is owned by the non-profit Michigan Urban Farm Initiative, not the City. There is discussion that MUFII might want to rehab the interior to house interns or workers to work the nearby urban farmland. The Harper Inn house is about one foot away from its neighbor and the neighbor finds this property to be an eyesore. Devan highlighted some of the challenging history of the North End neighborhood, and that he was excited to see this nomination come forward to possibly help bridge the gap between the neighborhood and the ideals of urban farming. Ryzewski concluded the section on archaeological potential of this property is a model and does a good job discussion outbuildings and other less-visible features of the property.

Motion to approve the nomination as presented.

Criteria and Level: A, local

Motion: Demas

Second: Ferraro

Vote: 8-0

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

**a. Wild-Frey Farm Historic Resources Study Committee Preliminary Report, Washtenaw County**

Board comments: None.

**8. APPEALS – Jon Stuckey and Austin Wright**

a. DJM Land Co, LLC v. City of Ypsilanti Historic District Commission

Board Comments: Ferraro asked why two separate hearings were held. Wright responded that the presentations took so long that they required a second day. Bollman said this case seems pretty cut and dry, he appreciated that the respondent did make the effort to find someone to make an effort on a compromise but as always it is up to the local commission.

Motion to adopt the proposal for decision that the appeal filed in the case of DJM Land Co, LLC v. City of Ypsilanti Historic District Commission be upheld.

Motion: Bollman

Second: Ferraro

Vote: 7-0 Recused: Devan Anderson

b. Mario Mongini v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission

Board Comments: Devan Anderson asked if there was any information known about why the respondent did not show up for his hearing. Stuckey responded that he did not know the reason but it is unusual.

Motion to adopt the proposal for decision that the appeal filed in the case of Mario Mongini v. City of Detroit Historic District Commission be upheld.

Motion: Ferraro

Second: Daley

Vote: 8-0

**9. DATES OF NEXT MEETING**

September 22, 2023, January 19, 2024

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn: Demas

Second: Hobia

Vote: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 1:44 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nathan Nietering