City of La Porte Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 5:30 PM
City Hall, Council Chambers, 801 Michigan Avenue

A meeting of the City of La Porte Historic Preservation Commission ("Commission") was held at City Hall Council Chambers, 801 Michigan Avenue, La Porte, IN, 46350 on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 5:30 P.M. ("Local Time"), pursuant to notice duly given in accordance with the rules of the Commission and the Indiana Open Door Law.

This meeting was called to order at 5:34 PM by Bruce Johnson, Vice Chair.

The board recited the pledge of allegiance along with individuals in attendance.

On call of the roll, the members of the Commission were shown to be present or absent as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Fonda Owens, Bruce Johnson, Mitchell Espinosa, Laura Riffel, Peter Steele, Rachelle McCaulley, and Sallie LaRocco (arrived at 5:45 pm).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christa Hurley-King.

GUESTS PRESENT: David Heinold, Blake Swihart, and Drew Buchanan.

MINUTES: A motion was made to **approve the April 21, 2026 meeting minutes** by Peter Steele and the motion was seconded by Laura Riffel. The motion passed 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORTS (CLAIMS, COAs, Demolition Reports): David Heinold mentioned that **2026-COA-02 for 1226 Michigan Avenue was staff approved as allowed by the HPC Design Guidelines** with coordination from Indiana Landmarks on the review for paint. No action is needed from the HPC because the COA was staff approved for paint colors matching the Design Guidelines.

Notice of Demolition Permit filed for 205 Rumely Street – David explained that Tonn & Blank Construction filed a demolition permit for the demolition of the building at 205 Rumely Street. He mentioned that Municode requires notice of demolition for structures listed in the LaPorte County Interim Report as contributing, notable, and outstanding ratings. The demolition is scheduled to begin next month and will take a few weeks to complete. David explained to the HPC members that this has been an ongoing discussion related to the review for a proposed housing development project. He mentioned that the property owner has a memorandum of agreement with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources for recovery of the Coca-Cola signage, marble walls, and slate steps outside for use in the new building. He also discussed that the City is working with the owner on landscaping around the new building.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Otocast app historical site selection – Mitchell explained that both himself and Bruce have selected five sites to send to the CVB so that they can forward the information to Otocast for development of the first few historic sites on the app.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

HEARING OF VISITORS: Rachelle McCaulley introduced herself as the newest board member and shared a few details.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Sallie LaRocco to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Fonda Owens. The meeting adjourned at 5:47 PM.

Historic Preservation Commission Chair

Attest