

**City of Frankenmuth**

**Historic Preservation District Commission**

**Preservation Guidelines Handbook**

**11/14/2018**



**City of Frankenmuth**  
240 W. Genesee Street  
Frankenmuth, MI 48734-1398

[\(989\) 652-9901](tel:(989)652-9901)

## **Local Historic Preservation**

Throughout this document, the Historic Preservation District Commission may be referred to as the “Historic District Commission” or “HDC”, whereas the “Historic Preservation District” may be referred to as the “Historic District” or “HD”. The intent of this is to promote clarity throughout this document when referring to the City’s historic district.

The City of Frankenmuth’s Historic Preservation District Commission (HDC) is unique. It focuses both on recognition of existing or found historic character, but also specifically encourages the incorporation and adoption of architecture that complements the City’s Bavarian heritage. Further, substantial changes have been made to structures within the City’s Historic Preservation District prior to and since its creation in the late 1970’s. The overwhelming intent of the HDC is to encourage preservation and restoration whenever possible, while permitting property owners the opportunity to restore, rehabilitate and construct when other alternatives are not reasonable.

The City of Frankenmuth’s Historic Preservation District Commission (HDC) consists of five (5) commission members appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. Commissioners are appointed to a three-year term, with memberships eligible for renewal at the completion of those terms. Interim vacancies shall be filled, by appointment of the Mayor, subject to confirmation of the legislative body, for completion of the unexpired term.

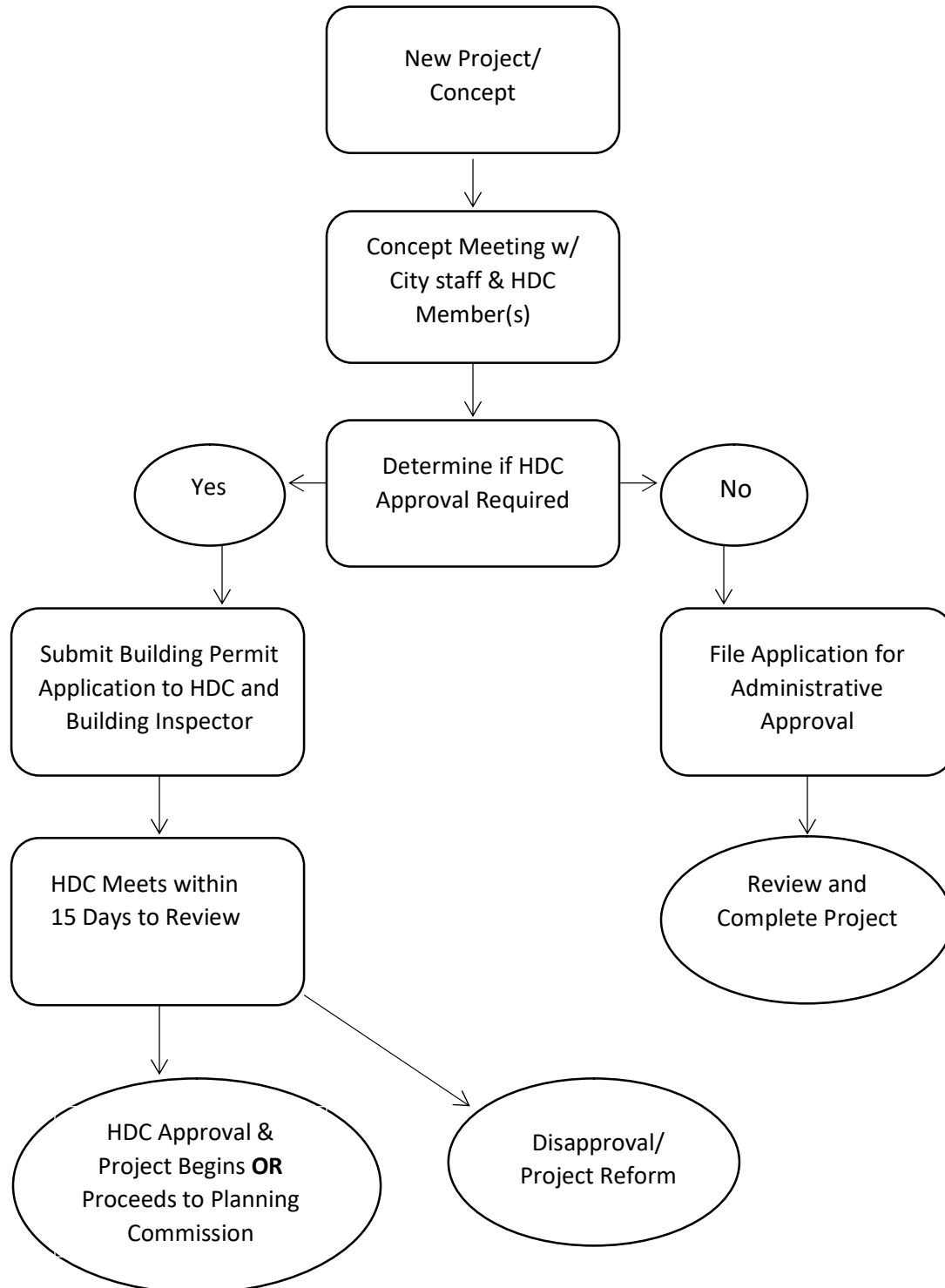
Members of the Historic Preservation District Commission are residents of the City of Frankenmuth. Two of said members shall be appointed from a list of citizens submitted by the Frankenmuth Historical Association, with the remaining members including: one (1) resident architect duly registered in the State of Michigan, one (1) member of the City Planning Commission, and one (1) member of the City Council. In the event that membership in the Commission cannot be filled through the recognized selection process, then membership may be filled by citizens at-large through appointment. When possible, memberships at large should be filled by residents within the Historic District.

The Commission is to elect its own Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. A full description of the Historic Preservation District Commission’s administration, operation, and enforcement are held within Chapter 54 of the City’s Zoning and Planning Code.

### **Concept Meeting**

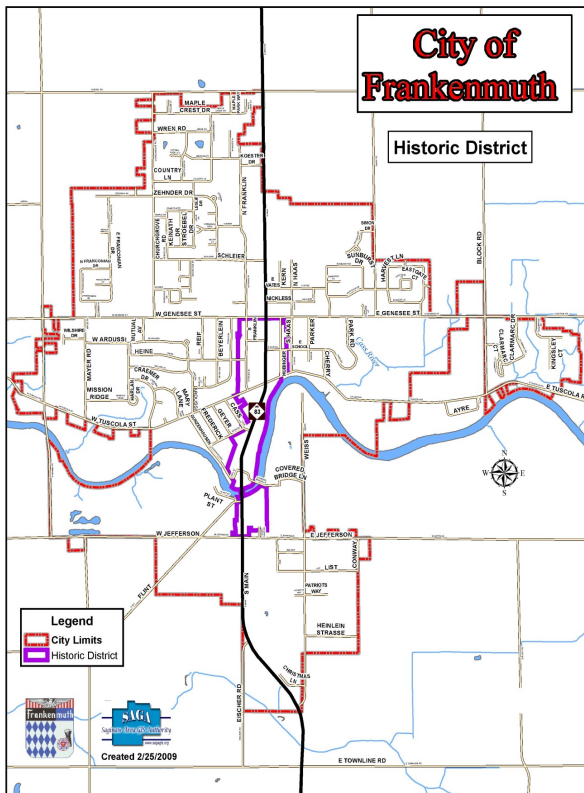
To obtain administrative approval, the HDC requires applicants to schedule a conceptual meeting during which an informal review, and question and answer period can occur. A meeting can also be scheduled for a fact-finding purpose too. Of course, like any project, the more detailed the plans or concepts, the better the project is understood. The better we are informed about the project, the more we can assist with the project. These meetings will include City staff and/or members of the HDC. If a quorum is present, the meeting will be posted accordingly. This can assist homeowners, property owners and developers in better

understanding the intent of HDC requirements and make the approval process easier. Conceptual approval early in the process can help limit costs and provide additional direction and better communication, also avoiding unnecessary delays. In some instances, submittal of a thorough and complete application may be enough to satisfy the requirement of a “conceptual meeting”, first.



## Historic District Map

The area located within the  
Purple represents the district.





## **HDC Standards and Design Guidelines**

### **Activities Not Requiring HDC Approval**

Window replacement is not required to be approved if the window openings remain the same size. A building permit for window replacement when the windows remain the same size is also not required.

Replacement of roofing materials is not required to be approved when replacing with the same materials (e.g. asphalt shingles with asphalt shingles). When replacing roofing materials with a different material, please contact City staff. Residential roof replacements do not require a building permit, however, most commercial roof replacements do require a permit.

Replacement of original siding materials with vinyl or cement board siding may be reviewed and approved without formal Commission approval when replaced with a material that is similar to the size and features of the original and/or contributing dwellings in the area.

### **Activities Requiring HDC Approval**

In addition to the below itemized categories, fences are permitted in the side and rear yard with a fence permit and no HDC review is required (Note: A zoning permit is required and a property survey is highly recommended).

Reconstruction and rehabilitation of porches, etc., are encouraged to rely on the existing character of the building. Construction that is intended to repair/renovate/rehabilitate what is there now with a newer equivalent is encouraged (please consult the building inspector before commencing such a project).

Additions and substantial renovations to buildings should rely on the existing character of the building or, when that has been substantially altered, the character of contributing buildings in the vicinity. This includes taking into consideration the surrounding bulk, mass and overall design of buildings in the immediate area. Suggestions are included in Appendix A.

New construction in established Historic District neighborhoods is encouraged to rely on found character in terms of design, bulk and mass.

### **Residential**

A focus on contributing historic properties in residential neighborhoods is on enhancing and preserving existing historic character. Paint color is not required to be submitted for approval because it does not inherently impact the structural integrity of the building unless you are painting brick or stone that has not previously been painted. The HDC encourages homeowners to choose color schemes that are complementary to the character of the home (see Appendix A). If a chosen color scheme is within the provided examples, it can be administratively approved. If a chosen color scheme is not within the provided examples, it is required that the property owner schedule a conceptual meeting with City staff and possibly with historic commission members.

## Commercial

Exterior paint colors are not necessarily required for submittal; however, fluorescent colors are prohibited. If new exterior painting is close to the existing color scheme, or within a pre-approved scheme, a new project may be approved administratively. Applications for administrative approval can be submitted to City staff in person or through an online process. Online applications can be submitted through the City website, or can be delivered or emailed directly to City staff or a member of the HDC.

## Re-painting

Any painting of brick, masonry or stone must be submitted for review.

Painting that is done as a mural or some other design or wall or art feature, shall be submitted for review. In general, brightly colored or animated/unrealistic wall murals are not permitted. Murals shall reflect the general character, architecture and more subdued color scheme of the commercial portion of the Historic District. Murals may be larger than sign restrictions, with prior approval.



## Awnings

Awnings meeting the following standards may be reviewed and approved administratively:

- Fabric should be canvas or modern material with the appearance of canvas and have flat or dull finish and be opaque to light (shiny, vinyl or other glossy finishes are not acceptable).
- Awnings shall not be backlit.
- Awnings shall be mounted in such a manner that it does not block or damage significant architectural features of the building.
- All signage thereon must comply with the City's sign code.



## Signs

Signs shall be complementary to the building. Fluorescent colors, neon lighting, flashing lighting or LED/video display signs are not permitted. Signs that complement the existing streetscape and reinforce the pedestrian scale of the commercial district are encouraged.

Signs may be approved administratively when the following conditions are met:

- Signs are not backlit
- If freestanding, signs are comprised of at least 30% natural materials including the base (examples include stone or brick masonry, wood, wrought iron, etc.).
- Signs that otherwise meet all requirements of the City's sign code.
- Pedestrian style signs are also permitted.

All signs outside of a building are regulated by City code, including signs attached on the outside of a building or windows. Signs attached inside of windows, however, are not regulated by the HDC or by the City or signs that cannot be viewed from adjacent property or the public rights-of-way.







Examples of permitted temporary, pedestrian style or “A-Frame” signs include the following:



### Façade renovations

When possible, renovations to the facades should retain and highlight existing character. Restoration of a building should be narrowly focused to bring back elements that may have been earlier removed. Additionally, the relationship of the building’s entry to the public street should be reinforced when possible. Commercial renovations should either retain the heritage of the original building or might include a Bavarian-Franconian theme. Residential renovations, however, should retain the tradition of the building’s original setting.

Examples are included in Appendix A.

As an alternative to reinforcing found character, façade improvements, renovations and new construction may conform to the Franconian and Bavarian architectural style characteristic of the German villages from which the early Frankenmuth settlers emigrated. Aspects of traditional architecture are encouraged to be included in commercial properties within the City's Historic District. When turning residential properties into commercial properties within the Historic District, it is appropriate to maintain aspects of the building's traditional character. Also, note that the proper zoning must be in place for this to occur. For example, renovations might include maintaining a building's original porch or windows. Examples and recommendations of this architectural style are included in Appendix B.

### **Additions**

Additions to buildings should be complementary in bulk, mass and form to the existing building. In general, additions should not:

- Disrupt the character-defining features of the building and/or surrounding property.
- Transform a secondary façade into a primary façade.
- Remove significant building features.
- Remove other historically significant features of the property.

Additions of 250 square feet or less and/or those involving mechanical or utility equipment can be approved administratively under the following conditions:

- Located in such a way as it is not viewable from a public street
- Is screened through architecture and/or landscaping from parking areas and when viewable from other buildings/properties
- Is complementary in terms of color, materials and architecture (as applicable) to the original structure
- Does not block or require the removal of an architectural feature or element of the original structure

### **New Construction**

As with renovations, new construction within the commercial portion of the Historic District may wish to either follow a pattern of construction that relies on the found character within the area or that relies on Franconian and Bavarian architecture. Regardless of the architecture and style, new construction should be complementary in bulk and mass. New buildings should be identifiable as being of their period of construction but not so differentiated that they detract from or visually compete with their historic neighbors. Placement of the building on the site is important for the way in which it will relate to the street, street front, pedestrians and the flow of pedestrians to and from each of those elements. Examples of new construction are provided in Appendix A.

### **Demolition**

Requests for demolition are required to be submitted to the Historic District Commission at least 15 days prior to the next meeting to provide adequate time for review and notification of adjacent property owners and other interested parties. Demolition is typically seen as a last

resort. In certain instances, however, demolition is necessary. If the public benefit of demolition outweighs potential benefit from preservation, demolition might become a viable option. If demolition offers improved economic, environmental, or social qualities to the community, demolition may be pursued.

According to Chapter 54 of City Code, applications for demolition (residential or commercial) may be issued when at least one of the following standards is met:

- The structure is deemed a hazard to public health or safety by the building inspector.
- The structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the community.
- Retention of the structure would cause undue financial hardship to the owner.
- Retention of the structure would not be in the best interest of the majority of the community (5.414).

### **Available Resources**

The City has been given several publications on Bavarian and Franconian architecture that has numerous colored photos. Please note that the text is in German and that the books may be viewed at the Frankenmuth City office. See the bibliography of the books listed in Appendix F.



**HPDC Administrative Approval APPLICATION**  
**City of Frankenmuth**  
**240 W. Genesee Street**  
**Frankenmuth, MI 48734-1398**  
**Phone: (989) 652-9901 • Facsimile: (989) 652-3451**

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information (Phone & Email): \_\_\_\_\_

Is the property located within the City of Frankenmuth's Historic Preservation District? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the property ☐Residential ☐Commercial ☐Other \_\_\_\_\_

What is the nature of the proposed project? ☐Rehabilitation ☐Reconstruction  
☐Replacement

Does the proposed project address one of the following (Circle all that apply): ☐Windows ☐Roofing  
☐Siding ☐Painting ☐New Landscaping ☐Temporary Signs ☐Other \_\_\_\_\_  
☐Permanent Signs (composed of at least 30% natural materials)

Please describe (in detail) the proposed project (feel free to attach such information):

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Please attach the following to this application: ☐A current photo of the property ☐A conceptual drawing  
or "photo shop" of the proposed project ☐A color sample or material board, as appropriate

After reviewing your application, a member of the City Staff will contact you to schedule a Concept Meeting,  
if deemed necessary. Are there days/times which are better for you?

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: Administrative approval is intended for the approval of some building updates within the City's Historic District. Submitting an application for administrative approval does not guarantee approval for a project. A Concept Meeting with City Staff/Commission Member(s) does not guarantee administrative approval. If approved, City Staff/Commission Member(s) will notify the applicant in writing. New construction such as additions or fencing will not be approved through administrative approval. City Staff reserves the right to send any proposed project to the Historic District Commission for approval, if deemed necessary.

## Resources

1. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties" - <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-guidelines.pdf>
2. "Michigan Local Historic Preservation District s Act", Act 169 of 1970, <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-Act-169-of-1970>
3. Michigan's State Historic Preservation Officer Brian D. Conway. (517) 373-1630.
4. Michigan State Historic Preservation Office Publications - [http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-54317\\_54760---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-54317_54760---,00.html)
5. City of Frankenmuth Zoning and Planning Code – Chapter 54 – "Historical Preservation", [http://www.frankenmuthcity.com/images/Clerk/Clerk\\_-\\_City\\_Code/Ch. 54\\_HistoricalPreservation.pdf](http://www.frankenmuthcity.com/images/Clerk/Clerk_-_City_Code/Ch._54_HistoricalPreservation.pdf)
6. City of Frankenmuth Zoning and Planning Code – Chapter 51 – "Zoning" – Article 17 – "Signage", [http://www.frankenmuthcity.com/images/Planning\\_Zoning/51\\_-\\_Zoning\\_NEW.pdf](http://www.frankenmuthcity.com/images/Planning_Zoning/51_-_Zoning_NEW.pdf)



# Appendix A

## Appropriate Color Schemes

- Examples of color schemes appropriate for the Historic District might include white/cream, blue/light blue, and earth-tone schemes such as tan/brown. Fluorescent colors are prohibited in the City's Historic District.
- Examples of exterior historic color schemes are available from many paint providers. Exterior historic color examples are provided by several companies, and are available online:

Sherwin Williams <https://www.sherwin-williams.com/homeowners/exterior-historic-colors>.

## Residential Addition Examples



230 S. Franklin Street



130 S. Franklin Street

## Commercial Renovation Examples



104 S. Franklin Street



966 S. Main Street



## Renovation Examples

Examples of façade renovations include two homes on S. Franklin St, at the addresses of 230 S. Franklin Street and 352 S. Franklin Street.



Before



After



Before



After

## New Construction Examples



Rupprecht Haus, 991 S. Main Street



Frankenmuth Cheese Haus, 545 S. Main Street

## Appendix B

### Resources on traditional architecture

Resources on traditional Bavarian architecture are available for reference from the City of Frankenmuth. These resources provide examples of traditional architecture and color schemes, and are located at the City & Township Government Center. They include authentic German architecture.

### Examples of Franconian/Bavarian Architecture



Rummel Platz, 520 S. Main Street



Frankenmuth River Place Shops, 925 S. Main Street

## Appendix C

### Federal Historic District Information

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 created the National Register of Historic Places, the list of National Historic Landmarks, and the State Historic Preservation Offices. Creation of the State Historic Preservation Office was intended to coordinate statewide preservation efforts and to nominate properties to the National Register.

The Secretary of the Interior is the leading figure of the Department of the United States Department of the Interior. This department oversees various departments and programs including the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places. The following information has been provided by the Secretary of the Interior as a resource of historic preservation.

The goals of the National Park Service's Historical Preservation Program include the following:

- Strengthen the integration of historic preservation into the broader public policy and land-use planning and decision-making arenas at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels
- Increase the opportunities for broad-based and diverse public participation in planning for historic and cultural resources.
- Expand knowledge and skills in historic preservation planning.
- Assist states, tribes, local governments, and federal agencies in carrying out inclusive preservation planning programs that are responsive to their own needs and concerns.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are a set of guidelines for maintenance, repair, and replacement of historic places, while promoting appropriate change in additions and minor alterations of a property. These standards offer four options when addressing a historic building, which should be considered carefully.

1. Preservation focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.
2. Rehabilitation focuses on the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.
3. Restoration depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.
4. Reconstruction re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.

It is important to consider several factors in choosing a method of treatment, including the historical significance, physical condition, and future intentions of the property in consideration. The Secretary of the Interior suggests using these factors in assisting with the protection of a historical property.

A building's **historic significance** is important because it can denote national landmarks, rare works of craftsmanship, or another significant moment in local, state, or national history. Buildings listed in the National Registry of historic places are more likely to be treated through preservation or rehabilitation, as compared to historic places not listed in the National Registry. These buildings are more likely to receive rehabilitation into new compatible uses.

The **physical condition** of a historic building's integrity is important in choosing the proper treatment of a property. Buildings with original and intact physical characteristics might be suited for preservation. Alterations made to a building do not necessarily remove the possibility of preservation, as long as these alterations have contributed to a building's historical significance. If extensive repairs or alterations are needed to satisfy requirements for use, then rehabilitation might be a more appropriate treatment.

Practicality in a building's **proposed use** is another contributing factor in determining treatment. Many historic buildings can be adapted to new use without seriously harming historic importance. Through adaptation instead of major alteration, new use can exist while protecting historical significance.



**Mandated code requirements** must be met, even when dealing with historic properties. If alterations are required in order to meet code requirements, they should remain as minimal as possible. Large alterations might alter use, but they should aim to preserve the building's appearance. For example, alterations required to meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 should change appearance as little as possible.

## **Appendix D**

### **State Historic District Information**

Michigan's Local Historic District Act, Act 169 of 1970, provides the legal foundation for the creation of local historic districts. The purpose of this public act is to:

“provide for the establishment of Historic Preservation Districts; to provide for the acquisition of certain resources for historic preservation purposes; to provide for preservation of historic and non-historic resources within Historic Districts; to provide for the establishment of Historic District Commissions; to provide for the maintenance of publicly owned resources by local units; to provide for certain assessments under certain circumstances; to provide for procedures; and to provide for remedies and penalties.”

This act allows local governments the ability to appoint Historic District Commissions to review proposed work done to the exterior of buildings, and to determine if the work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation. This is one of the few ways local communities can provide legal protection to their Historic District resources.

The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has been working with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) since 2009. It aims to provide resources for local Historic Districts to utilize while working with communities, individuals, and organizations to create a larger sense of investment in historic resources. The SHPO administers assistance and resources to local governments in the form of grant information and federal resource information. It also administers the standards and regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

## **Appendix E**

### **HDC Meetings/Communications**

Meetings of the Historic District Commission will be held quarterly in February, May, August and November of each year. Generally speaking, meetings will take place on the second Wednesday of each month at 3:30 PM in the City & Township Government Center's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting chambers. (Notes: (1) Unless noted otherwise. (2) Annual confirmation of these

meeting dates and times with the City office is recommended. (3) At times, the Historic District Commission may meet at an affected property located within the district.). Meeting agendas will be made available to the public in accordance with the State of Michigan's Open Meetings Act of 1976. Effort will be made to post agendas on the City's website prior to all HDC meetings. Citizens are encouraged to contact HDC members or City staff with any questions regarding their property within the Historic District.

## **Appendix F**

### **Bibliography of German Architecture - City of Frankenmuth**

Title: Gunzenhausen Zentrum des Frankischen Seenlandes Stadt am Limes UNESCO Welterbe  
By: Johann Schrenk  
ISBN: 3924270353

Title: Gunzenhausen Am Altmuhlsee  
By: Johann Schrenk  
ISBN: 3924270261

Title: Deutschland  
By: Kiedrowski Rainer Viedebantt Klaus  
ISBN: 3575110034

Title: Von Franken bis Oberbayern  
By: Hans F. Nohbauer  
ISBN: 3921268516

Title: Franken Im Farbbild  
By: Irene Reiff  
ISBN: 3929932628

Title: Romantisches Mittelfranken  
By: Michael Vogel & Johann Schrenk  
ISBN: 392498302X

Title: Die letzten 100 Brauereien in Bamberg und seinem Landkreis  
By: Uto Duthorn  
ISBN: 3981025709

Title: Bemalte Möbel aus Franken  
By: Kaspar Fred und Gerdi Maierbach u.a.  
ISBN: 3768901750