

**City of Merrill
Historic Preservation Committee
Thursday, June 10th, 2021 at 5:15 P.M.
City Hall Common Council Chambers, 1004 East First Street**

Voting Members Present (5 of 5): Alderman Paul Russell (Chairperson), Alderman Steve Sabatke, Elizabeth McCrank, Bea Lebal and Michael Caylor.

Others meeting attendees (either in-person or remotely) included: Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, City Attorney Tom Hayden, I/T Manager Dustin Brown and City Clerk Bill Heideman. Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

Call to order

Alderman Russell called the meeting to order at 5:17 P.M.

Minutes of previous meeting(s)

Motion (McCrank/Caylor) to approve the May 13th, 2021 minutes.

Bea Lebal requested that certain additions be made to the "Public Comment" portion of the minutes. Without objections, those additions will be made.

Motion to approve the minutes was carried.

Consider changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance

The meeting packet included a memorandum from City Attorney Hayden. The memorandum included a recommendation from City Attorney Hayden that the Historic Preservation Ordinance should be repealed.

Bea Lebal speculated that, at this point, the Historic Preservation Committee is struggling to determine purpose, goals and future direction.

Elizabeth McCrank expressed confidence that the committee can and will take steps that will be beneficial to the community.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel suggested that the committee could take measures to become more of an advisory body rather than a regulatory body. Alderman Sabatke responded by raising the question of how the committee would get to that point.

Bea Lebal mentioned that ladies from Wausau had attended previous meetings when the Scott Mansion was being discussed. She acknowledged their expertise in historical preservation matters, and suggested that they could be a valuable resource of information. Elizabeth McCrank agreed to contact those ladies and invite them to future meeting(s).

Alderman Sabatke suggested that people that live outside the City, but pay City taxes, could also be a resource for the committee.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel suggested amending the ordinance to be less restrictive, rather than forcing property owners to achieve the “perfect” look. He also asked the committee how they wanted him to address issues until any potential ordinance amendment(s) are in place.

Elizabeth McCrank raised the question of how to work with property owners. She also wondered about ways to convince property owners to speak to the committee.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel stated that there seems to be consensus that the committee favors regulation on demolitions, but an advisory position on other issues.

An ordinance will be drafted for consideration at the next meeting. No action was taken.

Public Comment Period

Michael Caylor provided information on his suggestion to designate certain streets in honor of prominent people from Merrill’s past. No street names would actually change.

Establish date, time and location of next meeting

Wednesday, July 7th, 2021 at 5:30 P.M. in the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

Adjournment

Motion (McCrank/Sabatke) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:02 P.M.

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

William N. Heideman CMC, WCMC
City Clerk