

Historic Resources Commission Minutes
August 2, 2021

The meeting was called to order by chairman Noreen Keating at 6:00. Those present included:

Mary Hebert
Kay Forster
Noreen Keating
Sherie Gekiere
Wendy Fleming
R.J. Archambo
Sherry Nelson
City Council Liaison, Diane Raab

Kay Forster moved to approve the minutes from the July 12, 2021, meeting. Seconded by Mary Hebert. Motion carried.

Sherry Nelson gave an update on the submission of the Certified Local Government application to the State Historic Preservation Office. The CLG coordinator for SHPO, Alan Higgins, directed a note to Mary Hebert thanking her for submitting the application on behalf of the City of Cheboygan. Following a review of the application, he attached a few comments regarding it and included related comments by Amy Arnold, also with SHPO.

Higgins noted that the city's ordinance must comply with state enabling legislation (Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act, Public Act 169 of 1970), which is a program requirement. Further, Higgins stated that the application need not be submitted again, and that questions/comments to be answered and supplemental information requested may be sent directly to him via email to complete the application process.

As most questions from SHPO were about the city ordinance for historic preservation, Nelson detailed some of the changes requested. They included some minor language changes, such as eliminating the word "historic" before "resource." Only "resource" is to be used. Another change is to add the PA 169 language, which details the concept of "historic districts." The ordinance must also reference that it complies with the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act. Also, a study committee must be appointed to do a survey to create, modify, or eliminate a historic district. Another note stipulated that it is a SHPO requirement that all Historic Commission members be city residents. Currently, Cheboygan's ordinance allows nonresidents to serve.

Nelson pointed out that it was better to revise the current ordinance as the comments directed, rather than prepare a new ordinance. Council liaison Raab commented that yes, it is much easier to revise an ordinance than to replace one.

Mary Hebert volunteered to work on creating new language for the ordinance to comply with SHPO requirements. She will have this done by the next Commissioners meeting.

As there are more requirements to meet, there was discussion regarding the benefits of going forward to obtain the Certified Local Government designation. Nelson presented the following list of benefits and requirements:

Benefits and Requirements of CLGs

1— Gives incentive to build a strong preservation program in partnership with NPS (National Park Service) and SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office).

2— Ensures a community's participation in the National Historic preservation program—which is the foundation for partnership with SHPO, providing a roadmap and tools for local preservation activities.

3— Gives credibility to local preservation activities.

4— CLG ensures priority support from SHPO

- * Survey planning (identifying historic places)
- * Building consultations (site visits or feedback about properties)
- * Archaeological advice

5—Grant funding to CLGs – 10% SHPO funding from NPS is set aside for CLGs). Can be used for:

- * Preservation Planning & Education Projects
- * Rehabilitation Planning and Projects

6—Community Partnership Projects

- * SHPO selects projects to undertake on behalf of CLGs at no cost to the community
- * 3 types of projects that qualify: Survey of historical resources, National Register of Historic Places nomination, Set of design guidelines

7—CLGs can access training and education through use of technical materials, workshops, roundtables, designed for CLG staff, elected officials, and HDC members (Historic District Commission).

CLG Requirements

1—Enforce local historic district ordinance complying with PA 169 of 1970

2—Appoint Historic District Commission (HDC)

3—Develop/Implement a strategy for the survey and inventory of historic resources

4—Provide for public participation in the preservation program

5—Establish 4-year goals

6—Comply with reporting requirements

Michigan has only 33 CLG communities listed on the SHPO website. They get preference when pursuing assistance for historic preservation. There was discussion, and consensus that the city should pursue the designation to help preserve Cheboygan's few remaining historic assets. The two closest CLG communities to Cheboygan are Boyne City and Charlevoix. Others in northern Michigan include Ewart, Calumet, Escanaba, Manistee and Menominee.

R.J. Archambo suggested that City Council should be involved in the CLG benefits discussion, and the Cheboygan Historic Resources ordinance revision. A couple ideas were to contact the mayor and ask to be on the agenda to make a CLG presentation to Council. Or, Mary Hebert recommended working with DDA/Main Street Interim Director, Katie Duczkowski, to ask MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corporation) Main Street Specialist, Joe Frost, and SHPO CLG Coordinator, Alan Higgins, to make a presentation to City Council regarding the benefits of becoming CLG certified. It was decided that Mary Hebert will work with Council liaison Raab and Duczkowski to set up a presentation to City Council.

Next, there was discussion about how best to solicit and recruit new commissioners who live in the city. Currently, there is no city mechanism to address openings to be filled. The new city manager has plans to change this practice, however, with creation of a new city website and some policy changes. Commissioners discussed serving until the end of the year, hopefully new resident commissioners could be appointed by that time. Several commissioners who are unable to continue serving because of residency requirements volunteered to be on the study committee: Kay Forster, Wendy Fleming, Sherry Nelson.

Public Comment. Bruce Gauthier commented that some of the SHPO requirements were designed for larger cities than Cheboygan. He suggested that SHPO be contacted to ask if there are exceptions to the "city resident" requirement.

Mary Hebert brought up that another aspect of historic preservation is grant writing. Is it possible to hold a fundraiser to support staff that could do that? Archambo stated that a fellow is potentially coming on board to work for the city. Perhaps that could be included in the job responsibilities. Hebert said she would research how to raise funds to support grant writing staff.

Tasks to be accomplished by the next meeting, September 13, 2021 (the meeting will be held a week later than normal due to the Labor Day holiday on September 6, 2021. City Hall will be closed.)

1— HRC Ordinance language will be revised.

2— R. J. Archambo will contact Boyne City to discuss CLG benefits

3— Mary Hebert will pursue a possible presentation to City Council by SHPO and MEDC

Board member comments. Mary Hebert expressed that it was good to have Council liaison Raab back at the meeting in person.

Meeting adjourned at 7:04.