



AGENDA FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

A Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be held on **Thursday, April 04, 2024 at 5:30 PM**
in the **Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall, 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI.**

AGENDA

A. Call to Order - Roll Call

[B. Approval of March 14, 2024 Historic Preservation Commission minutes](#)

C. Discussion and update on Tom Wopat Concert fundraiser

[D. Discussion regarding historic Tomah Boy Scout Cabin fund](#)

[E. Discussion regarding reasons to buy and restore a Historic Commercial Building and common myths about historic buildings](#)

F. Discuss educational opportunities and public outreach

G. Future agenda items

ADJOURNMENT

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 Becki Weyer, City Clerk, at 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI 54660.

City of Tomah Historic Preservation Commission

March 14, 2024 City Council Chambers, 819 Superior Ave., Tomah WI

Secretary's Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by John Glynn. Present were HPC members Glynn, John Miles, Jim Weinzatl, and Nellie Pater. Also present was SET representative Shane Rolff. HPC members Suzanne Baker-Young and Deb Chesser arrived at 5:35 and 5:40 respectively. Absent were Shawn Zabinski and Richard Yarrington,

Minutes from the February meeting had been distributed prior to the meeting. A motion to approve was made by Weinzatl and approved by Pater. All ayes, minutes approved.

The commission reviewed a proposed nomination form for recommendation that the Tomah Public Library be designated a historic building on the proposed City of Tomah Historic Register. The nomination form was drawn up by Pater and Rolff. A discussion was held regarding thoughts and ideas on what commissioners feel should be included on the nomination form as well as guidelines that would need to be included in the determination process. One part of the nomination process discussed was the holding of a public hearing after the initial nomination. Any ideas of items that should potentially be included in the nomination and determination process should be forwarded to Rolff so a draft can be presented at the next meeting. It was suggested that members look into what surrounding municipalities have done in their nomination and determination process.

An informal review of the restoration project of the replacement of the exterior front steps at the Tomah Public Library was held.

Members reviewed the detailed plans from the general contractor, Keller, and reviewed costs and the payment options. As the building is not yet on a city register, any oversight on the integrity of historic preservation would have to be done at the state and/or federal level as the building is on those registers.

A discussion was held regarding the duties and responsibilities of the HPC. Included in this discussion was how the remaining monies in the fund for the Boy Scout Cabin repairs and restoration should be handled. Also discussed was how to handle, or if there should be any fundraising projects after the current concert fundraiser project is concluded. Both items will be included for further discussion and decisions on future agendas. A discussion was also held regarding education and public outreach regarding what the HPC is and does. The general consensus was that HPC members should continue to familiarize themselves with the state recommendations and guidelines and that as a whole the HPC does need to raise public awareness of what the HPC offers. Education and public outreach should be done on a continuing basis and included on all future agendas. Also noted that verbiage to include any new or rapidly developing issues that may come to light; formerly commonly described in agendas as “any other new business” be included on agendas.

A motion to adjourn was made by Weinzatl and seconded by Pater. All ayes, meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Suzanne Baker-Young, HPC Secretary

BOY SCOUT CABIN

05-48508

Balance Forward	12/31/2018	6,990.68
Revenue		
Walmart	1/14/2019	1,000.00
Wayne Kling	1/24/2019	10.00
Scott White	6/10/2019	100.00
Andres Fund	7/24/2019	1,500.00
MCF	7/29/2019	72.72
Wayne Kling	8/5/2019	25.00
Scott White	8/30/2019	160.00
Alfred & Kathleen	8/30/2019	100.00
		<u>9,958.40</u>
Expenses		
Raffle License Cost	4/18/2019	51.00
		<u>51.00</u>
Ending Balance	12/31/2019	<u>9,907.40</u>
Revenue		
Scott White	2/5/2020	160.00
Scott White	5/8/2020	150.00
Donations	7/8/2020	120.00
Donations	9/21/2020	50.02
Scott White	10/28/2020	200.00
	12/31/2020	<u>680.02</u>
Expenses		
CBS Squared Inc	June	2,367.68
CBS Squared Inc	Dec	998.22
CBS Squared Inc	July	4,340.88
		<u>7,706.78</u>
Ending Balance	12/31/2020	<u>2,880.64</u>
Revenue		
Donation	3/1/2021	170.00
Scott White	4/14/2021	260.00
Scott White	4/27/2021	280.00
Wayne Kling	5/3/2021	20.00
Wayne Kling	5/19/2021	90.00
MB Audio	5/27/2021	50.00
Cardinal	6/10/2021	1,000.00
Scott White	7/22/2021	340.00
Raffle Proceeds		3,590.76
Brad Hanson	9/10/2021	150.00
Scott White	11/1/2021	410.00
Earle Grant	11/8/2021	1,000.00
	12/31/2021	<u>7,360.76</u>
Expenses		
Susan Holme		<u>475.00</u>
		<u>475.00</u>
Ending Balance	12/31/2021	<u>9,766.40</u>
Revenue		
Kindness Community	2/11/2022	1,500.00
Scott White	3/24/2022	350.00
Scott White	4/11/2022	340.00
		88.00
Mary & Richard Radl	7/13/2022	300.00
Scott White	7/25/2022	351.00
Scott White	10/17/2022	275.00
		<u>3,204.00</u>
Ending Balance	12/31/2022	<u>12,970.40</u>
Revenue		
Kindness Community	2/15/2023	500.00
Scott White	3/6/2023	390.00
Donation	5/16/2023	139.00
Scott White	9/14/2023	265.00
Scott White	12/12/2023	170.00
		<u>1,464.00</u>
Expenses		
Wire Pro	11/30/2023	2,381.72 (917.72)
Ending Balance	12/31/2023	<u>12,052.68</u>

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

05-48507

Revenue		
Craft Show		280.00
Donation		105.00
Donation - Mary Eiler Radl		300.00
	12/31/2022	<u>685.00</u>
Expenses		
Postage		<u>10.60</u>
		<u>10.60</u>
Balance @	12/31/2022	<u>674.40</u>
Historic Preservation		
Donations	2023	-
Craft Show	2023	-
		<u>-</u>
Balance	12/31/2023	674.40



W I S C O N S I N
H I S T O R I C A L
S O C I E T Y

GENERAL INFORMATION

Ten Reasons to Buy and Restore a Historic Commercial Building

There are many reasons why you might want to buy and restore a historic commercial building. You may choose to operate your business in a historic building simply because you like the building's architectural design and craftsmanship. But you might also look at an older building as an investment, because older buildings are often built with long-lasting materials and energy-efficient construction. Buying and preserving an older commercial building also allows you to benefit from, and contribute to, the well-being of your community.

Consider the following top 10 reasons to buy and restore a historic commercial building.

Reason 1: A Good Long-Term Investment

Your purchase and rehabilitation of a historic commercial building could be an excellent long-term investment. Historic commercial buildings are well-built, energy efficient and often offer great flexibility in the reuse of space. Many older commercial buildings are located in downtown areas that are experiencing a revival as a shopping and tourist destination. The development of downtown residential units is also increasing in popularity throughout Wisconsin. If your building is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places or is a contributing building in a historic district, your rehabilitation work could qualify for substantial federal and state tax credits.

Reason 2: Well-Built and Long-Lasting

Commercial buildings constructed in Wisconsin before 1940 are some of the best-built buildings that will ever exist. Many of the state's historic commercial buildings have stood for over 100 years, and will last another 100 years with proper care and maintenance. The frame and masonry buildings constructed from the 19th to the mid-20th centuries were built using old-growth wood and quality craftsmanship. Lumber made of oak, fir, white pine, poplar and other native hardwoods was used for the structural support of these buildings as well as floors, ceilings and architectural details. Expert masons utilized brick and stone for exterior walls and decorative elements. These buildings often display interior plaster walls as well as materials such as pressed metal, terra cotta and structural glass.

Reason 3: Already Energy Efficient

Commercial buildings constructed before 1920 are some of Wisconsin's most energy-efficient buildings. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, pre-1920 commercial buildings require less energy consumption per square foot than any other commercial buildings except those built since 2000. Historic commercial buildings were designed with many features that help reduce energy use: high ceilings, operable sash windows and thick walls of plaster, brick and wood framing. You can also retrofit these buildings with modern energy-saving features to lower your energy bills even further. Many of these retrofits—such as adding ceiling insulation, storm windows, and roof solar panels—can be done while preserving and maintaining the architectural character of your building.

Reason 4: Open Floor Space Permits Adaptive Reuse

The open floor space on the first and upper stories of many historic commercial buildings can be adaptively reused for your business or tenants. Commercial buildings constructed between 1860 and 1920 usually have an open floor design with minimal partitions. Often these spaces have a high floor-to-ceiling height and character-defining features such as wood floors, pressed metal ceilings, wood ceilings and plaster walls. These characteristics could allow you to keep your floor space open for retail space, add partial-height partition walls for offices or subdivide upper floor space for residential units. A rear or rooftop addition could also provide you with additional opportunities.

The rehabilitation of a historic building is often less costly than new construction. A historic commercial building also offers a quicker occupancy time than new construction. Because the building does not need to be constructed from the ground up, a historic building can often be placed in service quicker than a new building.

Reason 5: Eligible for Historic Building Tax Credits

One way to increase your investment in a historic commercial building is through the use of [federal](#) and [state tax credits](#) for substantial rehabilitation projects. By rehabilitating your building in keeping with its architectural character, you can take a 20% federal tax credit against your income taxes. The state also provides an additional 20% credit towards the state income tax to supplement the federal credit. For example, if you complete a substantial and approved rehabilitation that costs \$200,000, then you would receive a federal tax credit of \$40,000 and a state tax credit of \$40,000. These are credits against what you owe in taxes, not a reduction of your taxable income.

Reason 6: Eligible for Tax Breaks via an Easement Agreement

You might be able to add to your investment in a historic commercial building through an easement agreement. Basically, an easement is an agreement between a property owner and a qualified historical society, conservation group or government entity to maintain a property's historic character in exchange for certain tax breaks. You can receive tax benefits in the form of reduced income, estate or property taxes. The easement binds the owner and future owners to keeping the property in its present condition rather than using the property at its highest and best use. The value of an easement is the difference between a building's existing use and its highest and best use.

For example, if you owned a two-story historic building in downtown Milwaukee, and the highest and best use allowed by zoning regulations was a ten-story building, then you would give up those development rights when you signed an easement agreement.

Reason 7: Part of Downtown Revitalization Efforts

Your historic commercial building could benefit from—and contribute to—your community’s downtown revitalization efforts. Historic buildings are attractive venues for cultural and commercial amenities, such as museums, theaters, restaurants, shops and libraries that enhance community life. Community efforts to preserve and adaptively reuse historic buildings tend to concentrate these attractions within close proximity to older neighborhoods. The historic commercial districts in many Wisconsin communities are becoming the preferred locations for many residents to work and live. The revitalization of historic downtowns has been established as public policy, and many local, state and federal programs are available to assist downtown property owners with revitalization efforts. Your community may offer low-interest loans, façade grants and other financial incentives to encourage investment in an older commercial building.

Reason 8: Protects Community Tax Investments

When you make efforts to preserve a historic building, you are making a commitment to protect taxpayers’ investments – including your own investments – in your community’s existing infrastructure and neighborhoods. It is far less costly for your community to use and maintain the existing infrastructure, such as roads, sidewalks, lights, water/sewer lines, schools and fire stations, than to expand development on the edge of your city. Community expansion requires new infrastructure projects, usually at the expense of existing neighborhoods.

Consider the impact of post-World War II sprawl on many Wisconsin communities. As cities expanded into suburbia, businesses vacated perfectly sound buildings to follow the out-migration. The domino effect promoted decay in existing neighborhoods, decreasing their property values. Today, municipalities are more attentive to taxpayers’ investments and have learned what countless studies have proved: the costs of sprawl surpass the corresponding tax revenue from the new development.

Reason 9: Creates Economic Benefits for Your Community

Your preserved historic building can help to attract visitors to your community – and the economic benefits of “heritage tourism.” In fact, one of the most rapidly growing segments of the tourism industry is heritage tourism, which focuses on historic areas and sites. Heritage tourists are those who wish to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. A community that accentuates its particular historic character and identity attracts visitors seeking an experience they cannot find elsewhere. Studies have shown that heritage tourists tend to visit longer and spend more money than other types of tourists, bringing economic benefits to the merchants in the communities they visit.

Reason 10: Creates Jobs in Your Community

Whether your commercial building preservation project is a large rehabilitation contract or a small repair, your project helps to create work and income in your community. Although new construction is often viewed as an indication of economic health, the rehabilitation of existing buildings actually creates thousands of construction jobs annually. The National Parks Service estimates that every \$55,000 spent on rehabilitation equates with one job. In fact, historic preservation creates more jobs for the dollar than new construction. In a typical new construction project, about half of the expenditures are for labor and half for materials. In a rehabilitation project, it is more typical that 60% to 70% of expenses will go toward labor costs. The money you spend on local labor for your rehabilitation project will stay in your community.

By restoring a commercial building in your community, you also reduce the waste that goes into your local landfill. Construction debris accounts for 25% of landfill material annually. The demolition of a 2,000 square-foot building results in an average of 230,000 pounds of waste.



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

GENERAL INFORMATION

Common Myths About Historic Buildings

Many myths and bits of misinformation about historic houses and buildings are widely repeated and believed. Fortunately, as more people undertake rehabilitation and restoration projects, the myths are being dispelled. If you are thinking about buying an older house or building, you will want to know the truth about ownership and renovation of a historic structure. Some of the most common myths you might encounter are discussed below.

Myth #1: Restoring an older building costs more than new construction.

homeowner's income tax credit program. Source: WHS - State Historic Preservation Office.

Fact: Although each rehabilitation project is different, it is typically more cost-effective to restore an older building than to pay for new construction. Upgrading an older commercial building or house is usually less expensive than demolition plus construction of a comparable new building. Older buildings contain materials that are long-lasting and can be retrofitted to be more energy efficient. Also, your rehabilitation project may be able to benefit from a 25% state historic preservation tax credit for residential properties or a 20% federal tax credit for income-producing properties.



Columbia County. Repainting a historic house exterior is an eligible expense for the homeowner's income tax credit program. Repainting a historic house exterior is an eligible expense for the homeowner's income tax credit program. Repainting a historic house exterior is an eligible expense for the

Myth #2: If my property is designated “historic,” I won’t be able to make any changes to it and I will have to open it for tours.

Fact: Even if your house or building is in a locally designated historic district, you will be able to make significant changes to your property. Historic district zoning only regulates renovations that are readily visible from the street, and local design review generally allows flexibility for making rear additions to a structure. Historic zoning also does not impose any regulations on the design and use of a building’s interior. It is only if you receive tax credits or some type of grant for your rehabilitation efforts that your interior work would be subject to review and approval. Also, there is no law that will require you to open your house or building for tours, regardless of its listing on either the National Register of Historic Places or a local district designation.



Once a building is listed on the National Register, the owner can order a plaque to be installed on the building. In some instances, communities have their own plaques for local designation also. Source: WHS - State Historic Preservation Office.

Myth #3: Historic designation will lower my property values.

Fact: Over 30 studies across the country have clearly demonstrated that historic designation and the creation of historic districts actually increases property values. Historic designation gives a distinction to a neighborhood or an individual historic site that sets it apart from other properties. Historic homes and buildings can be marketed to buyers who are seeking the quality and character of these historic structures. The National Register recognizes the significance of a property or district, and local historic districts protect property owners from inappropriate new development or misguided remodeling. These historic designations will protect your investment and improve your property and resale values.



Historic buildings can retain details not found on their contemporary counterparts. These unique details contribute to higher property values.

Myth #4: If my property is listed on the National Register, it will be protected forever and can never be demolished.

Fact: You may have heard that a property listed on the National Register can never be demolished or altered, and that the government will step in and protect any threatened property. In fact, no such protection exists in federal or state laws. Property owners can do whatever they wish with their property according to their local zoning laws. The only way your use of a property could be affected by government intervention is with a federal or state government undertaking. Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, all federally funded, licensed or assisted projects — such as improvements to a federal highway or installation of cellular communication towers — must be reviewed by the [State Historic Preservation Officer \(SHPO\)](#). The SHPO will consider any possible adverse effects on historic resources and propose mitigation efforts. However, the government (state or federal) has no such authority if a private individual or company, a city or a county wishes to demolish or alter a National Register-listed property.

Myth #5: Government money is available to help me repair and preserve my house.

Fact: The amount of money available to help you rehabilitate a historic house or building through direct grants or foundations is very limited. Many of the available grants also require a financial or other type of material commitment from the property owner. If you undertake a substantial rehabilitation of your property, you can get financial assistance from the government in the form of [tax credits](#). If you want to rehabilitate your historic house, you may be approved for a state 25% tax credit for rehabilitation if you spend more than \$10,000 over a two-year period. If you want to rehabilitate your income-producing property, such as a downtown commercial building, you may be eligible for the 20% federal tax credit and/or the 20% state tax credit for your qualified costs. Both of these programs require review by the SHPO, which is responsible for ensuring that the work you do is in keeping with the character of your house or building.

Myth #6: Historic preservation is only for fancy and expensive homes. There is nothing special about my property or street.

Fact: Historic preservation applies to properties far beyond just the high style homes of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Historic preservation is a significant part of community planning decisions and quality of life issues. Older neighborhoods with modest architecture often have a particular character and historical importance in the development of a community. Every neighborhood and downtown area has a different story to tell, and these stories are expressed in the houses and buildings along the streets.



Montreal, Wisconsin. The Montreal Company built houses for its workers, some of which are seen in this photo and are now listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Source: Photographer Mark Fay

Myth #7: My property rights will be restricted if my building is designated as historic.

Fact: The intention of historic preservation standards and laws is to protect your property rights, not take them away. Your community's zoning code will help to maintain and enhance property values in designated historic districts. If you own a historic house or building or a property in a historic district, you can count on your local design review process to help preserve the historic character of your neighborhood or downtown. This preservation of historic character will enhance everyone's property and resale values. Without historic district zoning, your neighbor could build or remodel in such a way as to detract from the area's historic character and negatively affect your property.