

# MANISTEE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting of Wednesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

This meeting will be held in the City Council Chambers.

## AGENDA

**I Call to Order**

**II Roll Call**

**III Approval of Agenda**

At this time, the Historic District Commission can take action to approve the September 1, 2021, Agenda.

**IV Approval of Minutes**

At this time Historic District Commission can take action to approve the August 4, 2021, Meeting Minutes.

**V Public Comment on Agenda Related items**

At this time, the Chair will ask if there are any public comments.

**VI New Business**

**VII Old Business**

- **Finalize Mural Guidelines**

**Permit Review**

**VIII Public Comments and Communications concerning items not on the agenda.**

At this time, the Chair will ask if there are any public comments.

**IX Correspondence**

**X Reports**

DDA Executive & Economic Development Director

Museum Curator

Museum Director

Planning & Zoning Administrator

**XI Members Discussion**

At this time, the Chair will ask members of the Historic District Commission if they have any items they want to discuss.

**XII Adjournment**

## HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

70 Maple Street  
Manistee, MI 49660

### MEETING MINUTES

August 4, 2021

A meeting of the 2021 Historic District Commission was held on Wednesday, August 4, 2021 at 4:00 pm, Manistee, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chair Trucks.

**Members Present:** Shelly Memberto, William Connor, Ron Helmboldt, Dennis Otto, Thad Taylor, and Lee Trucks

**Members Absent:** Nick Hawkins

**Others:** Zach Sompels (City Zoning /Planner 1), and Nancy Baker (Recording Secretary)

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Commissioner Memberto, seconded by Commissioner Taylor to approve the agenda as printed. Motion passed with a voice vote.

Commissioner Connor entered the meeting at 4:01 pm.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA RELATED ITEMS

None

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Guideline changes for Murals

Mr. Sompels reviewed the guideline for murals. An update was compiled. The sentence under Guideline #11 – Murals, Location; *“Murals are only allowed as a reproduction of a previous mural located on the wall of the building. Photographic evidence must accompany the application”* is to be omitted.

Mr. Fedder stated past murals were advertisements for past businesses.

Mr. Sompels stated the HDC conveyed the desire for murals not to be advertisements. He reviewed other city historic district mural regulations.

Discussion ensued regarding types, content, location, marque murals.

MOTION by Commissioner Connor, seconded by Commissioner Taylor to adopt the Guideline #11 - Murals as presented.

With a roll call vote: Yes; Connor, Helmboldt, Memberto, Trucks, Taylor, Otto. No: none  
Motion passed 6 to 0.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **Permit Review**

An updated Permit Review listing was presented to the HDC.

Mr. Sompels stated the 411/347/349 River permits will show different expiring dates once the court ordered dates are obtained from the judge.

Each permit was reviewed with the possible status of the permit.

Mr. Sompels will inspect each open permit this fall and close any permits showing completion of the project.

## **COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

None

## **REPORTS**

### **DDA Executive & Economic Development**

No one in attendance to submit report.

### **Museum Curator/Director**

Mr. Fedder stated the museum wishes to rescreen the screen doors with peat material, build up the column base, improve the inner vestibule area. The HDC agreed this permit application is to be reviewed and approved by Mr. Sompels.

Mr. Fedder explained the details for the 429 River Street project. He is working with the CVB and Right-Side Design Group as an aspect for the new Walking Tour booklet that covers the history of the area and provides stops for people to visit that explain the history of a particular spot and its connection to Manistee's history, and signage for downtown historic properties and residential area. A USDA grant for these projects has been received with the work occurring over the next year(s).

### **Planning & Zoning Administrator**

Mr. Sompels thanked the HDC for returning to a regular meeting so soon after a special meeting.

### **MEMBERS DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Connor inquired about the 435 River Street windows. Mr. Sompels stated no response has been received from the owner. He will investigate whether a violation notice can be issued.

Commissioner Otto inquired about the 355 River Street building. The building needs facade improvements or possibly considered a blight building. He asked if the mural guideline can be amended. Mr. Sompels stated amendments can be done at any desired time.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned by call of the chair at 4:24 pm.

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Nancy Baker, Recording Secretary



## Historic District Commission

08/23/2021

Historic District Commission  
70 Maple Street  
Manistee, MI 49660

**Zachary Sompels**  
**Manistee County Planner**  
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Dear Historic District Commission,

At the previous meeting, there was a motion to adopt the Murals Guideline #11 within the City of Manistee Historic District. The next step in the process was to have the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) confirm the Guideline change was allowable. SHPO has granted the changes the City of Manistee Historic District Commission made to the Guidelines on Murals as allowable with a few minor, non-substantial changes.

If these minor changes are acceptable, I would ask for a final motion of adoption of Guideline #11 Murals for the City of Manistee.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zachary Sompels". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Zachary Sompels  
Manistee County Planner



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## Guideline #11 - Murals

These Guidelines have been developed by the Historic District Commission to assist applicants. Each request will be reviewed individually by the Commission based on its own merit. Exceptions to these guidelines may be made by the Commission on a case by case basis. The examples used in the guidelines reflect buildings in the district which are Victorian, but alterations to a building should reflect the era in which the building was constructed.

The Historic District Commission uses the Secretary of the Interior's [Standards for Rehabilitation](#) as interpreted by the [Preservation Briefs](#). Copies are available at the Manistee County Historical Museum and the Planning & Zoning Department at City Hall.

The Historic District Commission is sensitive to the desire for property owners to enhance their Buildings in the Manistee Commercial Historic District. The Historic District Commission has developed this policy to assist in the request for murals in the district.

The Historic District Commission recognizes that murals were used in the Historic District. Typically, murals were signs that were painted onto an exterior wall of the building that related to a business or product that was sold in the building.

### Definition

**Mural:** Painted graphics that are murals, mosaics, or any type of graphic arts that are painted on a firewall, fence, alley or retaining wall and do not contain copy, advertising symbols, lettering, trademarks, or other reference to the premises, products or services that are provided on the premises where the graphics are located or any other premises.

### Location

The context of the building and the surrounding area is a critical component to the evaluation of an appropriate location for a mural.

A mural may only be placed on an exterior wall that have previously been painted. Natural brick or stone may not be painted for a mural. Existing paint on these materials can be chemically removed (no sandblasting) or repainted as per Nation Park Service recommendations.

A mural is not allowed to be mounted onto the building. This could cause damage from moisture/condensation behind the attached panel.

When a building owner is considering adding a Mural to their building application must be made to the Historic District Commission for consideration.

Murals and public art may be permissible within the guidelines supporting historic objectives on secondary facades. Secondary facades are those facades facing the Manistee River i.e. the Riverwalk. If the buildings' architecture contributes significantly to the historic feel from the Riverwalk murals should be discouraged.

Murals should not compete with or overwhelm existing architectural features such as windows with trim, moldings, entryways, or similar detailing. Do not engulf key architectural features with murals.

Applicants must provide a budget for the project, and, if the project is approved, funding must be in place before work begins.

Any mural that is not maintained, faded, or is in disrepair shall be ordered removed or covered with opaque paint, similar to the primary building materials/colors or other appropriate material by the Historic District Commission.

Presentation materials must include:

Photos of the proposed location of the mural and complete wall measurements

Color drawing that adequately illustrates the proposed mural including actual color, finishes, and material samples with their locations designated on the mural drawing.

How the mural considers the social dynamic of the location.

How the artwork considers the historical, geographical, and cultural features of the city/county as well as the relationship to existing architecture, landscaping, and streetscape.

Statement regarding the durability of the artwork and its potential to require ongoing maintenance.

Signed statement by the property owner giving permission for the mural.

The Historic District Commission reserves the right to deny mural proposals based upon the City of Manistee policies and the qualifications stated herein.



DESIGN REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS # 1 | AUGUST 2021 | MICHIGAN.GOV/SHPO

## Changes to Existing Buildings: Murals and Historic Buildings

Like other public art, murals can contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of an area, support the cultural identity of a community, provide opportunities for interpreting history, and encourage public interaction and exploration. However, murals are not appropriate for all locations. A historic district commission (HDC) must carefully consider the role of murals in a local historic district to ensure that they complement and enhance rather than detract from or diminish the qualities of the district.

Each HDC must decide whether murals are appropriate for areas under its jurisdiction. Where murals are allowed, sensitive design approaches are key to achieving compatibility and harmony. Because each mural is an individual, expressive work intended for a specific location and every building has different constraints, each project requires careful review to ensure compatibility. In general, there are three aspects that should be considered when reviewing a mural project:

- **Compatibility with the Project Site:** The location, scale, and materials of the mural should be reviewed for compatibility with the project site.
- **Relationship to the Historic District:** The relationship to and visual impact on surrounding areas should be reviewed for compatibility with the district at-large.
- **Ongoing maintenance:** Selected media, techniques, and project location all impact the longevity of a mural, as do weather patterns, light intensity, and maintenance. Long-term maintenance should be considered for all projects.

### A NOTE ON HISTORIC MURALS

Murals were historically used on the sides of buildings to advertise a business, product, or service. These remain in many communities as faded remnants (“ghost signs”) and contribute to the history of the area. Obscuring, altering, or removing exposed historic murals is not appropriate. Likewise, touching up or overpainting such murals to renew their appearance creates a false sense of history and is generally not appropriate.

### HDC DESIGN REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

SHPO’s “Design Review Considerations” series is intended to encourage informed decision-making and promote best practices in historic preservation in consideration of the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation” (Standards). All content is provided for informational purposes only.

In accordance with Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended, the local historic district commission should evaluate the merits of each proposed project in its jurisdiction in consideration of the particulars of the project, the local context, potential impacts to historic resources and the overall district, the Standards, and local historic district design guidelines, if applicable.



# Design Considerations: Best Practices in Mural Design

## Mural Location

1. Locate murals only on masonry buildings that have historically been painted. Painting contributing masonry buildings that were not historically painted is not appropriate and does not meet the Standards.
2. Use smooth wall planes. Locating a mural on a building with siding features such as bevel, lap, or board and batten detailing or split-faced stone is not appropriate.
3. Locate murals on side, rear, or alley elevations only. Murals on the primary street façade of a building are not appropriate. However, temporary storefront window murals may be appropriate. Murals on secondary street façades of a corner building should be carefully considered for visual impact on wraparound storefront elements, where present.
4. A mural is most appropriate for non-contributing buildings. However, potential impacts to the overall district must still be considered.

## Mural Design, Scale, and Compatibility

1. Design a mural so that it does not obscure, detract from, or cause damage to character-defining features. Murals should not impair one's ability to interpret the historic character of the building or the overall area.
2. Carefully scale a mural to the property on which it is located so that its proportions and size are compatible with the building. A mural should complement, not compete with or overwhelm the architecture or character-defining features of a building.

3. A mural is most appropriate for blank walls or areas of a wall where there is no fenestration (window and door openings) so that it does not distract from the visual integrity and spatial organization of the building.
4. Accent lighting compatible with the scale, style, materials, and context of the building may be appropriate so long as any lighting is shaded, shielded, or directed to minimize glare and impacts to neighboring properties.
5. Consider the visibility and prominence of a mural from adjacent locations within the historic district. A mural should be sensitive to the overall context.

## Mural Materials

1. A mural should utilize treatments and materials that promote the district as an area of high-quality design. For example, properly prepare surfaces and use appropriate masonry primers and exterior grade paints to ensure proper adhesion. Power washing or blasting to prepare surfaces is not appropriate and murals should not be used in lieu of repointing a deteriorated wall.
2. Luminescent, neon, and reflective paints and finishes are not appropriate and can pose a safety hazard.
3. Avoid affixing dimensional and imitative materials such as artificial stone, sidings, and metals.
4. Encourage murals on removable materials such as canvas or a wood frame as an alternative to directly painting on a building. Anchor the framing through mortar joints (not the masonry face) and install the framing with a small gap between the building so that water can weep between the mural surface and the wall.



### MURALS AND MAINTENANCE PLANS

Murals that are not appropriately maintained can quickly become a visual nuisance. As such, long-term maintenance needs should be carefully considered when choosing a project location. For example, murals that face direct sunlight will fade and peel quicker, and murals in heavily trafficked areas may be subject to smog and chemicals that can alter paint colors. Maintenance plans that provide guidance on ongoing upkeep and, if applicable, future removal are encouraged as part of any mural project.



### MURALS VS. SIGNS

Although a HDC does not regulate content, careful distinction must be made to make sure a mural does not require review as a sign. As a best practice, murals should not include commercial product names, service names, business names, symbolic logos, and other such information that can be perceived as an endorsement or advertisement.



### WHAT SHOULD THE HDC ASK FOR IN A REVIEW?

Because of their unique nature, murals have special considerations. It may be appropriate to require applicants seeking a COA for a mural to submit additional detail with the COA application. Such information may include:

- Written approval from the property owner (if the applicant is not the owner)
- An agreement between the artist and property owner identifying responsibilities
- A scaled drawing showing the proposed location and size of the mural
- A color drawing or rendering of the proposed mural
- Photos of the subject property, the proposed mural location, and views from adjacent streets and neighboring properties
- A maintenance plan that includes ongoing treatments/obligations for the life of the mural