

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

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, July 9, 2026

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

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:32 p.m., Chair Weeder called the meeting to order. This Commission meeting takes place on-site. Staff was asked to call the roll.

ROLL CALL

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

Councilmember Absent: Blumberg

Student Council Present: Cooper Baum & Gabi Goldstein

Staff declared that a quorum was present.

Staff Present: Markle

Guests Present: Jason & Michelle Kang/Petitioners
Jorge Gonzalez/Landscape Architect
Teo Scorte/Petitioner

Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission – May 14, 2026

Commissioner Portman moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 14, 2026. Commissioner Pines seconded the motion.

On a voice vote

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

Voting Nay: None

Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Special Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission – June 24, 2026

Chair Weeder asked that her comments be reflected in the Discussion Item – Place of Remembrance Design Concept:

- that the Rose Garden pool be restored in lieu of the seating area
- the materials and design of the bench at the north end could evoke those of Jens Jensen

- the sundial bench could perhaps be incorporated as a design element

Commissioner Gonka moved to approve the special meeting minutes of June 24, 2026 as amended.
Commissioner Greenbaum seconded the motion.

On a voice vote

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

Voting Nay: None

Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

1. 2276 Linden Avenue – Certificate of Appropriateness

Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- Request
 - fence and patio
 - Edward Smith house
 - Colonial Revival style
 - built c. 1914
 - architect is Robert Seyfarth
- Background
 - attached garage
- Proposed Change
 - vinyl fence (up against neighbor's existing fence)
 - stone-paver patio, concrete pad
- Photos were shown
- Standards for COA

Petitioners Jason & Michelle Kang came forward. Ms. Kang said there's an existing patio that has sunk down. There's a flagstone walkway that would be removed. Chain-link and wood fences exist. The goal is privacy and maintenance-free. A white fence would match the home.

Chair Weeder asked if it's a 6' fence. Mr. Kang said they bought this house in December, 2025, and noticed the fence was not maintained. Part of it is broken off; not aesthetically-pleasing. Landscaping will go along the fence. Mr. Kang said the fence is a hazard for their children and pets.

Chair Weeder asked if there are any audience comments. There were none.

Some HPC comments are.....

- Chair Weeder said the fencing is currently mixed. The final fencing is unknown. A matte finish is desirable. When it is up against another fence, maintenance is difficult. Chair Weeder asked if they spoke with the neighbor.

Ms. Kang said it took a while for the north chain-link fence to be approved. Neither neighbor wants to remove their fence. The hope is the neighbor will remove the fence after theirs is installed.

- Commissioner Gonka asked how many fences there are. Ms. Kang replied – 3. Mr. Kang said there are 4 different materials. Ms. Kang stated there's no continuity. The fences are old.

- Chair Weeder said this matter pertains to material. Part of the fence is visible; is a historic district.
- Commissioner Portman asked how tall the fence would be. Mr. Gonzalez, landscape architect, said the hedge would grow 10-15' tall and soften the fence. Hostas will be planted in a 3 to 4'-wide area.
- Commissioner Gonka said the fence in front could be more elegant.
- Chair Weeder suggested replacing the wood that's visible. Mr. Kang said the vinyl fence is not glossy or matte.
- Commissioner Ehrlich said there is an added dimension. Landscaping may cover the fence. The concern is the look from the street. The neighbor's fence is not the Applicant's responsibility.
- Chair Weeder said there is 2' of non-plantable area between the fences. Ms. Kang advised the driveway is another project; will be straightened.
- Commissioner Gonka said vinyl is not the appropriate material in the front yard. The remainder of the fence could be approved. The Applicant could return with materials. Ms. Kang stated she would be opposed to 2 different fence materials.
- Commissioner Pines asked if both sides of the vinyl fence are identical. Ms. Kang said yes. There is a fancier capping on the fence.
- Commissioner Portman asked if there are any other options with color. Ms. Kang stated she started with black.
- Chair Weeder said white is amenable, as the house is trimmed in white.
- Commissioner Portman asked about back-to-back fences. Planner Markle noted this meets code.
- Commissioner Ehrlich stated there's a concern about the gap between the 2 fences.
- Chair Weeder said the concern is the view from the public way.
- Commissioner Gonka said he would like to see materials before approving the fence.

Commissioner Gonka moved to approve the COA, the backyard plan as is, and the fence from the south property line cut back to the corner of the house at the 13.8 marking of the platted survey. Commissioner Greenbaum seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

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

Voting Nay: None

Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

2. 105 S. Deere Park Drive – Certificate of Appropriateness

Planner Markle offered a presentation:

- Request
 - for a pool & patio directly north of the structure
 - E. Lichtstern House
 - Local Landmark
 - Italian Renaissance Revival style
 - built in 1919
- Background
 - designed by Arthur Heun
- Site Plan (from the 1920s) was shown
- Proposed Change
- Aerial View (from 2021) was illustrated
- Elevation of the pool was displayed

- Standards for COA

Petitioner, Teo Scorte, came forward and thanked the HPC for its previous approval, as everyone loves it. He noted a pool was there when the home was purchased. The new pool will be rectangular. He presented recently revised plans with spa in different location. Materials are Schwake Stone, a perfect match for the wall element. The home has significant arches in the covered walkway. The location of the spa is now in the upper-middle section.

Some HPC comments are.....

- Commissioner Portman asked, and Mr. Scorte replied the top arch was the spa.
- Chair Weeder asked about the:
 - pool fence. Mr. Scorte said it was there originally. The dog needs it.
 - center lines. Mr. Scorte said when one is inside the home, it's centered between the bays. The spa is centered on the pool and off-centered with the bays.
- Commissioner Gonka asked what color the plaster is. Mr. Scorte said blueish green to capture the home's copper petina.

Chair Weeder asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak. There was no one.

Commissioner Ehrlich moved to approve the COA as amended by the revisions presented at the July 9, 2026, HPC meeting. Commissioner Pines seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea	Chair Weeder; Commissioners Ehrlich, Gonka, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman
Voting Nay:	None

Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Encouraging Historic Preservation Update

Planner Markle advised City Council is in favor of the HPC's recommendations with regard to zoning incentives, preservation code changes, historic demolition tax, etc. They noted a document would be developed by Staff and presented to the HPC before it is submitted to City Council. Planner Markle stated City Council did not direct a permit-fee program or extend the demolition-delay policy.

Some HPC comments are.....

- Commissioner Greenbaum asked, and Planner Markle explained the demolition process, etc.
- Commissioner Ehrlich said all realtors don't have all of the information. He wonders how they and neighbors are being educated; community effort.
- Commissioner Gonka would not like to see a transfer of the demolition permit to the new buyer.

Planner Markle reminded City Council isn't in favor of furthering the demolition-delay discussion. They explained Staff will focus on simpler items first then move onto more complicated/time-consuming ones later. Planner Markle reported the majority of landmarks occurred before 1929.

2. Material Substitutes for Historic Properties

Planner Markle stated Chair Weeder has a presentation involving materials. They discussed:

- What does the Code say regarding Material?
- The Fallacy of “Good” v. “Bad” Material
- Differing Perspectives

Chair Weeder began her educational presentation, Substitute Materials Show & Tell (where photos were illustrated and materials were displayed and explained):

- Siding
- Shingles, Columns

Commissioner Gonka raised the issue of Design Review. A brief discussion took place.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Audience member, Tom Hiller, said it’s difficult to do environmental testing (in regards to substitute materials). He discussed traceability. Name brands can change. What could work for one design may not work for another due to the workability.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Next Regular Meeting is Scheduled for August 13, 2026

The next regular HPC Meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2026.

STAFF REPORT

Planner Markle advised the Walking Tour of the Highlands produced 149 participants. They thanked Commissioner Portman for helping out. Commissioner Ehrlich said neighbors came to join the tour. He shared Planner Markle was superb on the tour when providing facts, knowledge.

Planner Markle displayed a new feature of landmarked homes on the HPC tab of the City’s web site.

They updated everyone on 2012 Grange Road. Applicant agreed to accept the Commission’s conditions of approval.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Ehrlich moved to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. Commissioner Portman seconded the motion.

On a voice vote

Voting Yea Chair Weeder; Commissioners Gonka, Greenbaum, Pines, & Portman

Voting Nay: None

Staff declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted, Gale Cerabona, Recorder

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING ON MAY 14, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS, AND MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING ON JUNE 24, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITH CORRECTIONS.