



City of North Tonawanda

Historic Preservation Commission

City Hall
216 Payne Ave.
North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Regular Meeting Minutes May 18, 2026

Minutes

Present: Kristin Derby, Kelley Culp-Burton, Dennis Garland, Matt Bille

Excused: Chuck Weaver

Guest: Will Schulmeister, 2nd Ward Alderman

Meeting called to order 6:10pm.

Minutes

Approval of April minutes

1st Dennis Garland 2nd Kristin Derby

All in favor

 4 Aye 0 Nay

New Business

COA 27 Main Street – New signage (Downtown Local District)

COA received for new signage at business (Applicant not present): Blade sign, channel letter, and illuminated signs are being proposed. Application shows final cut sheets, materials. “Canalside Cones” marquee letters are called out as marquee letters mounted on raceway faces: insides painted light pink with white bulbs. HPC discussed projecting signs vs. blade signs, projecting are permitted in code. K. Culp-Burton noted that bare lightbulbs are not permitted in code, K. Derby advised that a variance could be issued by HPC. K. Culp-Burton identified missing area of COA– Owner’s name, address, and telephone (if different from applicant) area not filled out, COA is being submitted by sign company and has applicant and owner signatures but this form should be considered incomplete. In addition to violation of § 103-13.4E(11)(h)[3] (<https://ecode360.com/38425920>), incomplete application. Discussion to deny or table, K. Culp-Burton advocated to deny and return COA to applicant.

Motion to deny for non-compliance with Code § 103-13.4E(11)(h)[3]

1st Kelley Culp-Burton

2nd Dennis Garland

All in favor

 4 Aye 0 Nay

Discussion of role of HPC with Will Schulmeister

The 2nd Ward includes Downtown Local District, Sweeney Estate Local and National Register District, and majority of Local Landmarks. Role in surveying, documenting, advocating, and reviewing changes to historic materials discussed. Previous issues in Downtown District that have had no follow up from letters issued discussed (signs without permits, state of disrepair, encroachment on public right of way, etc.) Lowry School violation letter discussed, violation and fine was not sent (October 2024), building continues to be in a state of disrepair. Discussion of future of Memorial Pool, possibility of historic tax credits following a National Register nomination/approval. Pre-nomination was started but previously stalled due to friction with incomplete City plans, now that the new pool is being constructed adjacent this can be resumed. K. Derby advised that HPC cannot dictate or plan design but hypotheticals for park amenities are a possibility with the structure, internal footprint can be adapted to new needs of City.

Old Business

315 Niagara Street – Discussed last meeting, COA submitted during meeting. Addition of deck area to a non-contributing structure (Sweeney Estate Local and NR District) Tongue and groove composite flooring with wood-like appearance, either Timbertech or Lumberock to be used, wood for railing and spindles. Artist will be making a custom design. K. Derby noted appropriate massing, majority of visible materials as a good fit for long-term addition. Property owner is M. Bille, recusing self from vote.

Motion to approve as submitted

1st Kristin Derby 2nd Dennis Garland

All in favor

 3 Aye 0 Nay 1 Abstained

COA 98 Niagara St – Repair in-kind front porch (Sweeney Estate Local and NR District) Previously not voted on due to lack of quorum. COA received for in-kind repair to tongue and groove wood floor of front porch. When constructed, interior fasteners were used and have since rusted causing the boards to separate, at the ends boards have been exposed to elements and need to be replaced. Windkanter Construction LLC will be supporting the porch, pulling out the columns, repairing in-kind with new boards, and re-installing columns. Property owner is K. Derby, recusing self from vote.

Motion to approve as submitted

1st Dennis Garland 2nd Matt Bille

All in favor

3 Aye 0 Nay 1 Abstained

Bylaw/zoning update discussion

Discussion of seat appointments – how specific does HPC want to recommend for number of seats, relevant track record of Preservation? General discussion of developing short language only for appointments where due effort is made to seek a resident with relevant experience and if none exist, appointments who have a property or business ownership within a historic district, in good standing (no violations, no state of disrepair). Number of seats discussed, majority or specific number to be determined through final language. Working session to continue in June finalizing language.

New discussion

Erin Robinson as submitted their seat resignation, two vacancies exist on the HPC currently. The Mayor is exploring potential appointments from those who have expressed interest in the past.

Meeting close 6:12 pm.