



# CITY OF SOUTH BEND AND ST. JOSEPH COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



## MINUTES

### HYBRID MEETING

March 18, 2024  
6:00pm

Council Chambers, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
County-City Building, South Bend, IN

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sarah Andrews - President  
David Wyncott - Vice President  
Andrew Jones - Treasurer  
Joan Downs-Krostenko –  
Arch. Historian and Secretary  
Don Dietz  
Peter DeKever  
Michael Skaggs

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

#### ALSO PRESENT:

Ross Van Overberghe  
Kate Bolze  
Sandra Kennedy

- I. CALL TO ORDER – 6:03 pm
- II. ROLL CALL

*Commissioner David Wyncott arrived late to the meeting.*

#### III. PUBLIC HEARING

##### a. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

- i. 2024-0222 710 Park Avenue Chapin Park LHD, Ordinance #9575-05,  
Local Landmark, Ordinance #6461-1978 (Audio Position: 03:49)

The staff report was presented by:

Ross Van Overberghe, Historic Preservation Administrator

Staff Recommendation:

The proposed fence projects are positive improvements to the preservation of the structure and property. Due to the previously approved addition of French doors to the porch, the door into the later addition to the house will become unnecessary. Replacement with a window to match the others being installed retains a cohesive look to the structure. Staff makes a favorable recommendation.

The applicant was represented by:

Randy Davis, 710 Park Avenue, South Bend, IN, appeared in person to speak as the applicant.

The public was represented by:

There was no one from the public to speak in regards to this application.

SARAH ANDREWS  
PRESIDENT

A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ROSS VAN OVERBERGHE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADMINISTRATOR

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After due consideration the following action was taken:

Upon a motion by Michael Skaggs, seconded by Andrew Jones, and UNANIMOUSLY carried by vote, the Historic Preservation Commission APPROVES Certificate of Appropriateness Application #2024-2022.

Vote: 6-0. Six in favor, none opposed.

COA#2024-2022 is APPROVED.

b. LOCAL LANDMARK NOMINATION

- i. 3016 Portage Avenue, "Portage Manor" *(Audio Position: 10:28)*

The staff update was presented by: Ross Van Overberghe, Historic Preservation Administrator – there were no updates at the time of the meeting.

c. LOCAL LANDMARK DEDESIGNATION

- i. 66251 Cedar Road, Wakarusa, IN 46573  
Local Landmark, Ordinance #01-1980 *(Audio Position: 10:36)*

The staff report was presented by:

Ross Van Overberghe, Historic Preservation Administrator

Staff Recommendation:

The farm at 66251 Cedar Road, Wakarusa, IN, has a strong history of not only Madison Township but also the early settlers of St. Joseph County. The land for this farm was granted to the first owner by the United States Government in 1847. The still standing log house was built in 1853. The farm changed ownership several times until Charles Geyer purchased it in 1880. He became a prominent farmer and sawmill operator in Madison Township. Five of the 10 children of Charles Geyer were born in the log house. The remaining children were born in the current farmhouse built by Geyer in 1895. Charles Geyer's travels to several World's Fairs influenced his design and construction of the Barn, House and other outbuildings of the farm. Due to the farm's historical connection with early settlers of the region as well as its architectural details the staff recommends the Commission send this petition to the County Council with an Unfavorable Recommendation.

The applicant was represented by:

Savannah Boettcher, Attorney with the law firm of May, Oberfell, Lorber, 4100 Edison Lakes Parkway, Suite 100, Mishawaka, IN, appeared in person to represent the applicant. She provided a packet of information to each member of the Commission to accompany her presentation.

Steve Stump, 211 S Olive St, Wakarusa, IN, appeared in person to represent the applicant.

Terry Stump, 211 S Washington St, Wakarusa, IN, appeared in person to represent the applicant.

The public was represented by:

Randy Figg, 60822 Greenridge Ct, South Bend, IN, St. Joseph County Council member representing District F, appeared in person to speak in favor of the application.

*Commissioner David Wyncott arrived to the meeting at Audio Position: 46:09*

After due consideration the following action was taken:

Upon a motion by Peter DeKever, seconded by Don Dietz, and carried by vote, the Historic Preservation Commission sends the proposed Local Landmark Dedesignation of 66251 Cedar Road, Wakarusa, IN 46573 to the County Council with an UNFAVORABLE recommendation.

Commissioners are required to state their reasons for the unfavorable recommendation. Roll was called.

**Commissioner Wyncott:** Abstained

**Commissioner Jones (AYE):** I'm voting to deny this as it does not meet the standards and guidelines as articulated for removing the designation. I believe that this property still meets the definition of a property that should be considered a local landmark.

**Commissioner Skaggs (AYE):** I voted in support of the motion. I don't think it rises to the standard of needing dedesignation.

**Commissioner Downs-Krostenko (AYE):** In the intelligent words of my fellow Commissioner, there is a third way and renovations and modernizations can be made without the destruction of the historic integrity.

**Commissioner Dietz (AYE):** I believe that the property is not in a degraded state that it needs to be decommissioned.

**Commissioner DeKever (AYE):** I voted unfavorable because the property retains its historical integrity. It is historically significant, architecturally significant, and there's no compelling reason to dedesignate it, and doing so would compromise the historical significance of the building and not represent the community's interest in that protection.

**Commissioner Andrews (AYE):** I voted unfavorable for many of the reasons that my fellow Commissioners mentioned here this evening. This home still contains many of its original features, and we can see them, we know they're underneath and I think it would be against our standards and guidelines to allow it to move to what we saw before us.

Vote: 6-0-1. Six in favor, none opposed, one abstained.

Local Landmark Dedesignation of 66251 Cedar Road, Wakarusa, IN is given an UNFAVORABLE recommendation.

IV. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- i. February 19, 2024 minutes *(Audio Position: 55:11)*

Upon a motion by Joan Downs-Krostenko, seconded by Michael Skaggs, and UNANIMOUSLY carried by vote, the minutes from the February 19, 2024 Historic Preservation Commission are approved.

b. STAFF REPORTS

- i. Administrative Approvals *(Audio Position: 55:34)*

After due consideration, no action was taken.

c. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- i. No committees have met since the previous meeting.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

a. Staff Positions

(Audio Position: 55:44)

Ross Van Overberghe, Historic Preservation Administrator provided an update on the status of the open Historic Preservation Specialist position and the current lack of legal counsel for the Commission. Legal counsel is currently being performed by City Corporate Counsel Sandra Kennedy until a replacement is found. A brief update was also provided on the two vacancies on the Commission and the plan to fill those positions.


b. 2023-2024 Road Map Review

(Audio Position: 57:10)

Commission President Sarah Andrews aided by Ross Van Overberghe, Historic Preservation Administrator presented the 2023-2024 Road Map for the Commission and facilitated discussions with Commission members about several of the topics in the presentation.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Don Dietz, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

 April 11  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joan Downs-Krostenko  
Arch. Historian/ Secretary  
Date  
2024