



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes - Approved

September 3, 2026, at 6:00 P.M.

Saugatuck City Hall, 102 Butler St, Saugatuck, MI 49453

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Straker.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Baldwin, Cannarsa, Dean, Root, Paterson & Straker.

Members Absent: Lampen.

Staff Present: Director of Planning & Zoning Moore, Clerk Wolters.

Others Present: None.

3. Agenda Changes/Additions/Deletions: None.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Baldwin, supported by Patterson, to approve the August 6, 2026, minutes as presented. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

5. Public Comment: None.

6. Unfinished Business:

A. 326 Water:

Chair Straker noted that unfinished business item 326 Water was an extension request.

Motion by Baldwin, second by Patterson to approve the applicant's request for the extension of the historic district permit for section §152.07 of the City Code to the next regular scheduled meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

7. New Business

A. 699 Lake – Fence:

Applicant Dan Murzyn appeared in person regarding a request for a four-foot-high, green vinyl-coated chain-link fence along the northwest side lot line. The proposed fence would connect the existing green chain-link fence near the water to an existing wood fence, stopping approximately 15 feet from the front of the property. The proposed fence would match the existing green vinyl-coated chain-link fence, which has been in place since 1996.

Murzyn stated that the purpose of the fence was to clearly establish the property boundary due to ongoing disputes with adjacent property owners regarding encroachment. He indicated that the property line had been surveyed and staked and that the proposed fence would be located on the applicant's side of the property line.

The primary discussion concerned the proposed fence in relation to the existing six-foot stockade fence located on the neighboring property. The proposed chain-link fence would be placed just inside the applicant's property line, resulting in two parallel fences with a gap between them.

Straker raised the concern that the Commission has not historically approved a "double fence" and stated that the typical approach has been to encourage neighboring property owners to reach a single agreed-upon fencing solution. Straker also noted that waterfront views are an important consideration. Alternatives discussed included removal of the existing stockade fence or adding slats to the proposed chain-link fence. Murzyn indicated that he was not pursuing removal of the neighboring fence and preferred to maintain an open chain-link fence without slats.

Commissioners discussed the visual impact of the two fences, including the varying width of the space between them and the potential for the chain-link fence to become more visually prominent when located adjacent to the solid wood fence. The Commission also discussed whether the existing neighboring fence should affect consideration of the proposal and the potential precedent that approval could establish for similar requests involving multiple parallel fences. Zoning Director Moore provided clarification regarding the applicable zoning and historic district considerations. He stated that the zoning ordinance permits two fences, making the issue before the HDC primarily an aesthetic determination. Moore also noted that the neighboring six-foot stockade fence is a grandfathered structure and is taller than what could currently be constructed at the waterfront, where a new fence would be limited to three feet. As proposed, the applicant's fence would therefore be the lower of the two fences. Moore further noted that the HDC guidelines provide for case-by-case review.

Commissioners Baldwin, Paterson, Cannarsa, and Root discussed the applicant's stated need to establish a clear property boundary, the compatibility of the proposed material with the existing fencing on the property, and the existing fencing conditions. It was also noted that some of the existing fencing would not likely meet current standards if proposed as new construction. A letter of support from neighboring property owner was included in the application packet and one letter that was received after the packet was distributed and subsequently printed for the members at the meeting.

The application also included a foundation repair on the left side of the house, immediately behind the gate. The repair involves addressing minor below-grade cracking using the same material that was used for a previously approved repair on the same building.

Motion by Baldwin, second by Patterson to approve the applicant's request for historic district permit for the foundation repair and extension of the four-foot green vinyl-coated chain link fence to existing retaining wall along North Side Lot Line at 699 Lake Street, as amended to take into account the unique nature of this application, in addition to the pre-existing condition of the fence of the neighbor, even though neither of these fences would be

approved under current historic district commission guidelines, we are making an exception based on like for like application and the unique circumstance. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

B. 303 Butler – Gutters:

The applicant opened by clarifying a point of confusion: what looks like two buildings is actually one connected structure — the Breuckman House (*the white house, also called the Owl House*) joined to the Women's Club auditorium, a long red brick building from a 1937 construction. The proposed work included gutter improvements at the Bruckman House and Auditorium. At the Bruckman House, a new gutter and downspout will be added to one corner to match the existing half-round gutters in color and shape. At the Auditorium, the existing copper box gutters will be repaired from the interior by installing a new gutter within the existing gutter, with no exterior change. The existing green-patina copper and painted-aluminum downspouts will remain. The entrance roof is not included in the application, and roof replacement is currently underway. A new bronze-colored aluminum box gutter, approximately 10–12 feet long, is also proposed at the end of the Auditorium to address water runoff and match the existing box gutter at the Bruckman House kitchen.

Straker confirmed the existing built-in copper gutter is a box gutter and supported relining it as the appropriate repair, emphasizing the importance of preserving it architecturally. He noted that the bronze box gutter had been a concern because of the possibility of it appearing as painted copper but was satisfied with the proposed material. Cannarsa expressed support for the copper lining solution.

Motion by Baldwin, second by Cannarsa to approve the applicant's request for historic district permit for the repair, replacement, addition, and rerouting of gutters and downspouts at 303 Butlers Street, including the Saugatuck Woman's Club and the Owl House (Breuckman House) as proposed based on the application meeting the applicable historic district guidelines set forth in city code section §152.07. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

C. Rose Garden – Warming Station:

Cannarsa recused himself as he is a member on the sub-committee for this item.

The Saugatuck Douglas Convention Bureau director Ashley Siebelink presented the proposed improvements which include replacing the wrought iron fence with a full-length masonry bench wall to create additional seating, adding a custom natural gas fire feature, and expanding the garden from one entrance to three. Existing entrance pavers will be reused at the new entrances, with the main entrance replaced in kind. Additional plantings will be added to fill out the garden. Brick samples were presented and confirmed to have been selected specifically for the project. Commission members expressed strong support for the proposed improvements. Baldwin praised the project and noted that removing the wrought iron fence would eliminate significant ongoing maintenance costs. Patterson supported the project's streetscape and gathering benefits.

Discussion included preserving recognition of the Mize family and confirming the garden will remain the Mize Rose Garden.

Members also discussed finding a new location for the removed wrought iron fence. Moore found no conflicts with the historic district guidelines, noting the project qualifies as

a site improvement. Straker noted that the garden is a non-contributing park, meaning no contributing historic elements would be removed.

Motion by Patterson, second by Root to approve the applicant's request for a historic district permit for modifications to the Mize Rose Garden at the corner of Mason Street and Butler Street, including removal of the existing wrought iron fence and installing of low masonry seating walls, additional landscaping, two brick paver entryways, and custom natural gas fire feature as proposed, based on the application. Via voice vote, motion carried 5-0.

D. 249 Mason – Fence:

The applicant submitted a retroactive application which includes a 36-inch decorative black metal railing along the Mason Street frontage, a six-foot dog-eared wood fence along the rear and parking lot side. Commission members generally supported the revised proposal and agreed it was a significant improvement from the previous design. Discussion included the appearance and aging of the wood fence, overall material cohesion, and the relationship of the fencing to the building and surrounding parking area.

Motion by Root, second by Dean to approve the applicant's request for a historic district permit for the revised fencing associated with the outdoor amenity area of 249 Mason Street, including a 36 inch black decorative metal railing along the north and east sides of the covered deck, and six dog-eared fencing along six-foot dog-eared fencing along the east and south sides of the uncovered deck with accompanying gates, as proposed, based on the application meeting the applicable historic district guidelines set forth in city code section §152.07. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

E. 560 Mill – Residential Improvements:

No applicants were present. Moore offered one update to his staff review: he had confirmed the application meets the zoning ordinance requirements. Enclosure of the existing covered porch connecting the garage and the home; Installation of four windows and one exterior door; Installation of LP SmartSide smooth siding and replacement of the existing concrete stairs with slate.

Motion by Dean, second by Baldwin approve the applicant's request for the historic district permit for improvements at 560 Mill Street, including enclosure of the existing covered porch connecting the garage and home, installation of four windows and one exterior door, installation of LP smart side, smooth siding, and replacement of the existing. Concrete stairs with slate, as proposed in the application, based on the application meeting the applicable historic district guidelines set forth in city code section §152.07. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

F. 333/337 Culver – Windows:

Straker recused himself as he is the owner of 333 Culver and the Windjammer Condominium board president.

Cannarsa recused himself as he is the owner of 333 Culver.

Vice Chair Patterson disclosed that he also resides in the building. He was permitted to participate and vote because he was not directly affected by the matter and, in part, under

the rule of necessity. Without his participation, a quorum would not have been present. Vice Chair Patterson then assumed responsibility for conducting the discussion.

Applicant Tim Straker presented the application, which covers two units, 333 Culver and 337 Culver. The units were included in a single application because they are part of the same structure. Straker stated that this is consistent with how the Windjammer handles common elements for the six units within the building.

333 Culver:

- Two sliding glass doors
- Four transom windows

337 Culver:

- One upper sash window

All proposed replacements are like-for-like Andersen 2400 windows and doors, matching the existing color, dimensions, configuration, and Teraton finish. The building is a non-contributing structure, and the existing windows are original to 1983. Straker explained that Andersen still manufactures the same profile and color, allowing the replacements to closely match the existing units.

Straker referenced a photograph showing two newer sliding glass doors on the lower unit directly below his older doors and noted that the difference is not readily distinguishable due to the matching profile, color, and installation method. The replacements have occurred incrementally over time. The lower windows have previously been replaced, as well as a door on the rear of 337 Culver around 2018. Straker stated that he would prefer to replace all of the windows and doors at one time while the exact match remains available, but the replacements are currently being completed as needed. The existing units are deteriorating and are not repairable. The cladding at the bottom of one door is coming off. At 337 Culver, the hardware on the upper sash window is completely broken, and Straker stated that replacing the entire sash is more cost-effective than rebuilding the internal hardware.

Motion by Patterson, second by Dean to approve to approve the applicant's request for a historic district permit for the replacement of the deteriorated windows and doors at 333 and 337 Culver Street, including two sliders and four transoms at 333 Culver Street and the upper sash at 337 Culver Street, with like-for-like Anderson 2400 windows and doors matching the existing color dimensions, configuration, and Teraton one finish, as proposed based on the application. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Straker resumed control over the meeting.

8. Administrative Approvals & Updates

- A. Historic District Signs
- B. Coghlin Park Bike Rack

9. Communication: None.

10. Public Comments: None.

11. Commission Comments:

Patterson inquired about the status of the Historic District signage. Dean noted that City Council approved them and Zoning Director Moore updated that he is awaiting a response back the manufacturer, the hired firm Concept A has reached out to the manufacturer twice with no response yet.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Baldwin, supported by Dean, to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk