



Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 4:00 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by Hermanson at 4:00pm. A quorum in attendance consisted of Altschwager, Gilbertson, Hermanson, Nagle, and Ulrich. Staff liaison Bennett was also present.

Notice of Open Meeting

Hermanson noted the meeting was posted according to law.

Approval of agenda

Gilbertson motioned to approve the agenda as presented; seconded by Altschwager. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Approve minutes from previous meeting(s)

Consider and take action to approve the minutes of previous meeting(s)

Nagle motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 22, 2026. Gilbertson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Public Comments (3 minute limit per person)

There were no members of the public in attendance for comment and staff did not receive any correspondence.

New Business

1. Consideration and possible action regarding financial reports and invoices

Treasurer Altschwager presented the latest financial report and brought several new invoices for review.

Nagle motioned to pay \$260.95 from the Rest Haven account to Minuteman Press for marketing materials related to the 2026 Summer Concert Series; seconded by Gilbertson. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Nagle motioned to reimburse from the Rest Haven account to Commissioner Gilbertson \$30 for paying the fee for a temporary alcohol license for the 2026 Summer Concert Series; Gilbertson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Nagle motioned to reimburse from the HLPC general account to Commissioner Ulrich \$35.02 for paying for 5 petunias to be planted at the entry gate to Fireman's Park. Altschwager seconded the motion. There was discussion about how the flowers would be taken care of. Bennett suggested reaching out to Public Works as they water decorative City-owned plantings around town. Bennett noted that this item should be in partnership with the Public Spaces Committee going forward. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Staff will work with the Treasurer to send invoices to the Finance Department for processing and payment. Altschwager gave the invoices to Bennett, who will take them to Finance along with a

copy of the meeting minutes. Bennett will try to schedule the Finance Director to meet with HLPC at a future meeting.

2. Consider and take action regarding the Rest Haven project (CC 4/8/26)

Bennett and Hermanson presented an update of the Rest Haven project stemming from the Council's decision regarding the project from its April 8th meeting. Bennett also presented a recap of the City Attorney's opinion stating that Public Works (DPW) will be leading the project similarly to other City facility projects and may have input from the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (HLPC). HLPC members expressed displeasure of the opinion highlighting the requested consulting of HLPC by DPW and that HLPC's primary role would be to fundraise for the project. There were additional concerns about leveraging past work done by the HLPC as members did not want to see that go to waste and had issues about starting the project over. Bennett recapped the staff meeting between himself, the Community Development Director, the Public Works and Utilities Director, and the City Administrator in which Public Works accepted the lead role on the project and Bennett was designated as the coordinator. The City will use Axiom through Ruekert Mielke to update the existing plans using the current scope of the project. Bennett has been working with Axiom to provide relevant information based on HLPC efforts.

There was additional discussion regarding the April 8th Council decision to postpone the project until the City Attorney opinion was obtained as there was no motion to directly alter or remove the January 6th Council decision for HLPC to replace the front entry doors, add push button access and needed electrical to the Rest Haven for up to \$25,000. Staff will look into this.

HLPC and staff agreed to a working meeting that will include Hermanson, Gilbertson, and Bennett to go over this topic prior to the next HLPC meeting.

3. Consider and take action regarding the local historic designation of the Fireman's Park Complex located at 1049 Park Ave. (CC 5/5/26)

Bennett and Hermanson presented the May 5th Council decision to not move forward with the application for the local historic designation of the Fireman's Park Complex with HLPC Commissioners expressing disappointment in the decision. During discussion, questions from the Council were addressed along with the presentation of new information highlighting a small portion of the park that contains the contributing structures defined by the National and State historic registry. Bennett presented informative comparison charts that highlighted differences between local, state and national historic designation. It was noted that members of the HLPC have been contacted by Alder Rostad about the topic and that he'll be attending the next HLPC meeting in June.

There was further discussion about creating a set of talking points to promote the benefits and address concerns regarding local designation, specifically Certified Local Government (CLG) status. Staff will try to create a list of talking points from the HLPC members for the next meeting.

4. Consider and take action regarding purchasing additional historic recognition yard signs

Nagle presented a list of proposed properties that still need historic recognition yard signs. Any requests to be included in the recognition program may be forwarded to Nagle or staff. It was clarified that pricing for the signs is based on quantity with 38 being the most efficient option. The focus of the initial wave of yard signs and going forward included century homes - especially in the Prairie Street and South Dickason Boulevard areas. Nagle added that there were four homes that used to be churches and looked for input on how to include that information on the yard signs.

Nagle will have an updated list and may request action on this topic at the next HLPC meeting.

5. Consider and take action regarding the 2026 Summer Concert Series

Staff and commission member addressed work orders for Public Works to set up the 2026 summer concerts along with coordinating marketing materials to be used online. Bennett addressed how

the City Finance Director wants to proceed with payment to performers. This will involve confirmation of each performance, then staff will send a copy of the performer contract and the February 17th HLPC minutes to the Finance Department for payment. Bennett will send Hermanson a copy of the performer contracts.

It was noted that there likely won't be any opening acts, however, food vendors will be available.

6. Consider and take action regarding 2027 budgeting and capital improvement projects

Bennett noted that HLPC members should have a list of items to budget for in 2027 along with any requests for capital improvement projects (CIP). Having a recommended budget will help staff and the CHLPC Treasurer to implement the City's purchasing policy with the Finance Department.

A major change for 2027 featured the HLPC's involvement in the Summer Concert Series. It was noted that 2026 will be the last year of hands-on involvement and beginning in 2027, the City's Recreation Department will be handling the concert series. There was discussion about the possibility of any proceeds generated could be shared with HLPC. Bennett will meet with Amy Jo to discuss this possibility.

7. Discuss initial draft of the zoning code rewrite regarding historic preservation

Bennett presented the initial draft regarding the historic preservation section of the zoning code. The zoning code rewrite is tasked to the Plan Commission and at its May 14th meeting it reviewed an initial draft of the historic preservation code. The main changes from the current code include moving the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (HLPC) composition, powers and duties to the same chapter as all other City boards, committees, and commissions, creation of downtown design standards to be reviewed by Plan Commission with input from HLPC, and giving final approval of local designation from HLPC to the Council pending review and recommendation by the HLPC.

It was emphasized that locally designated properties would still need HLPC approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and are still subject to State and National historic regulations. It was also noted that the new zoning code, if implemented, may impact the City's Certified Local Government (CLG) status. Bennett stated that the Plan Commission expressed interest of including input by the HLPC regarding any changes to the zoning code that impacts historic preservation along with a desire to include HLPC in potential downtown design reviews.

HLPC expressed concerns about providing input to Plan Commission and will look to have this topic remain on future agendas. HLPC would likely forward recommendations to the Plan Commission. Individual members of HLPC may participate separately in public comments during the remaining 2026 Plan Commission meetings. Bennett will see if the representative from Vandewalle and Associates could attend a future HLPC meeting either in-person or via Zoom to answer questions. Any feedback would need to be forwarded to the Plan Commission for consideration.

8. Consider and take action to nominate and elect among the members of the Commission the following positions: Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer / Secretary

Hermanson motioned to nominate Nagle as Chair, Gilbertson as Vice Chair, and Altschwager as Secretary / Treasurer; Gilbertson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

The new officers of the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission are as follows: Brian Nagle - Chair, Libby Gilbertson - Vice Chair, and Beth Altschwager as Secretary/Treasurer.

Altschwager expressed concern about writing minutes and implementing the City's purchasing policy. Bennett will work with Altschwager by providing meeting minutes and aiding in the purchasing policy process.

Adjourn

Nagle motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Altschwager. There was no discussion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56pm.

** These minutes will be approved at a future meeting and may be amended. These minutes are respectfully submitted by David Bennett, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator **