



CITY OF BATTLE CREEK

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT – PLANNING AND ZONING

AGENDA

Historic District Commission Meeting

Date: Monday, September 8, 2025
Time: 4:00 P.M.
Where: City Hall, Room 301

- 1. Call to Order:**
- 2. Attendance:**
- 3. Additions or Deletions to Agenda:**
- 4. Approval of minutes:** August 11, 2025
- 5. Correspondence:**
- 6. Old Business:**
- 7. New Business**
 - A. H16-25 (160 N. Washington Ave)**
 Petition filed by Grace Health for a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the main building located at 160 N Washington Ave., Parcel #7720-00-007-0.
- 8. Comments by the Public:**
- 9. Comments from Commission members and Staff:**
- 10. Adjournment:**

The City of Battle Creek will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered in the meeting upon notice to the City of Battle Creek. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aides or services should contact the City of Battle Creek by writing or calling the following: Office of the Planning & Zoning Division, 10 North Division – Suite 117, Battle Creek, MI 49016, (269)966-3348 (Voice), (269)966-3348 (TDD)

CITY OF BATTLE CREEK

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING

10 North Division, Battle Creek, MI 49014

Minutes for August 11, 2025

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: By Commissioner Simpson at 4:04 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Commissioner Simpson asked for a roll vote.

Comm. Simpson, present

Comm. Drozdowski, present

Comm. Davis, present

Comm. Sallee, present

Comm. Thornton, present

Comm. Steinbrunner, present

Comm. Case, present

Staff Present: Travis Sullivan, Planning & Zoning Administrator, Melody Carlsen, Administrative Assistant, Patrick Batterson, Assistant City Attorney.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of the July 14, 2025 meeting minutes.

MOTION MADE BY COMMISSIONER CASE TO APPROVE THE JULY 14, 2025 MEETING MINUTES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER THORNTON.

ROLL VOTE: Commissioner Simpson asked everyone in favor to signify by saying “aye”.

ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, MOTION APPROVED.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letter from the Calhoun County Landbank to the Historic District Commission.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. H15-25 (211 NE Capital Ave)

Petition for a Certificate of Appropriateness filed by Monty Bishop for the construction of a new 6-foot-tall white vinyl fence located at 211 NE Capital Ave, parcel #5350-00-006-0.

Staff Presentation: Travis Sullivan presented the staff report for H13-25. Mr. Sullivan noted the applicant's application was not in the meeting packet and would be emailed to commissioners. Staff recommends approval of H15-25.

Questions by Commissioners:

Commissioner Simpson asked if there was a picture of the proposed fence and if the blue and white structure was part of the fence being replaced. If the fence was going to be incorporated into the ADA ramp and if the fence would be stained. Asked if the homeowner worked on the ADA ramp at all and what color he painted it.

Commissioner Case asked if the fence would be painted.

Commissioner Stienbrunner asked the homeowner if his plan was to keep the ADA ramp. Inquired to the space on the third floor.

Commissioner Davis asked what type of wood fencing would be used.

Applicant Presentation: Monty Bishop, owner of 211 NE Capital Ave was present to speak and answer questions from commissioners.

**MOTION MADE BY COMMISSIONER DROZDOWSKI TO APPROVE H15-25.
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER THORNTON.**

ROLL VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED. MOTION APPROVED.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF:

Travis Sullivan went over the Administrative Quarterly Report.

Commissioner Thornton asked if the Commission had any say over paint colors used to paint a fence.

ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Simpson adjourned the meeting at 4:47 pm.

Submitted by: Melody Carlsen, Planning and Zoning Administrative Assistant



Battle Creek Historic District Commission

Staff Report

160 N Washington Ave.

Meeting: September 8, 2025

To: Historic District Commission
From: Travis Sullivan, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Date: September 2, 2025
Subject: The petition, H-16-25, filed by Grace Health for a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the main building located at 160 N Washington Ave., Parcel #7720-00-007-0.

Summary

The applicant has filed the subject HDC Notice to Proceed request for the proposed demolition of the entire structure located at 160 N Washington Ave. (Parcel #7720-00-007-0) for the purpose of creating additional parking for Grace Health patients and staff. Staff recommends denial of a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the entire structure at the northeast corner of N Washington Ave. and E Manchester St., as the proposed demolition likely does not meet one of the four standards for demolition outlined in Section 1470.09 "Review of Applications," Section 1470.17 "Preservation of Historic Features" and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines.

Site & History

The subject site (160 N Washington Ave.) is located in the Old Advent Town local historic district at the northeast corner of N Washington Ave. and E Manchester St. The subject site is not independently registered on the National Register of Historic Places, but is included within the nationally recognized Advent Historic District as verified by staff on September 2, 2025. The structure at the subject site was constructed in 1885.

According to BS&A records, the property at 160 N Washington Ave. has not been the subject of previous Historic District Commission (HDC) Certificate of Appropriateness requests. However, a building permit was issued in 2015 for the reroofing the entire house and the barber shop, including the installation of fascia.

Figure 1 below provides an aerial view of the subject property. Figures 2 provides a historical view of the home on the subject site (undated), courtesy of the Willard Library collection. Figure 3 provides a present-day street-level view of the building on the subject site, courtesy of Google Street View.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of the subject site (160 N Washington Ave.). The thick outline and orange pin indicate the location of the subject parcel. Photo courtesy of Near Map.



Figure 2: Historical view of the subject property from E Manchester St. Photo courtesy of the Willard Library Digital Collection.

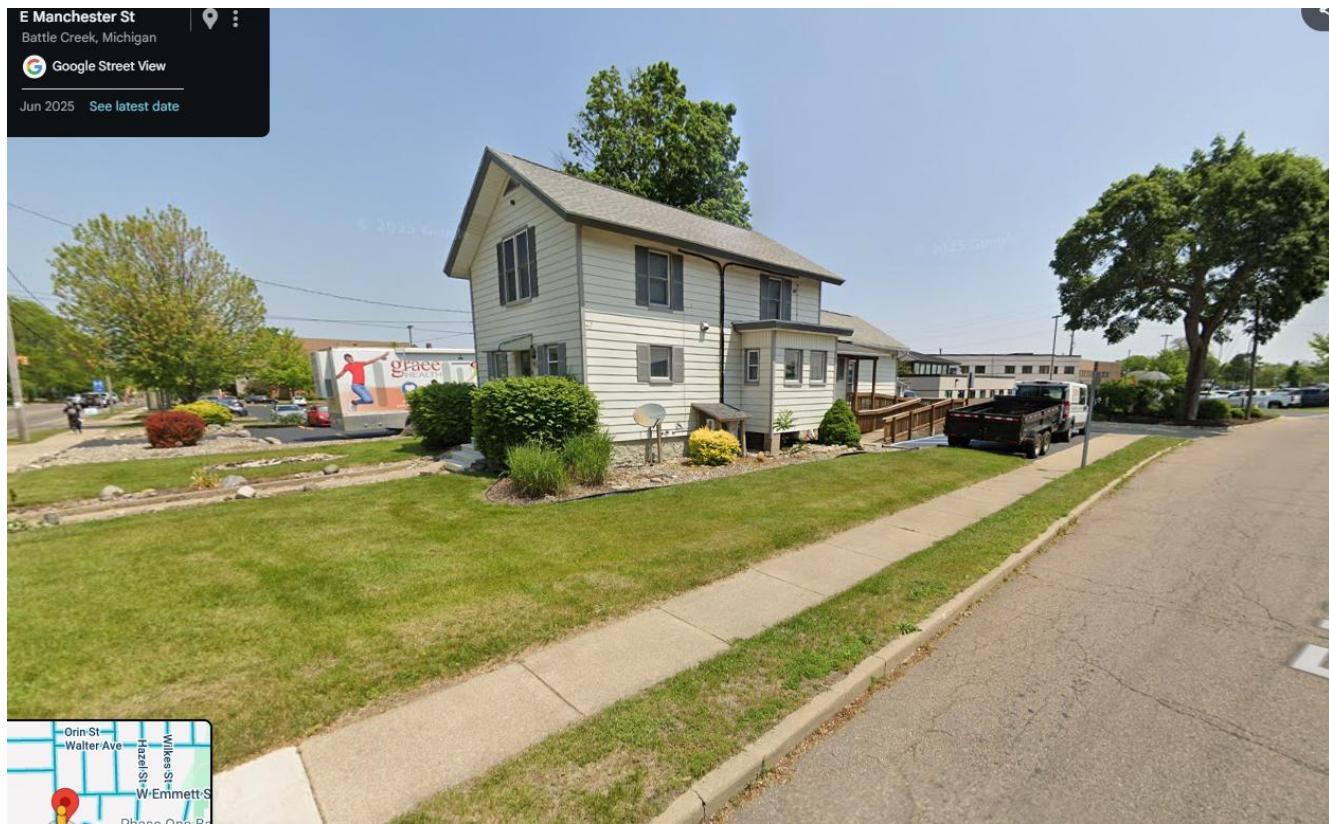


Figure 3: Street-level view of the subject property from E Manchester St., June 2025. Photo courtesy of Google Street View.

Applicable HDC Guidelines and Analysis for a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the entire structure at the subject site, 160 N Washington Ave.

This property is reviewed in accordance with City of Battle Creek Building and Housing Code Chapter 1470 "Historic Preservation", as amended, the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act, as amended, and the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places as outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines.

Generally, demolition of a structure will not comply with the standards outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. However, according to the provisions outlined in Section 1470.09(e), the Historic District Commission (HDC) **shall** approve a Notice to Proceed if **at least one of the following criteria is met**. It is the duty of the of the HDC to determine if the application has met the test proscribed in Section 1470.09(e) for the demolition of the entire structure at 160 N Washington Ave. Staff does not believe that the applicant has met the requirements for a Notice to Proceed to be issued based upon the criteria as detailed below;

(1) The resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or to the structures and occupants.

The property is currently in a satisfactory condition and poses no hazard to the safety of the public or to the structure itself or its occupants. On the contrary, this property was nominated for and received a 2024 Beautiful Battle Creek Award in recognition of the owner's care and maintenance of the property.

This criteria has not been satisfied.

(2) The resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community, and the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals and financing and environmental clearances.

The applicant is proposing to construct additional parking for patients and staff of Grace Health. Whether such an improvement constitutes a "substantial benefit to the community" will be a decision for the HDC to discuss. However, it may be worth noting that substantial amounts of unused parking appear to be present within the generally vicinity of the Grace Health campus, and that it may be prudent for Grace Health to explore a shared parking agreement with an adjacent property owner for reservation of currently unused parking spaces.

This criteria has likely not been satisfied.

(3) Retaining the resource will cause undue financial hardship to the owner when a governmental action, an act of God or other event beyond the owner's control created the hardship, and all feasible alternatives to eliminate the financial hardship, which may include offering the resource for sale at its fair market value or moving the resource to a vacant site within the Historic District, have been attempted and exhausted by the owner.

No notable deterioration of the structure is apparent at the present time. The structure appears to be in good and usable order, with no open violations outstanding.

This criteria has not been satisfied.

(4) Retaining the resource is not in the interests of the majority of the community.

According to Section 1470.02 (Purpose), “Historic preservation is declared to be a public purpose and this chapter is enacted to regulate the construction, addition, alteration, repair, moving, excavation and demolition of resources in Historic Districts within the City of Battle Creek.” Further, Section 1470.02 states that the purpose of the local historic districts includes the safeguarding of the heritage of the city by preserving historic districts and historic resources within the city, which reflect significant historic, cultural, or architectural value.

The preservation of a contributing resource for which construction dates back to 1885, and which remains substantially similar in its present-day condition compared to the photo contained in the Willard Library digital collection can likely be determined to be in the interest of the majority of the community. Whether or not the construction of additional patient and staff parking spaces in place of the building constitutes a greater good to the public interest will be a determination that the HDC will need to consider.

This criteria has likely not been satisfied.

Recommendation

The applicant is proposing the demolition of the entire structure located at 160 N Washington Ave. for the purpose of the creating additional parking for Grace Health patients and staff.

Planning staff is recommending that a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the structure at 160 N Washington Ave. be denied, as the request does not meet the standards outlined in Section 1470.09(e) “Review of Applications,” as documented in the application and in this report. Staff recommends that the HDC discuss with the applicant potential alternatives, including the possibility of a shared parking agreement with an adjacent property owner for additional parking spaces for Grace Health patients and staff, or alternatively the relocation of the resource to a different location within the Old Advent Town local historic district.

Support Material

Historic District Commission Application



CITY OF BATTLE CREEK

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT - PLANNING AND ZONING

Historic District Commission

Application for (check all that apply):

Certificate of Appropriateness (for repairs or rehab projects)

Notice to Proceed (for demolition requests)

Petition No.

Date Received: 8-4-2025

APPLICANT**

Name: Grace Health ---- Chris Davis

Address: 181 Emmett St. W (269)441-1733

Phone: 269-441-3401 Scott Hutchings Fax: _____

Email: chris.davis@gracehealthmi.org

OWNER (if different from applicant)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

** If the applicant is not the property owner, a letter signed by the owner agreeing to the application to the Historic District Commission must be included with the application.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS/EXISTING CONDITIONS

Address(es) of property for which the request is being sought: 160 N. Washington

Current use of the property: Vacant

List existing structures on the property and the approximate age of each: _____

Main Structure: built in roughly 1885

Please list all activities/proposed work for the property area and how the proposed work relates to the building as a whole: Structure would be removed. Footprint of structure would become green space.

Existing Parking Lot around structure would remain as is for now.

Indicate in which manner the proposed work will result in changes to the size and/or appearance of the features outlined in this application: Structure will be removed. Green space created

Does the work proposed include maintenance/repair of existing features of the structure or will it create new features that do not currently exist?

Entire structure would be demolished.

Please indicate the existing building materials of the following structural features and the proposed materials if that feature is included as part of the application. If the material and location is not listed below, please use the spaces left at the bottom of the list to indicate the feature and the proposed materials.

	Existing Materials	Proposed Materials (if applicable)
Roof	_____	_____
Windows	_____	_____
Siding	_____	_____
Foundation	_____	_____
	_____	_____

For Notice to Proceed requests only:

What options have you explored for the repair or relocation of the structure proposed for demolition?
 Repair or relocation of the structure has not been explored. Available parking for patients and staff is limited.
 This area will help Grace Health add more parking to meet current and future needs as we continue to grow.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

As outlined in the attached information, each request requires supplementary items that thoroughly describe the existing structure and proposed project. These items are to be submitted with the completed application, including:

- (If the petitioner is not the owner) an affidavit authorizing an applicant to act on behalf of the owner
- Property Site Plan
 - Residential occupied properties: applicants shall submit a drawing of the property indicating existing and proposed property features, including but not limited to any structures, drives, fences, decks/patios, etc. The dimensions of all existing and proposed features shall be labeled, as well as property dimensions. Distances between existing and/or proposed buildings and property lines shall also be included on the drawing. Indicate the location of any proposed building additions subject to review by the HDC.

- Non-residential properties that propose any revisions from an approved site plan will require a new site plan submittal, per Chapter 1294 of the Zoning Ordinance. If the requested project will NOT result in changes to the property including buildings (new or additions), parking, landscaping, etc. the applicant shall submit a drawing as specified in 2a.
- Photographs of the property and structure, including all elevations of the building, historical photographs of the property and structure, and street photos of structures adjacent to the property.
- **For Certificate of Appropriateness applications only:**
 - Provide one set of drawings that explain exactly what is being proposed including details of the project, specifications, and product information as needed. All drawings should be to scale.
 - Provide specific information on all materials proposed for the project, including manufacturer names, illustrations, specifications, and samples. Material information should be submitted with this application and all samples should be brought to the meeting.,
- **For Notice to Proceed applications only:**
 - Labeled photographs of the interior and exterior of the structure proposed for demolition.
 - Estimates for the complete repair of the property and estimates for demolition of the property OR
 - Documentation that the demolition is needed in order to further a major improvement program that has community-wide benefit OR
 - Any other supporting documentation that demonstrates compliance with any of the above standards for issuance of a Notice to Proceed.

Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Historic District Commission.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

By signing this application, the applicant hereby declares that all answers given herein are true to the best of their knowledge, and confirms that all information required for Historic District Commission review has been submitted. Furthermore, the applicant confirms that they have thoroughly read the "Historic District Commission, Information and Procedures" and agrees to comply with all requirements and procedures outlined herein.


 Name CFO
B. Scott Hordtinkas

Date

8-4-25

