

**VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026 – 6:30 PM
9996 WATER STREET**



ACTION ITEMS:

Ellis moved, Russell seconded to approve the July 28, 2026 Historic Preservation Committee minutes as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Russell moved, Ellis seconded to recommend approval to the Plan Committee for the Addition Design Review Application for Devin Wolf at 9815 Water Street, all ayes. Motion carried.

Russell moved, Ellis seconded to approve the Garage Design Review Application for 9992 Moravia Street for John Maher, all ayes. Motion carried.

Pentler moved, Ellis seconded to adjourn at 6:54 PM, all ayes. Motion carried.

Present: Marcia Ellis, Kathy Pentler (online), Amy Russell, and BD Thorp – Chair.

Absent: Cody Schreck.

Staff: Brent Bristol - Village Administrator and Kim Roberts - Deputy Clerk.

Guests in person: Ken Nelson, Andy Bartelt, Monique McClean, and Sandy Van Sickle.

Guests online: Brian Rosner (DeLeers Construction), Jason Reinhardt (DeLeers Construction), and John Maher.

1. Call to order:

Thorp called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. Quorum:

A quorum of the Historic Preservation Committee was present.

3. Changes in agenda:

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Visitors' Comments:

There were no visitors' comments.

5. Approval of previous minutes:

Ellis moved, Russell seconded to approve the July 28, 2026 Historic Preservation Committee minutes as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

6. Devin Wolf – 9815 Water Street – Addition – Design Review:

Bristol introduced the application for Devin Wolf's property at 9815 Water Street, a waterfront cottage at the south end of the Village. He explained that the project originated as a foundation replacement, a process in which the existing log structure is lifted, a new foundation is installed beneath it, and the structure is set back down. It is a technique consistent with similar historic log building projects along the waterfront. During the course of that work, the owner and contractor, Jack Opitz, identified a desire to add a small addition to the backside of the cottage. The application before the Committee is for a design review application for a 98.4 square foot addition to the rear of the log cottage. Bristol noted that the addition would be constructed of wood, with vertical wood siding chosen to complement the existing horizontal log construction in color.

Committee members expressed support for the application noting the addition was a reasonable size and that it preserved the historic look of the structure.

Russell moved, Ellis seconded to recommend approval to the Plan Committee for the Addition Design Review Application for Devin Wolf at 9815 Water Street, all ayes. Motion carried.

7. John Maher – 9992 Moravia Street – Garage and Remodel – Design Review:

Bristol introduced the application for John Maher's property at 9992 Moravia Street, located just north of the Bethany Parsonage. He noted that he had been in discussions with Maher regarding the need for additional storage and a garage solution for at least a year. The proposal consists of a roughly 25-by-25-foot garage to be constructed on the east/backside of the existing house, situated in an alcove near the current propane tank location. Bristol noted that the existing driveway and parking disturbances are concentrated in that area, and that the sloping grade on the backside of the property would require retaining walls, particularly on the north side of the proposed structure. He estimated that approximately ten (10) cedar trees would need to be removed. From a dimensional standpoint, he indicated no concerns on his end. He confirmed that design treatments for the garage are intended to match the existing building, and that the existing shed, which once housed a washer and dryer and a powder room would be removed as part of the project.

John Maher clarified that when he and his family purchased the house 25 years ago, the washer and dryer were originally in that shed, but they have since been relocated inside the house to a converted closet. He confirmed that only storage and a small powder room remain in the shed.

A discussion was held regarding the Garage and Remodel Design Review Application for 9992 Moravia Street. Pentler asked whether the laundry and bathroom would be incorporated into the new garage. Maher confirmed they would not. The only special-use space in the garage would be a small, roughly 9-by-6-foot temperature-controlled room in the north front corner, described as a "butler's pantry" intended for excess kitchen storage, beverages, and food items. This room would have no water. Maher clarified that a side door on the garage leads into this butler's pantry, with no interior door connecting it to the garage bay itself. The only access to the garage is through the garage door on the front. Pentler stated that as long as the structure matches the home and meets the Village's specifications, she had no objection. Russell noted that the garage is positioned behind the house and largely hidden, but raised a question about the cedar shingle detailing visible at the top of the garage in the drawings, asking whether it was consistent with the character and design of the main house. Maher explained that DeLeers, the project designer, had specifically incorporated the cedar shake elements from the side of the house that faces the schoolhouse, as well as decorative corner elements from the existing building, into the garage design. He noted that these repeated design elements would be visible upon approaching the driveway and at the top of the garage facade, resulting in a cohesive appearance. Ellis stated she had driven by the property that day and raised several questions: Whether blasting or dynamiting into the bluff would be necessary, whether the propane tank would be relocated, and what the drainage and runoff plans were.

Representatives from DeLeers confirmed that the propane tank would be relocated after the garage is constructed. Regarding blasting, it was noted that the extent of rock removal was not yet fully determined, it was possible that chipping rather than full blasting could be sufficient for the foundation work. On the drainage question, the contractor explained that a drainage system would be installed behind the garage and tied into daylight on the backside of the hill. Maher added that a French drain had been discussed with a landscaper, to be located in the corner at the base of the bluff to capture water running down from above. He noted that existing plantings near the base of the bluff already capture a significant amount of runoff. Pentler interjected to note a particular concern regarding the adjacent schoolhouse, which has archives stored in its basement. She emphasized that it was imperative that drainage not be directed toward the schoolhouse.

Thorp asked whether the garage would extend approximately seven to eight feet north of the main building's north corner, based on the western elevation drawing. The representative from DeLeers confirmed this was correct, explaining that the setback from the building was necessary to allow sufficient space for a vehicle to maneuver out of the garage and turn around, given the tightness of the site. Thorp asked whether Maher had considered burying the propane tank, particularly if blasting was already being planned. Maher indicated that this had not been discussed.

Sandy Van Sickle, of 3035 Church Street, addressed the Committee. She expressed concern about stormwater runoff, noting that her property on Church Street already experiences significant water issues originating from Moravia Street and the hill. She asked whether gutters or other measures were planned for the garage to manage runoff.

Thorp acknowledged her concern and indicated it had been partly addressed during discussion, and that the matter would be taken up again during the Plan Committee meeting, to which Van Sickle was invited to attend.

Remodel – Railing on Western Facade – Design Review

The interior remodel component of the application, which included a small number of window and door changes, was generally straightforward. However, Bristol flagged that the western elevation of the drawings revealed a proposed new railing on the flat roof area above the first-floor living space. This flat roof is currently accessible via an existing door, but has no railing a condition that would not meet current code if constructed today. The proposed remodel includes replacing that door with a patio-style slider and adding a railing around the flat roof perimeter, which Bristol fully understood from a safety standpoint, particularly given Maher's mention of grandchildren. However, since the railing constitutes new exterior work, Bristol indicated it was subject to setback requirements that he had not yet been able to fully verify.

Maher confirmed that the railing design would match the existing deck railing, the same materials and style used on a deck installed three to four years prior, and that this consistency was intentional.

Russell noted she would not have a problem with the railing matching what was below, but expressed a preference that the mullions on the new door match the character of older-style windows on the building.

Maher responded that the replacement slider would include mullions, and noted more broadly that the family is in the process of replacing remaining windows throughout the house with mullioned Marvin windows.

The Committee agreed that the railing application should be tabled and brought back at the next meeting, at which point the full remodel application — including both the railing and any other outstanding items could be acted upon together.

Russell moved, Ellis seconded to approve the Garage Design Review Application for 9992 Moravia Street for John Maher, all ayes. Motion carried.

8. New Business for next meeting / next meeting date:

No new business was noted.

The next meeting of the Historic Preservation Committee is October 27, 2026.

9. Adjournment:

Pentler moved, Ellis seconded to adjourn at 6:54 PM, all ayes. Motion carried.

Recorded by, Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk