

Elkhart Historic & Cultural Preservation Commission

Meeting Thursday, May 21, 2026

Call to Order:

Doug Mulvaney called to order the Elkhart Historic & Cultural Preservation Commission Meeting for Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 6:04 pm.

Roll Call:

Present: Carrie Brunson, Doug Mulvaney, JA Whitmer, and Bobby Glassburn via Teams.

Absent: Bill Zimmerman

Approval of Agenda:

Doug Mulvaney asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion made by JA Whitmer, seconded by Carrie Brunson; motion carried with the following roll call vote:

Carrie Brunson – Yes
Doug Mulvaney – Yes
JA Whitmer - Yes
Bobby Glassburn – Yes

Approval of Minutes:

Mulvaney said that he would accept a motion to approve the minutes for March 19, 2026, as presented. Motion made by Whitmer, seconded by Bobby Glassburn; motion carried with the following roll call vote:

Brunson – Yes
Mulvaney – Yes
Whitmer - Yes
Glassburn – Yes

Hearing of Visitors: NA

Old Business:

Mulvaney asked staff if there were any old business, neighborhood update, progress review or nominations.

Kyle Anthony-Petter planner II, staff member for the commission, said no.

New Business:

A: 26-COA-03, 175-177 State Street – Non-Illuminated sign

Anthony-Petter read staff report: The proposed project is to install a non-illuminated vinyl printed sign panel on the first floor on the portico.

Applicable Guidelines:

Commercial Standards: Signs: Add a New Sign to Replace a sign or where no sign has existed previously.

- New signs should be in proportion and be similar in color and details to the building.
- Signage should not cover nor remove elements of the building that give it its character.
- Signs designed in the same period as the building's construction are recommended – allowing the use of modern materials for their fabrication.
- New signs should be installed with anchoring that does not destroy or cause removal of historic materials.

Staff Analysis

The petitioner is requesting to install a non-illuminated vinyl printed sign on the building's first story portico on the front façade.

The petitioner recently reached out staff to talk about requirement for signage for this property and was made aware of the need for approval from the Commission before permits.

The proposed sign area will be placed on the portico with the lettering and image of the sign to be located in the center of the sign. The sign will be installed on top of the existing vinyl siding and will be able to be removed if needed in the future. This request for the property reflects the petitioners wanting to add signage to the front of their building to better identify its location.

Recommendations

The Staff recommends approval of the request based on the following findings of fact:

1. The proposed sign should be and is in proportion and similar in color and details of the building;
2. The proposed sign will not cover nor remove elements of the building that give it its character;
3. The proposed sign will be installed with anchoring that does not destroy or cause removal of historic materials;
4. The proposed color, graphics, and scale is compatible with the district and its character;

Whitmer asked if the sign would be on the white part in front, centered and how much space it would take up. Petter responded that since it is a vinyl wrap and explain that the vinyl will fill the whole area of it, but the lettering will just be just in the middle.

Todd Lehman, petitioner introduced himself, from Sign tech services at 1508 Basher Rd in Goshen is working with Lifeline Youth Ministries. Lehman said that this home is used for interns at Lifeline and it was primarily funded by Craig and Connie Volmer thus the reason to recognize the family and name the house the Fulmer House.

Mulvaney asked the commission if there were any questions for the petitioner. Whitmer said that her only question was already answered by staff.

Mulvaney said that he would accept a motion to approve 26-COA-03, as presented. Motion made by Whitmer, seconded by Brunson; motion carried with the following roll call vote:

Brunson – Yes
Mulvaney – Yes
Whitmer - Yes
Glassburn – Yes

Applicant said that if you see Connie Fulmer, she does not know about this. Mulvaney said that this was a surprise.

B: 26-COA-04, 302 East Beardsley Avenue – Awning

Mulvaney told Anthony-Petter that they have written staff reports which are very detailed with staff analysis and recommendations which were consulted with city council, and he agreed that it was not necessary to read it into the record. Mulvaney said to just give a summary of what is proposed and the recommendations.

Anthony-Petter read: The proposed project is the installation of a new steel framed awning on the piazza on the front of the building.

Recommendations

The staff recommends **approval** of the request based on the following findings of fact:

1. The proposed awning for the building where no photographic or physical evidence exists has been designed based on historic images of the district.
2. The proposed design does not cover up elements of the building that give it its architectural character.
3. The proposed awning will match the design, shape and coverings evidenced in the historic image(s) with one of those photos being included in your packet.
4. The proposed awning's installation will be specified in such a way as not to require removal or damage to original materials;

Mulvaney asked the commission if there were any questions to staff. Whitmer asked if there was information in the packet. Anthony-Petter said yes and indicated that it was on page four in the packet which was a photo from 1924 showing the awnings that were installed on the windows, and a similar design will be on the Piazza on the front area.

Whitmer asked if the awning would be like it shows on the window. Whitmer asked if this was for year-round use. Anthony-Petter responded that it is for the summer, for the warm months, and it will be taken down when it gets cold. Mulvaney added that the frame would probably stay up. Whitmer asked if the steel structure frame would stay up. Anthony-Petter responded that it is all removable. Mulvaney asked if the whole thing could come in potentially. Anthony-Petter said yes. Whitmer asked if the awnings were still on the windows. Anthony-Petter responded yes and added

that they are typically installed in May, in spring and then as it gets colder than they are taken down.

Mulvaney asked the petitioner to come forward to speak to the application.

Jacqueline Beals introduced herself with custom Awning. Beals said that it has a perception for couple of years. It is coming to fruition this canopy, if you have the renderings that we have proposed, it will be just as they are rendered. Beals added that the frame stays up over the winter months, but the canvas comes down. Mulvaney said will shield from the rain if the rain shows up at an event and commented that he thinks it looks great and it is very consistent to what he has seen in some other historic properties that have awnings already and they have extended out over patios and balconies. Beals said that they have been fortunate enough to be taking care of the Ruthmere for some years and the awnings on the windows are also of this vintage, which is a steel frame and not typically what you will see in modern architecture. Whitmer asked if the awning matches the window awnings. Beal confirmed yes and said that it is a traditional green and white, black stripe.

Mulvaney said that he would accept a motion to approve 26-COA-04, as presented. Motion made by Whitmer, seconded by Brunson; motion carried with the following roll call vote:

Brunson – Yes
Mulvaney – Yes
Whitmer - Yes
Glassburn – Yes

C: Elkhart County Bridge # 265 Improvement Project

Mulvaney said that he assumed that the historic commission was notified because it is a qualifying body. Anthony-Petter responded, yes, that is pretty much and that is why there is not a COA number. Anthony-Petter explained that it is essentially because the city is a certified local government and anytime that there is a project that uses federal funds within the area and the city is one of the bodies that are notified to present comments if any. In this case they are planning on taking down the bridge and then installing a new bridge. The bridge is in Middlebury, and it is not in Elkhart, but because Elkhart is one of the bodies that are able to provide comments, they notify the city. Anthony-Petter said that the recommendation that they would be looking for is approval of no comments.

Mulvaney said that he would accept a motion to approve no comment. Motion made by Whitmer, seconded by Brunson; motion carried with the following roll call vote:

Brunson – Yes
Mulvaney – Yes
Whitmer - Yes
Glassburn – Yes

D: NR/Local Designation – Commission Training

Deb Parcell said that the commission is supposed to do training as part of the contract with Indiana Landmarks. Parcell said that she was about five years overdue.

Whitmer asked what the training topic was. Parcell said Local designation and National register designation. Parcell explained that the two different kinds and said that probably the commission already knew all this information, but it is refresher.

Parcell presented the historic designations to the historic commission as part of the city contract with Indiana landmarks. Parcell said that they would do training for the community as well if she has the opportunity.

The presentation was about Historic Designation showing and explaining the National register and Local designation differences like how houses are selected, history, federal fund usage, the process on how the districts are created, how a property is considered to be in the national register, eligibility like age, architectural, style and facts and myths. Local designation process, creating history districts, single sites, rating of houses and the process for COAs applications which are only required for outside work. The presentation also explained the phases on how to create a conservation district.

At the end of the presentation Whitmer said "we really gone backwards because we are now in conservation rather than forward." Parcell said as you are working on new guidelines, she thinks that those are going to be helpful. It will allow a lot more staff approval, it has more flexibility for materials, but there are still certain things. Parcell said that preservation means preserving, and she believes that we can preserve a few of them.

Announcements:

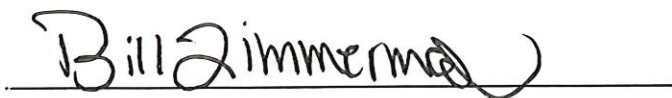
A: Historic Preservation Month

Anthony-Petter said that May is Historic Preservation month. It happened across the county, different commissions, different preservation groups celebrate the month of May. He just wanted to remind the commission that it was preservation month.

Anthony-Petter announced that whenever the commission meets again the design guidelines will need to be updated because some of the information in them has changed, like email addresses, and he will be adding the second half of the design guidelines, which are commercial. Mainly when commercial buildings have signage that would not fit in a residential sense but are more commercial.

Adjournment:

Mulvaney said that he would accept a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm. Motion made Whitmer, seconded by Brunson; motion approved 4-0.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Zimmerman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Bill Zimmerman, Chair