

**NIAGARA FALLS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**BRETT DOSTER, CHAIRMAN**  
**KRISTIAN RUGGIERO, VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Minutes for March 7, 2024**

A regular meeting of the City of Niagara Falls Planning Board was held on Wednesday, March 7, 2024, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 745 Main Street, Niagara Falls, N.Y.

**The meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brett Doster, Chairman  
Jessica Collins  
Georgia Robinson-Bradberry  
Noah Munoz  
Saladin Allah

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Mike Pesarchick, Planner II/HPS

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Kristian Ruggiero, Vice-Chairman  
Jessica Berry

**SPEAKERS:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA — FOR THIS MEETING**

MR. DOSTER said that two items had to be added to the evening's agenda. First, the Commission had to vote on a positive recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding 6 4<sup>th</sup> Street following the public hearing, and the second was to authorize the Secretary to the Commission to send the recommendation to SHPO.

A motion to approve the agenda, with the added items, was made by **MR. DOSTER** and seconded by **MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY**.

**MOTION: MAJORITY APPROVED**

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held February 1, 2024, was made by **MR. DOSTER** and seconded by **MR. MUNOZ**.

**MOTION: MAJORITY APPROVED**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (All Non-Agenda Topics)**

There was no public participation.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. Public Hearing: for the proposed State and National Historic Register designation of 6 4th Street (A.K.A. the Tatler Club), a property listed on the Niagara Falls Local Historic Register since 2004.

**The Public Hearing was opened at 6:12 p.m.**

No members of the public spoke regarding the proposed designation.

MR. PESARCHICK said that, as a Certified Local Government (CLG), the Commission was encouraged and invited to give feedback when a building in their jurisdiction was put up for the State and National Historic Registers, in this case, the Tatler Club. MR. PESARCHICK said that SHPO was meeting on March 14, 2024, to discuss this item and the HPC recommendation was due then. He said that the Mayor signed a letter of support that would be sent to SHPO as well.

MR. DOSTER said he hoped the Commission received more of these nominations in the future.

MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY asked if the meeting on March 14 would be at City Hall. MR. PESARCHICK said it would be in Albany at the SHPO meeting, and that the Commission was providing a recommendation because it was on the register. He remarked that the Tatler Club was one of the first buildings put on the Local Register in 2004. MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY said it was a long time coming.

MR. DOSTER said it was surprising that it was on the Local Register before the National, but historic tax credits wouldn't have been in effect then.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:14 p.m.

2. Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation: for the proposed State and National Historic Register designation of 6 4th Street (A.K.A. the Tatler Club), a property listed on the Niagara Falls Local Historic Register since 2004.

A vote on an action item should be made in the following format:

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MR. DOSTER asked for a motion to approve the Historic Preservation Commission recommendation to SHPO.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by **MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY** and seconded by **MR. MUNOZ**.

BRETT DOSTER	YES
GEORGIA ROBINSON-BRADBERRY	YES
SALADIN ALLAH	YES
NOAH MUNOZ	YES
JESSICA COLLINS	YES

**MOTION: UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

3. Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation: to approve the Planning Department to submit the HPC recommendation for 6 4<sup>th</sup> Street to SHPO.

MR. DOSTER asked for a motion to approve the Planning Department to submit Historic Preservation Commission recommendation to SHPO.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by **MR. MUNOZ** and seconded by **MR. DOSTER**.

BRETT DOSTER	YES
GEORGIA ROBINSON-BRADBERRY	YES
SALADIN ALLAH	YES
NOAH MUNOZ	YES
JESSICA COLLINS	YES

**MOTION: UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

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**PLANNING REPORT / COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Planning Clerk: update on the clerk position in the Planning Department.

MR. PESARCHICK said that the Planning Department clerk had recently department to take care of family matters. An offer has been extended to a new clerk and they hoped to be a full department once again. MR. PESARCHICK said he has been doing the clerk's duties as well, and apologized if anything had been missed.

**OTHER ITEMS**

MR. PESARCHICK said that the Planning Department was processing projects involving adaptive reuse, specifically the Radio Social project at 500 3<sup>rd</sup> Street which will restore the façade of the former Niagara-Hudson Power building. MR. DOSTER said that was a beautiful Art Deco building.

MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY asked if there were any more blue and yellow historic signs going up. MR. PESARCHICK said there was one in the Planning Department office that is slated for the site of the former Shredded Wheat factory on Buffalo Avenue. The parcel is privately owned and will require an agreement to install the sign. MR. DOSTER asked what the process was to get one of those signs. MR. PESARCHICK said he believed it was through a state grant. MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY said that she knew the company that made the signs, and that the company asked for pictures of the signs once they've been installed.

MR. PESARCHICK said that, for the record, the Turtle [25 Rainbow Boulevard] Landmark Designation did fail at the City Council meeting on March 6, 2024, and that unfortunately that was the end of the process. According to the law, the decision is "final." MR. PESARCHICK said he interpreted the law as meaning there was no appeals process and that, in his opinion, it didn't mean the Commission couldn't try a new application in the future, but there was no appeals for the other one.

MR. MUNOZ said he felt the biggest reason it failed was that it wasn't 50 years old. MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY said that wasn't "written in stone." MR. PESARCHICK said that people conflated the requirements for the National and State Registers with the Local Historic Register. MR. DOSTER said that even for the National Register, a building didn't have to be 50 years old.

MR. DOSTER said that he thought, based on what the Council members said, there is some "trepidation" about the perception of telling someone what to do with private property, which he felt was "unfair" to people who do own landmarked properties. He also said that the 50-year rule is not in the criteria for the local law. MR. DOSTER said it was "unfortunate" but there was "a lot of buzz" about the building. MR. PESARCHICK said he would keep the Commission informed if there were any more developments about the building.

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MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY asked if it wasn't the job of the City Code Enforcement department to tell people what to do with their property. MR. DOSTER said it was and that living in a democratic republic, we give up some freedoms for the betterment of everybody, such as stopping at red lights and obeying speed limits. He said he understood why landmarking was "uncommon" but that it wasn't any different fundamentally.

MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY said she felt that the Council did not fully read the recommendation packet. MR. DOSTER said the Council might have read the packet, but did not fully understand the preservation ordinance. He said that he felt the Council decision was based more on opinion, rather than the criteria set forth in the law.

MR. PESARCHICK said that was it for the Department report, and said that there was a nice project coming up on Main Street, the Heritage Gateways project, which will include the area around the historic canal bridge on Second Street. MR. DOSTER said that the bridge was probably buried under the road. MR. PESARCHICK said that the process for the project was kicking off at the next Planning Board meeting.

MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY asked whose responsibility it was to highlight different cultural properties they have in the city. MR. PESARCHICK said that it would be groups like Discover Niagara that uses social media to highlight these things, as well as the Community Development department. MR. PESARCHICK said it could also be the Commission with an education campaign funded by a CLG grant. MR. MUNOZ said he owned a house owned by the first Black physician in Niagara Falls, and was unable to find grants for some of the repair work. He said he would like the recognition to come to fruition.

MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY said she felt there should be some kind of monthly highlight of one of the properties as part of a tourism push. She said that people were already making their way there as part of the eclipse. MR. DOSTER agreed.

MR. PESARCHICK informed the Commission that he would be attending the Preservation League of New York State conference in Rochester next month on behalf of the City, and that he would be happy to provide a report if the Commission wanted. He said that the conference also had open tickets if anyone was interested and there were scholarships available.

MS. ROBINSON-BRADBERRY said that the Tatler Club was inviting the Commission to hold a monthly meeting there, and asked if it was possible to do so. MR. PESARCHICK said he would look into this. MR. DOSTER said it should be ok long as it complied with Open Meetings Law and that the location was publicly advertised.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by **MR. DOSTER** and seconded by **MR. MUNOZ**.

**The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.**