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**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**

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**MEETING DATE:** Thursday, March 12, 2026

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

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**CALL TO ORDER**

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At 6:33 p.m., Chairperson Weeder called the meeting to order. This Commission meeting takes place on-site. Staff was asked to call the roll. She requested a 10-minute break so Commissioners may read handouts just presented.

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Commissioner Gonka arrived at 6:38 p.m.

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**ROLL CALL**

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Commissioners Present: Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Gonka, Greenbaum, Hartinger, Pines, & Portman

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Councilmember Absent: Blumberg

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Student Council Present: Cooper Baum

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Student Council Absent: Gabi Goldstein, Amelia Koslow

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Staff declared that a quorum was present.

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Staff Present: Fontane, Coleman, & Markle

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Guests Present: Ken & Marcia Kotula/Petitioner, Owners  
Kim Schliesmann/Petitioner, Owner  
Thomas Hiller and Peijian Sun/ Petitioner, Owner  
Cal Bernstein, Attorney/Samuels & Bernstein

56  
57  
58

Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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64

*Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission – February 12, 2026*

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Commissioner Pines moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 12, 2026. Commissioner Greenbaum seconded the motion.

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70

On a voice vote

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73

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

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Voting Nay: None

1 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

2  
3 Planner Markle advised that copies of public letters are available (specifically two letters from Mr. Cal  
4 Bernstein, Attorney with Samuels & Bernstein, for the case at 147 Central Avenue).

5  
6 **SCHEDULED BUSINESS**

7 Commissioner Ehrlich suggested the last three items be moved up on the agenda. Chairperson Weeder  
8 concurred, and the order was rearranged.

9  
10 1. Final Consideration of Landmark Nomination – 818 Hill Street

11 Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- 12 • Not Surveyed
- 13 • Tudor style with Swedish Folk elements
- 14 • Builder & Architect is Harry Bengston
- 15 • Landmark Designation Process
- 16 • Elevations were shown
- 17 • Previous Consideration (from the February 12, 2026, HPC meeting)
- 18 • Findings of Fact
- 19 • Landmark Criteria
- 20 • Recommendation

21  
22 Commissioner Portman moved to recommend a Landmark Nomination to City Council. Commissioner  
23 Ehrlich seconded the motion.

24  
25 On a roll call vote

26 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Gonka, Greenbaum, Hartinger, Pines,  
27 & Portman

28 Voting Nay: None

29  
30 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

31  
32 2. Preliminary Consideration of Landmark Nomination – 670 De Tamble Avenue

33 Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- 34 • Landmark Designation Process
- 35 • Arthur Vetter House
- 36 • Tudor style
- 37 • Built in 1928
- 38 • Builder is Arthur Vetter
- 39 • Contributing Structure in the 2006 Bob O’Link survey
- 40 • Elevations were shown
- 41 • Notable Architectural Features
- 42 • Tudor-style Characteristics
- 43 • Arthur & Mabel Vetter
- 44 • Daniel Vetter
- 45 • Chain of Title
- 46 • Alteration History (before & after photos were shown)
- 47 • 2003-2004 Preservation Award Winner

- 1 • Landmark Criteria
- 2 • Recommendation

3  
4 Mr. Ken Kotula, Petitioner, stated the house is nearing 100 years of age. He explained the revisions. The  
5 implanted stone and brick work (and stucco) fit more into a Cotswold-hybrid cottage. The neighbor, Lisa  
6 Temkin, brought a letter (from after their fire occurred in 2008; previously addressed as 556) which was  
7 distributed. The Kotula's love the house and raised their family there. The house was built October 28, 1928.  
8 Mr. Kotula noted this house deserves a landmark nomination. It has been repaired and enhanced.

9  
10 Some HPC comments are:

- 11 • Commissioner Ehrlich would like a picture taken of the letter, so it is in the record.
- 12 • Commissioner Portman appreciates the owners honoring the house.
- 13 • Chairperson Weeder said this house is charming, well-composed, detailed and worthy of Criteria 1, 3,  
14 4, & 6.
- 15 • Commissioner Portman:
  - 16 ○ referenced the differences. Commissioners stated the dormer & French doors were added.  
17 He noted a typo.
  - 18 ○ stated the owners, son & father Arthur & Daniel, are significant. The house won the  
19 Preservation award. He asked, and Planner Marke said Bob O'Link has historic homes in that  
20 survey area.

21  
22 Chairperson Weeder asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak. There was no one.

23  
24 Commissioner Greenbaum moved that this meets Criteria 1, 3, 4, & 6; has sufficient integrity of design; and  
25 is recommended for a Preliminary Consideration of Landmark Nomination. Commissioner Ehrlich seconded  
26 the motion.

27  
28 On a roll call vote

29 Voting Yea                      Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Gonka, Greenbaum, Hartinger, Pines,  
30    & Portman

31 Voting Nay:                      None

32  
33 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

34  
35 3. Preliminary Consideration of Landmark Nomination – 273 Sheridan Road

36 Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- 37 • Landmark Designation Process
- 38 • Marshall Johnson House
- 39 • Significant rating in the 2003 Braeside survey
- 40 • French Eclectic style
- 41 • Built in 1935
- 42 • Architect & Builder are unknown
- 43 • Marshall Johnson
  - 44 ○ Notable landscape architect
  - 45 ○ Trained and worked under Jen Jensen
  - 46 ○ Jen Jensen's son-in-law
- 47 • Elevations were shown

- 1 • Aerial view was illustrated
- 2 • Notable Architectural Features
- 3 • French-Eclectic style Characteristics
- 4 • Chain of Title
- 5 • Alteration History
- 6 • Landmark Criteria
- 7 • Recommendation

8  
9 Chairperson Weeder asked if anyone from the public wishes to speak. The following came forward:

- 10 • Lisa Temkin gave a brief history.

11  
12 Ms. Kim Schliesmann, Petitioner, advised they are the third owner and were taken by this house. The  
13 outside will remain the same. An architectural, Belmont-style, shingle roof is slated to exactly match. The  
14 inside is amazing. There is a piece of stained glass (3x4 from the World’s Fair) mounted in the inside. The  
15 paving stones might have been a gathering circle. Perhaps students could recreate the yard (via a program).  
16 They wish to protect this house. There is no water damage and is in remarkable shape.

17  
18 Commissioner Portman shared the University of Illinois has local extension offices.

19  
20 Chairperson Weeder asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak. The following came forward:

- 21 • Mary Seyfarth stated Marshall Johnson is the designer of the Rose Garden.

22  
23 Commissioner Portman asked, and Planner Markle said, regarding Criteria 7, the HPC may want to consider  
24 this as a significant corner lot.

25  
26 Commissioner Greenbaum moved that Criteria 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7 are met. This house has sufficient integrity,  
27 and the HPC wishes to adopt a Preliminary Landmark Nomination. Commissioner Ehrlich seconded the  
28 motion.

29  
30 On a roll call vote  
31 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Gonka, Greenbaum, Hartinger, Pines,  
32 & Portman  
33 Voting Nay: None

34  
35 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

36  
37 4. Review of Written Report to the Plan and Design Commission regarding Planned Development – 147  
38 Central Avenue

39 Planner Markle offered a brief presentation:

- 40 • HPC is required to give a recommendation to the PDC
- 41 • Prior HPC Consideration on January 8, 2026
  - 42 ○ a report was summarized by Staff
- 43 • Recommendation

44  
45 Senior Planner Coleman read the first part of the memo on Page 10. Planner Markle said the report goes  
46 into more detail.

47

1 Chairperson Weeder said this is an unusual situation, as the attorney wrote a letter that the HPC is not  
2 competent to discuss/vote. Discussion took place on the two agenda items relating to this matter.

3  
4 Commissioner Ehrlich said the HPC is being asked to address something based on the facts on the ground at  
5 the time of the ruling (as they presently exist). The historic designation was made as one property. The  
6 property line exists where it was designated. It is not currently subdivided. This is Monticello in Highland  
7 Park. He has seen nothing that gives the HPC the power to do this. The HPC should do nothing on this. A  
8 COA is needed. Commissioner Ehrlich can't believe he is being threatened with a constitutional  
9 amendment. The HPC will make a recommendation/motion that the designation remains, and the HPC or  
10 City Council don't have the authority to change that. He is upset he was never given the design commission  
11 document. What is relevant is an attorney made a comment that a \$2,500 public benefit/donation would be  
12 given.

13  
14 Director Fontane said there are two applications before the HPC. Part of the PDC's purview is to decide  
15 several things. The HPC is being consulted. He expounded on the process.

16  
17 Some HPC comments are.....

- 18 • Commissioner Portman is not in favor of agreeing to the second point in the drafted written  
19 recommendation.
- 20 • Commissioner Gonka said building on the lot affects the landmark designation.

21  
22 Director Fontane reminded the size of this property triggers a Planned Development. The Planned  
23 Development process does not remove a landmark designation.

- 24  
25 • Commissioner Ehrlich expressed that Corporation Counsel hasn't said the HPC cannot operate  
26 without facts on the ground. He feels a joint meeting should take place with the PDC.

27  
28 Senior Planner Coleman explained the PDC process and request for input from the HPC.

- 29  
30 • Chairperson Weeder believes the bullet points on drafted written recommendation are well  
31 considered. She'd like it to be more specific (on restrictive yard setbacks....). Director Fontane  
32 explained same. Chairperson Weeder would like to have more time to study this.

33  
34 Director Fontane said this is not a conversation between two Commissions. It is a request to obtain  
35 the HPC's vantage point.

- 36  
37 • Commissioner Portman would like to add on the second part of the written  
38 recommendation.....allowing any structure to be built on Lot B will create more density on the  
39 existing estate. Planner Markle said this is noted and read same.
- 40 • Commissioner Ehrlich concurred.
- 41 • Commissioner Gonka would like to add information on the COA even if it's redundant.

42  
43 Commissioner Gonka moved to continue this matter to add more research as per this discussion tonight.  
44 Commissioner Ehrlich seconded the motion. Commissioner Gonka amended the motion that this be  
45 continued to a date in April. Commissioner Ehrlich accepted the amendment.

46  
47 On a roll call vote

1 Voting Yea Chairperson Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Gonka, Greenbaum, Hartinger, Pines,  
2 & Portman  
3 Voting Nay: None  
4

5 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.  
6

7 5. Continuation of Partial Landmark Removal – 147 Central Avenue

8 Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- 9 • Prior HPC Consideration
  - 10 • Summary of Application
  - 11 • Photos were shown
  - 12 • Prior Designation
  - 13 • Recommendation
- 14

15 Mr. Bernstein, Attorney with Samuels & Bernstein, shared the PDC has discussed nothing further at this  
16 time, as it awaits input from the HPC. It was noted subdivision relief is being requested; is a through lot.  
17

18 Chairperson Weeder asked if anyone from the public wishes to speak. The following came forward:

- 19 • Kelsey Gonzalez referred to her extensive comments. She would like the HPC to have its own  
20 language on the previous matter. Ms. Gonzalez stated....what is binding is this item (landmark  
21 removal). She read excerpts from her letter. The HPC is here to protect Highland Park residences.  
22 Other entities went through an extensive review. It is ridiculous that the City wouldn't protect this,  
23 as it's a public treasure. If this occurs, Highland Park's preservation program preserves nothing.  
24

25 Commissioner Gonka expressed that while the whole process is confusing the items discussed are  
26 relevant. Planner Markle explained the footnote. Corporation Counsel drafted the Resolution.  
27 Director Fontane said what's in the packet is a draft.  
28

- 29 • Tom Corning defers to Ms. Gonzalez, as she is more invested and closer to the property. He concurs  
30 with Ms. Gonzalez. Calling this Monticello is an appropriate measure. The Central Street Bridge is  
31 large, trees were removed. Mr. Corning likes that input from the PDC and HPC is being sought. He  
32 thanked the HPC. Mr. Corning would like to see the landmark removal item be thrown away. He is  
33 sensitive that this is a burden. Mr. Corning would like to see serious FAR, bulk restrictions, etc., be  
34 put in place. There is not an Appearance Review Commission for any property. It is important,  
35 architecturally, that neighbors don't see a black box. It is a prime property. To make this a palatable  
36 venture, he would like to see comments, restrictions, and conditions applied.  
37

38 Director Fontane expounded on the process.  
39

40 Some HPC comments are.....

- 41 • Commissioner Gonka said the gate is not on the property. A little bit of a fence is. It was stated this  
42 meets Criteria 3 & 7.
- 43 • Commissioner Ehrlich believes this should be continued, dovetailed with the previous agenda item.
- 44 • Commissioner Gonka said there isn't anyone from the public who wants to see this subdivided. The  
45 Commission is knowledgeable about the Criteria and can consider the Criteria. There is no question  
46 that the lot meets at least two Criteria. Commissioner Greenbaum concurred.
- 47 • Commissioner Gonka said the Commission is confident in their ability to assess a Landmarked parcel.

- Commissioner Portman believes Criteria 4 is met.
- Commissioner Ehrlich believes Criteria 2 is met.
- Commissioner Greenbaum believes Criteria 1 is met. Commissioners Pines and Ehrlich concurred.
- Commissioner Pines doesn't believe Criteria 2 applies. More information is needed.

Commissioner Gonka moved to find that Lot B located at 147 Central Avenue does satisfy Landmark Criteria 1, 3, 4, & 7, does have sufficient integrity of design, and recommends City Council not adopt a Landmark Removal ordinance.

Commissioner Greenbaum seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

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

Voting Nay:                      None

Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **1. 2026 Preservation Month Events**

Planner Markle advised that Staff recommends a Walking Tour/Open House of The Highlands. Senior Planner Coleman said this would be confirmed tomorrow with City Management. Commissioner Pines asked, and Senior Planner Coleman replied this would be in place of the Bicycle Tour. Commissioner Ehrlich would like to invite Jean Sogin due to her vast knowledge. Everyone agreed this would be a great event.

Student Council Baum departed the meeting at 9:34 p.m.

Planner Markle advised the event for the Preservation Awards would be at the Willets House on May 7, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2026.

## **BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There was no Business from the Public.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. Next Regular Meeting is Scheduled for April 15, 2026**

It was noted the next regular HPC Meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2026.

## **STAFF REPORT**

There was no Staff Report.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Gonka moved to adjourn at 9:41 p.m. Commissioner Hartinger seconded the motion.

On a voice vote

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

Voting Nay:                      None

1 Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

2

3 Respectfully Submitted,

4 Gale Cerabona, Recorder

5

6 **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 12, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.**