



Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 4:00 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call Meeting to Order

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

Notice of Open Meeting

It was noted that the meeting was posted according to law.

Approval of agenda

Altschwager motioned to approve the meeting agenda; seconded by Gilbertson. There was no discussion and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Approve minutes from previous meeting(s)

Consider and take action to approve the meeting minutes from August 26, 2026

There was a discussion regarding Pavilion upkeep. Staff was asked to see if there's an upkeep fund or clarification on how maintenance is funded. Bennett was asked to amend the minutes for Item #2 to exclude external historic preservation from the 4th paragraph.

Hermanson motioned to approve the meeting minutes with amending new business item #2 from August 26, 2026; seconded by Gilbertson. There was no additional discussion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Public Comments (3 minute limit per person)

There were no members of the public in attendance for comment and there was no correspondence received.

Altschwager asked about mowing the former community garden property. That property is under private ownership with the mowing responsibility going to the current owner.

New Business

1. Consider and take action regarding financial reporting and invoices

There was a recap of how finances will be handled until the Workhorse software is up to date following the end-of-the-year audit. Bennett will receive an Excel spreadsheet from Nagle and will work with Altschwager to provide more accurate reporting.

Altschwager presented a concert donation from OfficeSupply.com. \$4,125 were donated from the 2027 calendars. Bennett noted the City's purchasing policy and how sales tax is handled. Bennett recommended going through staff for purchases. Bennett was asked to look into how donations are paid/distributed.

Gilbertson presented the financial breakdown of the summer concerts.

Hermanson motioned to approve the joint financial reports; seconded by Gilbertson. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Consider and take action to make a recommendation to Plan Commission regarding the historic preservation section of the zoning code rewrite

Ulrich asked about certificate of appropriateness (COA). The City hasn't done one in years but shouldn't have due to only City Hall being locally historically designated. Hermanson provided background about potential lawsuits that hindered further COAs. Hermanson brought a past COA example from 2021 to debunk previous discussion about the commission being inefficient regarding approving COAs.

Nagle shared his concern about providing recommendations to Council for landmarking that creates an unnecessary additional step and gives more work for Council. The Council would still be involved in appeals.

Hermanson shared her opinion to keep the existing ordinance but include minimal changes. Nagle brought up the previous point from Kornmann from the last meeting about final approval from the elected body versus an appointed body. Nagle expressed concern about a Council that had no interest in historic preservation.

The commission discussed the potential recommendation to Plan Commission. The commission highlighted benefits of the City's Certified Local Government (CLG) status and impact to future historic district designations if the designation was removed. Hermanson gave background on the current designation. Downtown design standards were favorably discussed.

The commission is good with the changes that move the commission composition and duties to Chapter 2. Nagle asked about the commission's involvement in downtown design review. Significant changes would require review by HLPC as a commission to review and make recommendations to Plan Commission. COAs would be decided by HLPC.

Gilbertson motioned for the Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission recommends keeping the landmarking procedure as-is, move the composition and duties to Chapter 2, wording the historic preservation of the zoning code to maintain CLG status, and incorporating a timeline for HLPC input for downtown design review in line with COA timeline. Seconded by Hammer. There was no additional discussion and the motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

3. Accept the application for the local designation of the Fireman's Park Complex

Bennett presented the completed and signed application for the local historic designation of the Fireman's Park Complex within Fireman's Park has been received and is brought to the commission to accept it and begin the review process. Bennett reviewed the process of nomination and the timeline for specific tasks to be done, such as notifications, etc.

The commission discussed timeline for review process and agreed on Oct 21st for preliminary review with the public hearing for December 2nd.

Gilbertson motions to accept the application; Altschwager seconded. There was no additional discussion, and the motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

4. Discuss any updates regarding the current project at the Rest Haven

Bennett did not have any updates to share at the staff level. Mayor Hammer stated he is working on moving the project forward. There are accessibility concerns regarding upgrading municipal buildings that still need to be worked out. Gilbertson recommended talking to independent living facilities about accessibility capabilities for properties. It was noted there's a difference between municipal facilities versus private facilities regarding accessibility. Hammer and Bennett will continue to make progress on the project.

5. Discuss any updates regarding the Fireman's Park Pavilion

Bennett had no update but will work with the incoming Recreation Director to bring the stairs painting to be reviewed by the Recreation Committee. Nagle asked if the painting of the stairs would take place before the new Recreation Director is onboard. Bennett responded that it is unlikely as the stairs have not completed the curing process yet.

6. Consider and take action regarding purchasing of additional historic recognition yard signs and adding historic tax credit information with yard sign letters

Nagle presented an updated letter to accompany the new historic recognition yard signs and recommended approval of the letter to be sent to those who have received the new signs that have already gone out. Nagle included a letter drafted by Gilbertson that provided education about tax credits for historic designated properties. The information provided in the tax credit information letter came from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Hermanson motioned to approve the yard sign letter and tax credit information letter; seconded by Altschwager. There was no additional discussion, and the motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

Nagle presented a list of additional addresses in which new historic recognition signs could be purchased in 2026. To maximize the purchase, 4-5 additional properties would need to be added to the list. Nagle asked if there are any historic properties that need a sign, to let him know, so the list can be completed for the next order. The next order of yard signs would complete the remaining historic neighborhoods. Nagle would like to finalize the list prior to the October meeting. Bennett would make a social media and City website post to ask for additional properties to be included.

7. Discuss updates regarding the storage area for historic preservation documents and items and take possible action of purchasing additional storage solutions

Bennett had cleaned up and reorganized the storage space which provided additional filing cabinets. Ulrich and Gilbertson have done an initial clean up of HLPC materials and began organizing.

Gilbertson suggested not purchasing additional storage due to having empty storage boxes and new filing cabinets.

Gilbertson brought to the commission's attention a bin of postcards that were used for a previous fundraiser. There was discussion about possibly selling them at various locations and using them as thank you cards for donors. The commission will discuss how to use the postcards at its next meeting.

Adjourn

The only new item for next meeting was a request by Hermanson about attending the State's historic preservation convention.

Gilbertson motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Altschwager. There was no discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 6:03pm.

**** 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 ****