

1 **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**
2 **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**
3 **OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**
4

5
6 **MEETING DATE:** Thursday, February 12, 2026
7

8 **MEETING LOCATION:** Council Chambers, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL
9

10 **CALL TO ORDER**

11 At 6:33 p.m., Chairperson Weeder called the meeting to order. This Commission meeting takes place on-site.
12 Staff was asked to call the roll.
13

14 **ROLL CALL**

15 Commissioners Present: Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman
16

17 Commissioners Absent: Commissioners Gonka & Hartinger
18

19 Councilmember Present: Lidawer
20

21 Student Council Present: Cooper Baum & Gabi Goldstein
22

23 Staff declared that a quorum was present.
24

25 Staff Present: Coleman & Markle
26

27 Guests Present: Tom Hiller & Peijian Sun/Petitioners, Mary Seyfarth, Linda Barbera-Stein
28

29 Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder
30

31 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

32 *Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission – January 8, 2026*
33

34 Commissioner Pines moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 8, 2026. Commissioner
35 Ehrlich seconded the motion.
36

37 On a voice vote

38 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman

39 Voting Nay: None
40

41 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.
42

43 **SCHEDULED BUSINESS**

44 Planner Markle advised that the Applicant asked that the next two cases be continued to the March 12,
45 2026, HPC meeting. They noted the Plan and Design Commission/PDC meeting would be continued as well.
46

47 1. Review of Written Report to the Plan and Design Commission regarding Planned Development – 147
48 Central Avenue

1
2 2. Continuation of Partial Landmark Removal – 147 Central Avenue
3

4 Commissioner Ehrlich commented on public comment included in the February Agenda Packet. He believes
5 the HPC cannot rule on the first two agenda items. He noted confusion regarding procedural grounds.
6 Planner Markle recommended that the Commission not discuss items without the Petitioner present and
7 stated procedural questions will be discussed further at the March HPC meeting.
8

9 Councilperson Lidawer said these cases are requested to be continued.
10

11 Commissioner Ehrlich said previous comments regarding procedure have not been responded to. Planner
12 Markle stated that Corporation Counsel has already addressed the Commission's procedural concerns in the
13 form of a memo. The memo is included in the February Agenda Packet.
14

15 Commissioner Portman moved to continue the two cases for 147 Central Avenue to the March 12, 2026,
16 HPC meeting. Commissioner Pines seconded the motion.
17

18 On a roll call vote

19 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman

20 Voting Nay: None
21

22 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.
23

24 3. Preliminary Consideration of Landmark Nomination – 818 Hill Street

25 Commissioner Portman disclosed he lives 8-9 houses away on this street and has a friendship with the
26 owners. Corporation Counsel is aware and advised there would be no conflict.
27

28 Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- 29 • Summary
 - 30 ○ The "Summer House"
 - 31 ○ Tudor style
 - 32 ○ built c. 1927
 - 33 ○ architect is Harry Bengston
- 34 • Edith Rockefeller McCormick
 - 35 ○ original owner (not primary residence)
 - 36 ○ daughter of J.D. Rockefeller
 - 37 ○ real-estate developer; created *The Highlands*
- 38 • Elevations were shown
 - 39 ○ cedar-shingled roof
 - 40 ○ fieldstone chimney
 - 41 ○ hand-hewn logs (building material) may be the oldest in Highland Park
- 42 • Swedish Influence (culture document from Applicant was distributed)
- 43 • Notable Architectural Features
- 44 • Tudor-style Characteristics
 - 45 ○ Similarities to "Storybook style"
- 46 • Chain of Title
- 47 • Alteration History

- 1 ○ east, south façade modification
- 2 ○ log replacement
- 3 ○ carriage door removal; standard garage doors installed
- 4 • Site Plan
- 5 ○ Roof restoration – nominated for 2026 Preservation Award. Will be further considered in
- 6 May 2026.

7
8 Councilperson Lidawer departed the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

- 9
- 10 • Landmark Criteria (Staff recommends considering Criteria #1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 9)
- 11 • Recommendation

12
13 Petitioner/Owner, Mr. Tom Hiller appreciates Planner Markle’s presentation. He said he had no idea about
14 the history of the house when the initially moved in. The history was long forgotten at the time. They have
15 been living there for 4 years, and it’s a one-of-a-kind house. The roof and structure is a work of art. The
16 home has original Crane bathroom fixtures. Mr. Hiller advised that 1/3 of Swedish people immigrated to the
17 Midwest. He shared logs are actual.

18
19 Some HPC comments are:

- 20 • Commissioner Ehrlich said it’s an incredible presentation and house. He believes all landmark criteria
21 apply along with integrity.

22
23 Mr. Hiller stated the Newberry Library has minutes of meetings from around 1928 (regarding the
24 ERM Trust). He discussed the preparation/culmination of notable events (300th Anniversary in 1938)
25 in Delaware.

- 26
- 27 • Chairperson Weeder commended the Petitioner on a great summary.
- 28 • Commissioner Portman referred to Pages 24-25, and noted the pine trees haven’t changed. He stated
29 this home is a focal point of the Swedish movement.

30
31 Mr. Hiller said the paneling is mind boggling. He and his wife had no clue when they bought this
32 house; built like a bomb shelter.

- 33
- 34 • Commissioner Greenbaum said the architect for her house is R. Harold Zook.

35
36 Staff asked if anyone from the public wishes to speak. The following came forward:

- 37 • Mary Seyfarth asked how many faux-thatched roofs are like this in Highland Park. It was noted there
38 is one on Oakwood, St. Johns, and Sheridan Road.

39
40 Mr. Hiller said the number of houses in the area had this type of roof; though, they are torn off
41 now. He noted there is one on Greenwood; has to do with the number of layers. Another house is
42 on Tower Road and another by Northwestern. There are some in Palatine, Hinsdale, etc.

43
44 Petitioner/Owner, Mrs. Peijian Sun advised this roof is unique; like an ocean; a fish pattern. There is a boat
45 on the chimney (to come across the ocean). Many say this house is overbuilt. There is a Japanese burn
46 technique. The stone is granite, river stone (breaking technique rather than cutting).

47

1 Another audience member came forward:

- 2 • Linda Barbera-Stein did an exhibit in *The Highlands* with this kind of house; the American Dream.
3 Housing materials were American-made and affordable. This house was a summer house.

4
5 Planner Markle displayed an aerial view as did Ms. Stein.

6
7 Ms. Stein advised there were 7-9 Tudor homes built before the crash.

8
9 More HPC comments are.....

- 10 • Chairperson Weeder believes this house meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, & 9.
- 11 • Commissioners Pine and Portman concur.
- 12 • Commissioner Ehrlich believes Criteria 2 & 8 also meet landmark criteria.

13
14 Commissioner Ehrlich moved that Criteria 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 9 apply as well as the grounds. Commissioner
15 Portman seconded the motion.

16
17 Referring to Criteria 2, Commissioner Ehrlich said the location of an event could be anywhere. After
18 consensus of at least 3 HPC members who disagreed that Criteria 2 applies, Commissioner Ehrlich withdrew
19 his motion. Commissioner Portman withdrew seconding the motion.

20
21 Commissioner Greenbaum moved that Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 9 apply, the house has sufficient integrity,
22 and a preliminary Landmark Designation is recommended. Commissioner Pines seconded the motion.

23
24 On a roll call vote

25 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman

26 Voting Nay: None

27
28 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

29
30 Audience member, Mary Seyfarth offered rationale that Criteria 2 applies due to Edith McCormick.
31 Members of the HPC stated this is covered in Criteria 3. Mr. Hiller responded with more history on Edith
32 McCormick.

33 34 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

35 There were no Discussion Items.

36 37 **BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC**

38 There was no Business from the Public.

39 40 **STAFF REPORT**

41 Planner Markle referenced the CMO memo about Residents' Academy/Summer School and encouraged HPC
42 members to apply.

43
44 Planner Markle welcomed two new Student Representatives. Cooper Baum & Gabi Goldstein introduced
45 themselves and shared where they go to high school.

46 47 **OTHER BUSINESS**

1 1. Next Regular Meeting is Scheduled for March 12, 2026
2 It was noted the next regular HPC Meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2026.

3
4 **ADJOURNMENT**

5 Commissioner Portman moved to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Commissioner Ehrlich seconded the motion.

6
7 On a voice vote
8 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman
9 Voting Nay: None

10
11 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

12
13 Respectfully Submitted,

14
15
16
17 Gale Cerabona
18 Recorder

19
20 **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING ON JANUARY 8, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.**