

It is expected that a Quorum of the Board of Public Works, Park Board, Administration Committee, Personnel Committee and/or Common Council may attend this meeting: (although it is not expected that any official action of any of those bodies will be taken)

**CITY OF MENASHA  
LANDMARKS COMMISSION  
Menasha City Center, Room 133  
100 Main Street, Menasha**

**December 17, 2019**

**4:00PM**

**AGENDA**

- A. CALL TO ORDER
- B. ROLL CALL/EXCUSED ABSENCES
- C. MINUTES TO APPROVE
  - 1. Minutes of the November 26, 2019 Landmarks Commission Meeting
- D. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM OF CONCERN ON THIS AGENDA OR ANY ITEM RELATED TO THE LANDMARKS RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION
  - Five (5) minute time limit for each person
- E. COMMUNICATIONS
  - 1. None
- F. ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - 1. Landmarks Ordinance Discussion
- G. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM OF CONCERN ON THIS AGENDA
  - Five (5) minute time limit for each person
- H. ADJOURNMENT

If you have any questions, please call the Community Development Department at (920) 967-3650 between 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday

Menasha is committed to its diverse population. Our Non-English speaking population or those with disabilities are invited to contact the Community Development Department at 967-3650 at least 24-hours in advance of the meeting so special accommodations can be made.

**CITY OF MENASHA**  
**Landmarks Commission**  
**Menasha City Center, Room 133**  
**100 Main Street, Menasha**  
November 26, 2019  
DRAFT MINUTES

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**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Grade at 4:35 PM.

**B. ROLL CALL/EXCUSED ABSENCES**

LANDMARKS MEMBERS PRESENT: Alderman Tom Grade, Commissioners Dean Wydeven, Kate Mueller, Kim Massey, and Jeff Heimerman.

LANDMARKS MEMBERS EXCUSED: Commissioners Arnie Collier and Thomas Almendarez.

OTHERS PRESENT: AP Stephenson, Mayor Merkes, Paul Brunette (210 Main Street), and Nick Jevne (210 Main Street).

**C. MINUTES TO APPROVE**

**1. Minutes of the October 23, 2019 Landmarks Commission Meeting**

A motion was made by Comm. Massey to approve the minutes of October 23, 2019 Landmarks Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Comm. Wydeven. The motion carried.

**D. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM OF CONCERN ON THIS AGENDA OR ANY ITEM RELATED TO THE LANDMARKS RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

Five (5) minute time limit for each person

Paul Brunette (210 Main Street): informed the commission about deteriorating buildings in the downtown.

Nick Jevne (210 Main Street): informed the commission about deteriorating buildings in the downtown.

**E. COMMUNICATIONS**

**1. None**

**F. ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Vacant Properties Discussion**

AP Stephenson gave a background on code enforcement issues and the role landmarks plays with code enforcement.

Comm. Mueller reported her findings from other communities that have historic and cultural preservation ordinances.

The commission entered into a conversation with the following being discussed:

- Historic buildings in Menasha
- The state of Menasha's downtown
- Steps that can be taken to stop demolition by neglect
- The code enforcement process
- How the Landmarks Commission can be an advocate for good business in the downtown

No action was taken.

**G. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM OF CONCERN ON THIS AGENDA**

Five (5) minute time limit for each person

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

Comm. Mueller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 PM. The motion was seconded by Comm. Heimerman. The motion carried.

*Minutes prepared by AP Stephenson.*



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Landmarks Commission  
From: Community Development Department/JS  
Date: December 17, 2019  
**Re: Landmarks Ordinance**

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In recent months the Landmarks Commission has been discussing a “vibrant downtown” ordinance to help revitalize the downtown and reduce store vacancies. Store vacancies have a negative impact on economic development and quality of life in our downtown. They create a perception of inactivity, low value, and blight. This perception can further decrease our downtown’s value by discouraging individuals to renovate or invest in the downtown. Overtime, this trend becomes harder and harder to reverse and can lead to demolition by neglect of older historic buildings. Long term vacancies are a detriment to the downtown, the city, and historic districts.

The Landmarks Commission has researched how communities in Wisconsin, as well as nationally, have taken action to react to property owners who cannot find tenants for their properties or refuse to lease their space(s).

The City of Milwaukee requires all residential and commercial buildings that have been vacant for more than 30 days, excluding properties that are undergoing active renovations, properties impacted by natural disaster, and homes that the property owner intends to resume residing in. Residence of the city are required by ordinance to register there vacant building when it becomes vacant. For the first 6 months no action is taken. After six months the building will start incurring a \$250 fee every 6 months. In order to be taken off the vacant property list the building needs to be verified to have a business or person residing in it. In addition, at that time the building inspector is allowed to assess the property for maintenance issues. The City of Milwaukee originally did a full inspection but has since moved to only exterior inspections due to time constraints of their building inspectors.

The Landmarks Commission invites dialogue with the Common Council to create a similar program to protect the property values, historic resources, and vitality of the business district. Important items to identify include interior and exterior building maintenance standards, lot maintenance standards, and definitions of vacant including time periods. The Landmarks Commission currently has authority to deter neglect of a building, however, the standards have not be defined.

Recommendation

Recommendation to the Common Council to discuss enacting a vacant building registration ordinance. Following discussion the ordinance would be referred back to Landmarks Commission to draft an ordinance for Common Council approval.