



## **AGENDA FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

A Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 5:30 PM**  
in the **Council Chambers at City Hall, 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI.**

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### **Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://zoom.us/j/7689466740?pwd=dEdLR2hXK0ZYMk1qNU5vNFJwMzdSZz09>

Meeting ID: 768 946 6740 Password: Tomah2020

Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

1. Join Zoom Meeting

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

### **GENERAL:**

- [4.](#) approval of April 2025 Minutes
5. Group member introductions and meeting rules
6. Group re-organization. The new officers will start next month
7. Meeting dates, times, and place
- [8.](#) Slide presentation
9. Questions and answers.
10. Future Agenda Items
11. Next Meeting Schedule

### **ADJOURN:**

**NOTICE:** It is possible that a quorum of members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above-stated meeting to gather information. No action will be taken by any governmental body at the above-stated meeting other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice. Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact Nicole Jacobs, City Clerk, at 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI 54660.

## City of Tomah Historic Preservation Commission

Secretary's Minutes April 10, 2025 City Council Chambers

The meeting was called to order by President Shawn Zabinski at 5:30 p.m. Present were Zabinski, Jim Weinzatl, John Miles, John Glynn, Suzanne Baker-Young, Deb Chesser, and Nick Morales.

A motion to approve the minutes from the June 2024 meeting was made by Weinzatl and seconded by Glynn. All ayes, minutes approved.

A motion to approve the minutes from the March 2025 meeting was made by Glynn and seconded by Weinzatl. All ayes, minutes approved.

Morales gave the Director of Economic Development and Zoning update. He gave details on a grant request for a façade improvement on the north wall of the All Things Amish store. He also explained the basic details on the city improvement grants.

Morales also gave an update on the status of the updates to the Downtown Master Plan. There is still work to be done on the updated plan. More formal details will be presented for the May meeting.

A discussion was held regarding state reporting requirements and what needs to be done to get reinstated as a Certified Local Government by the State Historical Society. Losing the CLG certification includes losing some of the grant opportunities that would be available.

A PowerPoint as a case study on creation of historic districts was given that featured Stoughton Wisconsin. This will be looked into further and discussed at a future meeting. It was agreed that there should be some with this discussion. Possibly inviting business and building owners to the next meeting and having Jason Tish from SHPO present to help explain the benefits of a historic property and district. It was noted that the State of Wisconsin Historical Society website has

a section that covers this. Baker-Young also noted that she had attended a webinar on the subject that may be available online as well.

A motion to adjourn was made by Baker-Young and seconded by Miles. All ayes, meeting adjourned at 6:18.

Suzanne Baker-Young, Secretary

The background of the slide is a photograph of the Wisconsin State Capitol building, featuring a large central dome and classical architectural elements like columns and a pediment. The image is dimmed with a dark blue overlay. The title text is centered over the upper half of the image.

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

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*A Policy Overview for Government Leaders*

# Why Historic Preservation Matters



**Economic Engine** Preservation projects generate jobs, attract private investment, and revitalize downtowns and Main Streets across Wisconsin.



**Cultural Identity** Historic places are symbols of shared heritage, connecting communities to the people and events that shaped them.



**Environmental Impact** Rehabilitating existing buildings conserves embodied energy and materials, reducing the carbon footprint of new construction.



**Tourism Driver** Wisconsin's historic sites draw millions of visitors annually, supporting local businesses and generating tax revenue.

# Wisconsin's Preservation Heritage

*Wisconsin has a preservation history spanning over 175 years, making it one of the earliest states to formally protect its cultural resources.*

- 1846** ● Wisconsin Historical Society founded, one of the oldest in the nation
- 1966** ● National Historic Preservation Act establishes federal framework
- 1977** ● Wisconsin enacts its own Historic Preservation Program (Ch. 44)
- 1986** ● Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation founded
- 2014** ● State expands 20% historic tax credit for income-producing properties
- 2016** ● Frank Lloyd Wright Trail designated as official state route
- 2026** ● AB 375 signed, repairing and strengthening the state HTC program

# Wisconsin Historical Society & SHPO

## Wisconsin Historical Society

Founded in 1846, the WHS is an official state agency and trustee, housing the largest North American heritage collection after the Library of Congress.

Conducts statewide surveys to identify and document historic properties across all 72 counties.

Maintains the Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places and administers federal preservation programs.

## State Historic Preservation Officer

Oversees the state's historic preservation program and ensures compliance with federal preservation laws.

Reviews proposed construction and government projects that may affect historic properties.

Coordinates both the State and National Registers of Historic Places in Wisconsin.

Certifies local historic preservation ordinances and provides technical assistance statewide.

# Legal Framework: Wisconsin Statutes

*Chapter 44 of the Wisconsin Statutes provides the comprehensive legal foundation for historic preservation in the state.*

## **Review Processes (ss. 44.39-44.42)**

Require state agencies and political subdivisions to consider impacts on historic properties before undertaking projects.

## **Local Authority (ss. 44.44, 66.1111)**

Empower cities, villages, and counties to establish preservation ordinances, commissions, and architectural conservancy districts.

## **Incentive Programs (ss. 71.07, 238.17)**

Establish state tax credits for rehabilitation of historic properties, supplementing federal incentives.

## **Criminal Protections (s. 44.48)**

Criminalize unauthorized disturbance of archaeological sites and specify penalties for violations.

## **Burial Site Preservation (s. 157.70)**

Protect human burial sites, mounds, and cemeteries from disturbance, with a dedicated Burial Sites Preservation Board.

# Federal and State Laws Working Together

## FEDERAL

### Section 106 Review

Federal agencies must consider effects on historic properties for any federally funded, permitted, or licensed undertaking.

### National Historic Preservation Act (1966)

Establishes the National Register, State Historic Preservation Officers, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

### Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit

20% credit for certified rehabilitation of income-producing historic buildings.

## STATE

### Wisconsin Statute 44.40

State-funded or state-permitted projects must consider impacts on listed historic properties.

### Municipal Responsibilities (ss. 44.42, 66.1111)

Political subdivisions and school boards must consider impacts of funded projects on listed properties.

### State Historic Tax Credit

Additional 20% state credit for certified historic rehabilitation projects.

# National Register of Historic Places

**2,500+**

Listed Properties & Districts

*across all 72 Wisconsin counties*

## LEADING COUNTIES

Milwaukee County	292
Dane County	265
Rock County	142
Door County	80
La Crosse County	69
Eau Claire County	65
Brown County	63

# State Register of Historic Places

*Wisconsin's official list of state properties determined historically significant to our heritage.*

- Recognizes buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects significant in state or local history
- Coordinated by the State Historic Preservation Office within the Wisconsin Historical Society
- Eligibility criteria include historical, architectural, or cultural significance with retained integrity
- Designation makes properties eligible for state tax credits and provides review protections
- Most listed properties are privately owned; listing does not restrict private property rights
- Recent listing: Frost Woods Historic District in Monona, featuring Mid-Century Modern homes



# Notable Historic Landmarks

## **Pabst Mansion, Milwaukee**

Flemish Renaissance Revival masterpiece (1892), re-listed at national significance in 2025

## **Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison**

Beaux-Arts landmark with the only granite dome in the United States

## **Villa Louis, Prairie du Chien**

Victorian estate on St. Feriote Island, one of the finest historic house museums in the Midwest

## **Wisconsin State Prison, Waupun**

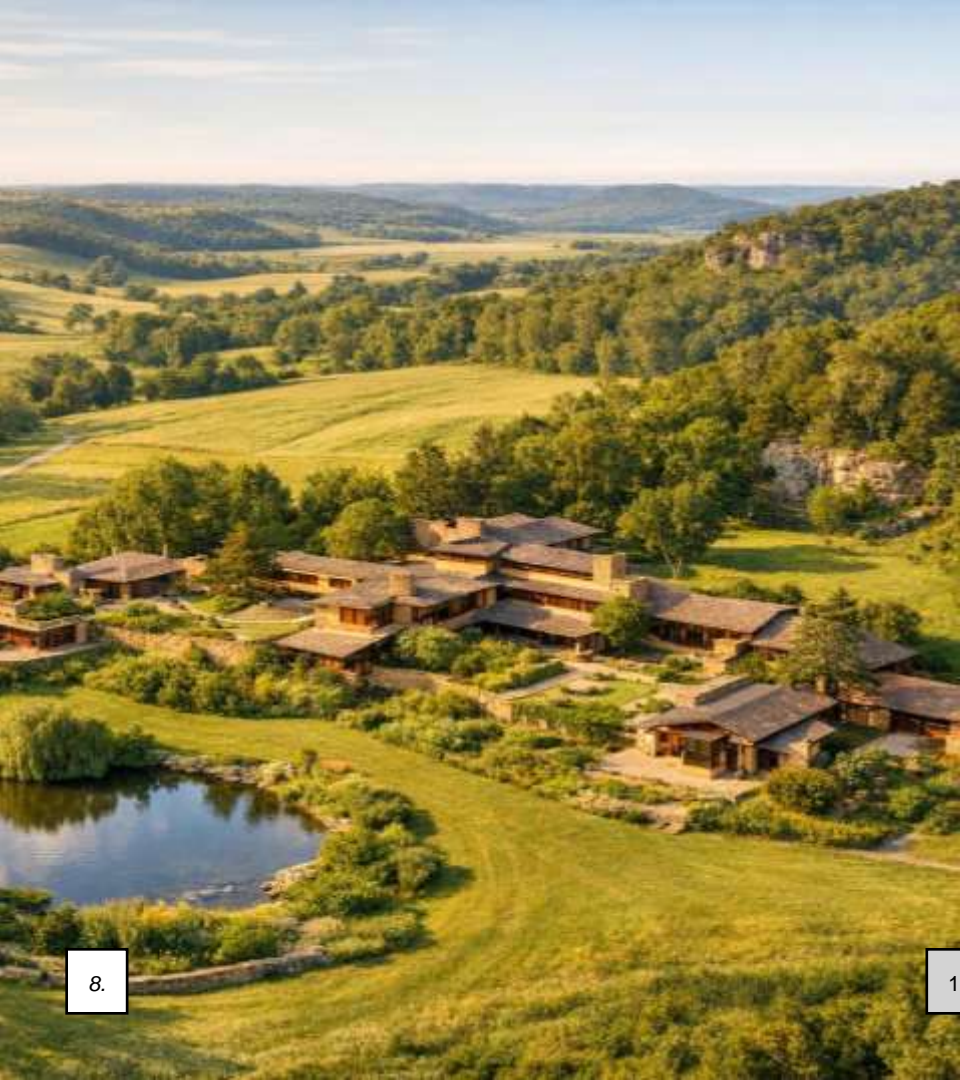
Historic district showcasing 19th-century institutional architecture

## **Circus World, Baraboo**

8.

Original Ringling Brothers winter quarters, now a museum and National Historic Landmark

12



# Frank Lloyd Wright's Wisconsin Legacy

Wisconsin-born Wright left behind nearly 500 structures. His Taliesin estate is both a National Historic Landmark and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- Taliesin in Spring Green: home, studio, and 800-acre estate spanning all decades of his career
- Named to National Geographic's Best of the World 2026 for its weekend workshops
- UNESCO inscription in 2019 for 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright
- Taliesin Preservation, a nonprofit since 1990, stewards the property and educational programs

# The Frank Lloyd Wright Trail

*A 200-mile self-guided route through southern Wisconsin featuring nine Wright-designed public buildings across eight stops.*

- 01 Taliesin & Visitor Center**  
Spring Green
- 02 Wyoming Valley School**  
Spring Green
- 03 Monona Terrace**  
Madison
- 04 First Unitarian Meeting House**  
Madison

- 05 Burnham Block**  
Milwaukee
- 06 SC Johnson Admin Building & Research Tower**  
Racine
- 07 Wingspread**  
Wind Point
- 08 A.D. German Warehouse**  
Richland Center

# Tax Credit Programs

**20%**

## FEDERAL CREDIT

For certified rehabilitation of income-producing historic buildings listed on or eligible for the National Register

**20%**

## STATE CREDIT

Supplemental credit for income-producing properties. \$3.5M maximum. Transferable to entities with tax liability

**25%**

## HOMEOWNER CREDIT

For owner-occupied personal residences. No federal equivalent. Available to individual Wisconsin taxpayers

## KEY REQUIREMENTS

- Must follow Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
- State credit requires minimum \$50,000 in qualified expenditures and Part 2 approval before work begins
- AB 375 (signed May 2026) removes the federal adjusted basis requirement for state-only projects, expanding access for small projects

# Local Preservation Efforts



## Local Landmarks Commissions

Municipalities can establish commissions to designate local landmarks and review proposed changes affecting historic properties.



## Historic Preservation Ordinances

Cities, villages, and counties can adopt ordinances certified by the SHPO, providing local regulatory protections for historic resources.



## Architectural Conservancy Districts

Under s. 66.1007, communities can create districts to preserve areas of architectural significance through design review.



## Community Organizations

Groups like the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation (founded 1986) advocate statewide, connecting property owners with resources and expertise.

# Preservation Challenges

## Development Pressure

Growing communities face tension between new construction needs and preserving historic fabric.

## Funding Gaps

Small-scale projects often struggle to access tax credits due to minimum expenditure requirements and complex application processes.

## Deferred Maintenance

Many historic buildings suffer from years of neglect, making rehabilitation costs prohibitive without incentives.

## Climate Adaptation

Historic structures need energy upgrades that respect original character while meeting modern performance standards.

## Awareness & Documentation

Properties at risk may not yet be identified or documented, especially in rural communities.



# The Future of Preservation

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## POLICY PRIORITIES

- Strengthen and fully fund the state historic tax credit program to ensure accessibility for projects of all sizes
- Support local governments in establishing and maintaining effective preservation ordinances and commissions
- Invest in survey and documentation of at-risk properties, particularly in underserved and rural communities
- Integrate preservation into broader planning goals including housing, sustainability, and economic development
- Promote heritage tourism as an economic strategy, building on assets like the Frank Lloyd Wright Trail

# Historical Preservation Commission

Tomah, WI