



# City of Joliet

## Joliet Historic Preservation Commission

### Meeting Agenda

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Wednesday, April 22, 2026

6:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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Citizens who are unable to attend the meeting can email comments in advance of the meeting to [publiccomment@joliet.gov](mailto:publiccomment@joliet.gov).

#### CALL TO ORDER

#### DECLARATION OF QUORUM

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Joliet Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes 02-25-2026

**Attachments:** [JHPC 2-25-26 Minutes](#)

#### CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS

This section is for anyone wanting to speak regarding agenda items and are allowed a maximum of 4 minutes. It is not a question and answer period and staff, and the Commission members do not generally respond to public comments. The City Clerk has a copy of the public speaking procedures; please note, speakers who engage in conduct injurious to the harmony of the meeting shall be called to order by the Presiding Officer and may forfeit the opportunity to speak.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### OLD BUSINESS

Survey of Hitching Posts & Stepping Stones

#### NEW BUSINESS

Annual Historic Preservation Awards

**Attachments:** [Annual Awards PacketHPC.pdf](#)

National Historic Preservation Month (May) Events and Activities

## **STAFF REPORTS**

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

This section is for anyone wanting to speak regarding non-agenda items and are allowed a maximum of 4 minutes. It is not a question and answer period and staff, and the Commission members do not generally respond to public comments. The City Clerk has a copy of the public speaking procedures; please note, speakers who engage in conduct injurious to the harmony of the meeting shall be called to order by the Presiding Officer and may forfeit the opportunity to speak.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting will be held in an accessible location. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact The City Clerk Office, 150 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432 at (815) 724-3780.



# City of Joliet

150 West Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

## Memo

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**File #:** TMP-9771

**Agenda Date:** 4/22/2026

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# **City of Joliet**

150 West Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432



## **Meeting Minutes - Pending Approval**

**Wednesday, February 25, 2026**

**6:00 PM**

**City Hall, Council Chambers**

## **Joliet Historic Preservation Commission**

### ***Commission Members***

***Quinn Adamowski***

***Brian Bessler***

***Felipe J. Gloria***

***Kevin Heinemann***

***Candace Johnson***

***Kailee Lowry***

***Sharon Merwin***

***Aaron Mikottis***

***Ken Spiegel***

***Sara Stovall***

***Steven Wright***

Citizens who are unable to attend the meeting can email comments in advance of the meeting to [publiccomment@joliet.gov](mailto:publiccomment@joliet.gov).

## CALL TO ORDER

## DECLARATION OF QUORUM

**Present** Brian Bessler, Felipe J. Gloria, Candace Johnson, Kailee Lowry and Sharon Merwin  
**Absent** Quinn Adamowski, Kevin Heinemann, Aaron Mikottis, Ken Spiegel, Sara Stovall and Steven Wright

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### Joliet Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes 11-19-25

Attachments: [JHPC 11-19-25 Minutes.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Kailee Lowry, seconded by Sharon Merwin, to approve Joliet Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes 11-19-25. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Bessler, Gloria, Johnson, Lowry and Merwin

**Absent:** Adamowski, Heinemann, Spiegel and Stovall

## CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

## OLD BUSINESS

### Survey of Hitching Posts & Stepping Stones

Planning Director Jayne Bernhard reported that there were no spreadsheet entries and the project was not yet open to the public, and noted a public message could be issued to gather public input if the Commission concurred. Commissioners discussed possible locations and were encouraged to add them to the spreadsheet. Ms. Bernhard reported she shared the concept with City engineers.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Election of Chair and Vice-Chair Positions

A motion was made by Kailee Lowry, seconded by Brian Bessler to open the nominations for Chair. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Candace Johnson nominated Brian Bessler for Chair. No other nominations for Chair were made at that time.

A motion was made by Kailee Lowry, seconded by Felipe J. Gloria to close the nominations for Chair. No vote was taken to close the nominations.

A motion was made by Candace Johnson, seconded by Kailee Lowry to approve Brian Bessler for Chair. The motion was carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Bessler, Gloria, Johnson, Lowry and Merwin

**Absent:** Adamowski, Heinemann, Mikottis, Spiegel, Stovall and Wright

A motion was made by Kailee Lowry, seconded by Brian Bessler to open nominations for Vice-Chair. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Kailee Lowry nominated Candace Johnson for Vice-Chair. No other nominations for Vice-Chair were made at that time.

A motion was made by Sharon Merwin, seconded by Kailee Lowry to close the nominations for Vice-Chair. All Commissioners present voted aye.

A motion was made by Brian Bessler, seconded by Kailee Lowry to approve Candace Johnson for Vice-Chair. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Bessler, Gloria, Johnson, Lowry and Merwin

**Absent:** Adamowski, Heinemann, Mikottis, Spiegel, Stovall and Wright

### **Arts, Culture, & Heritage Workshop – Joliet Comprehensive Plan – Key Themes**

Ms. Bernhard reported on the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Workshop, including four topic stations that addressed preservation, arts access, cultural identity, and welcoming spaces. Feedback from the workshop supported historic preservation and placemaking, with concerns about funding incentives, and emphasized sharing the histories of Joliet residents. Commissioners noted limited public awareness of Joliet's history and existing amenities. Suggestions included improving website resources and developing videos to promote cultural and heritage assets.

### **Joliet Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report for 2025**

Attachments: [CLG-Annual-Update-City of Joliet 2025.pdf](#)

Ms. Bernhard explained the annual report highlights heritage, cultural, and preservation initiatives, and would be submitted to City Council. The report noted the African American Context Study, I-80 Des Plaines River Bridge project, Comprehensive Plan, five meetings, zero Certificates of Appropriateness, fifteen administrative reviews, and no landmark or National Register nominations in 2025. Staff and commissioners continue training, including virtual sessions, and Ms. Merwin suggested additional free webinars via Wiss, Janney, Elster & Associates at [wje.com](http://wje.com).

A motion was made by Sharon Merwin, seconded by Kailee Lowry, to approve Joliet Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report for 2025. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Bessler, Gloria, Johnson, Lowry and Merwin

**Absent:** Adamowski, Heinemann, Spiegel and Stovall

### **2026 Annual Historic Preservation Strategy**

Attachments: [2025 Action Plan-Annual Review.pdf](#)  
[2026 Action Plan-Draft.pdf](#)

Ms. Bernhard and the Commission reviewed and discussed the 2026 draft goals and priority actions within three themes: Educate the Public about Historic Resources, Stewardship of Designated Historic Properties, and Promote Historic Resources.

A motion was made by Kailee Lowry, seconded by Felipe J. Gloria, to approve Annual Historic Preservation Strategy . The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Bessler, Gloria, Johnson, Lowry and Merwin

**Absent:** Adamowski, Heinemann, Spiegel and Stovall

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Ms. Bernhard provided updates on the Comprehensive Plan, noting Community Workshop #2 would be held at the Joliet Public Library on February 26 to review public input, project goals, and four character areas.

Updates were also provided on the I-80 Des Plaines River Bridge project, including ongoing cost analysis, engineering review, and historical research. Ms. Bernhard reported on the Choice Neighborhoods initiative, including an active website and a past meeting that focused on housing options. The Rivers Edge Redevelopment Zone program was noted as state-approved and open to qualified projects.

Ms. Bernhard announced Historic Preservation Award nominations would open March 1. Potential nominees were discussed. Plans for National Historic Preservation Month in May include daily social media posts, with an additional suggestion to feature one historic building monthly.

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Ms. Merwin highlighted the Commission's formation in 1991 and her years of service on the Commission. Ms. Bernhard expressed appreciation for her service.

The Commission discussed photographing hitching posts and stepping stones at residents' homes.

Ms. Bernhard reported Kevin Heinemann resigned due to relocation to Indiana.

Ms. Johnson inquired whether anyone attended the February 18 Kendall County Historic Preservation workshop and sending an apology for nonattendance. Ms. Bernhard noted she attended the Kendall County Regional Planning Commission Annual Meeting.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Brian Bessler, seconded by Kailee Lowry, to approve adjournment. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Bessler, Gloria, Johnson, Lowry and Merwin

**Absent:** Adamowski, Heinemann, Spiegel and Stovall

This meeting will be held in an accessible location. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact The City Clerk Office, 150 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432 at (815) 724-3780.



# City of Joliet

150 West Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

## Memo

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**File #:** TMP-9772

**Agenda Date:** 4/22/2026

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# City of Joliet

150 West Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

## Memo

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**File #:** TMP-9773

**Agenda Date:**4/22/2026

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## STAFF REPORT

**DATE:** April 10, 2026  
**TO:** Joliet Historic Preservation Commission  
**FROM:** Jayne M. Bernhard, Secretary to the Joliet Historic Preservation Commission  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Historic Preservation Award Program

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### **BACKGROUND**

Since 2008, the Joliet Historic Preservation Commission annually sponsors the Joliet Historic Preservation Award. The City of Joliet annually bestows these awards, which recognizes properties that have undergone recent preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation as well as people or organizations who exhibit dedication to the field of historic preservation. Last year the City recognized the Patrick Haley Mansion and the homeowners of 900 N. Raynor for their historic preservation efforts.

The Historic Preservation Commission issued a call for nominations in March 2026. Nominations were due Friday April 10, 2026.

### **DISCUSSION**

Three nominations for completed projects were submitted for consideration for the 2026 Annual Historic Preservation Awards Program:

- 408 Whitney Avenue – for the restoration and repair of the exterior and interior after major fire damage, which was authorized by the homeowner.
- 226 E. Clinton Street – for the for the repair and preservation of the decorative brick details at the former Joliet Jewish Federation temple, which has been home to the Werden Buck Boys & Girls Club for the past several decades. This work was authorized by the Boys & Girls Club.
- 416 N. Chicago Street – for the installation of specialty lighting that highlights the distinct architectural features of historic St. Joseph Church, which was authorized by the St. Joseph Parish Council and financially supported by donations.

Nominations as well as supporting information and photos are attached. Winners will likely be recognized at the May 19<sup>th</sup> 2026 City Council meeting with a proclamation.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends all three nominations for awards this year. The property owners authorized work to preserve the historic architectural features of these structures when they could have chosen not to. Joliet's architecture reflects the city's rich heritage and contributes

significantly to its character and identity. Preserving this architecture enhances Joliet's authenticity, sense of place and overall quality of life.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Nominations
- Supporting information and photos

# Annual Joliet Historic Preservation Award

A recognition of properties that have undergone recent exterior and/or interior preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive use, or sympathetic additions as well as for people who exhibit dedication to the field of historic preservation.

## MAIL NOMINATION FORM TO:

Joliet Historic Preservation Commission  
150 W. Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

## EMAIL NOMINATION FORM TO:

[HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov](mailto:HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov)

DEADLINE: Friday, April 10, 2026

Property Address: 408 Whitney Avenue ZIP Code 60435

Current Property Owner (if known): Rey and Maria Hernandez

Historic Name and/or Original Owner (if known): Aaron E. Vance, 1891

Current Use: Single family home, Bands on the Porch

Historic Use: Residence of Aaron E. Vance, owner of the first furniture store in Joliet (1891)

Year Built (if known): 1891

Year Rehabilitated, Renovated, Restored (if known): 2016, 2025

Architectural Style/Form (if known): Queen anne victorian

**Reason for nomination:** Please provide a short description, between 50 and 500 words, explaining the project or person being nominated. The statement should clearly identify the purpose and scope of work, unusual challenges or innovative approaches, sensitive treatment of historic fabric, long-term impact and any other information that supports the nomination as being exceptional. Attach an additional page if needed.

408 Whitney's current owner's intention when purchasing the home is to restore it to its original state. Although 408 Whitney has almost been demolished twice over its years due to the poor state and negligence, including being a multi-family house for many years, Rey has worked hard to find the history of the Aaron E. Vance house and make the Queen anne victorian house shine like it did in 1891. After a fire in April 2023, the house, while almost fully restored, is still undergoing renovations.

**Images:** Please provide a minimum of five photographs or quality digital photographs in .jpg format on a CD ROM, flash drive, or by email highlighting the project. Before and after pictures are encouraged.

Submitted By: Rey Hernandez

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Home Address: 408 Whitney Ave City Joliet State IL ZIP 60435

# Annual Joliet Historic Preservation Award

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*A recognition of properties that have undergone recent exterior and/or interior preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive use, or sympathetic additions as well as for people who exhibit dedication to the field of historic preservation.*

**DEADLINE:** Friday, April 10, 2026

**MAIL NOMINATION FORM TO:**

Joliet Historic Preservation Commission  
150 W. Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

**EMAIL NOMINATION FORM TO:**

[HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov](mailto:HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov)

**Property Address:** 408 Whitney Avenue, Joliet

**ZIP Code:** 60435

**Current Property Owner (if known):** Rey & Maria Hernandez

**Historic Name and/or Original Owner (if known):** Aaron E. Vance, 1891

**Year Built (if known):** 1891

**Year Rehabilitated, Renovated, Restored (if known):** 2016 & 2025

**Architectural Style/Form (if known):** Queen Anne

## **ADDENDUM:**

Staff spoke with the property and obtained the following additional information related to the nomination of their home for this award:

The owners communicated that after the April 2023 fire, they took their time restoring the fire damage. They interviewed several contractors who proposed work that would not have retained the architectural details of the house. The homeowners felt it was important to retain the cedar shakes and wood siding. In the end, they were able to find a contractor who would retain the home's architectural features and historic integrity with special orders for the cedar shakes and siding. For this reason, they did not move back into the home until the fall of 2025!

The owners also communicated that the front steps were in complete disrepair at the time of their purchase in 2016 (pictures attached). They took time to find wrought iron rails that matched other homes in the area. In the future, they would love to rebuild the front steps as it was originally constructed; however, modern building code will require a handrail and guardrails (handrail with balusters) above 30" in height off the ground.

Before



Before



After



In-progress

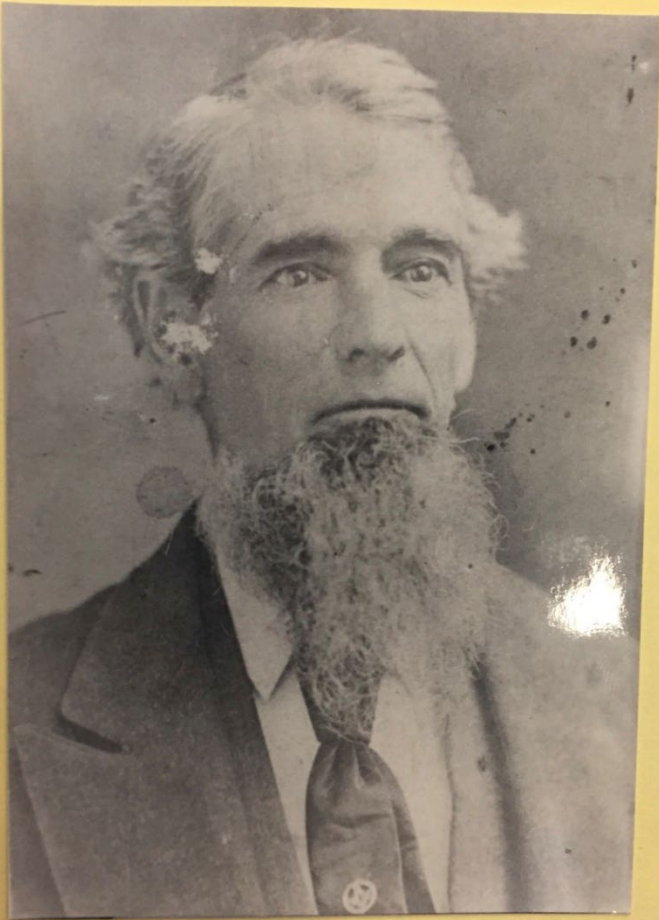


Fire



After - Now





Aaron Vance  
# 28



# Annual Joliet Historic Preservation Award

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*A recognition of properties that have undergone recent exterior and/or interior preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive use, or sympathetic additions as well as for people who exhibit dedication to the field of historic preservation.*

**DEADLINE:** Friday, April 10, 2026

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**EMAIL NOMINATION FORM TO:**  
[HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov](mailto:HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov)

**Property Address:** 226 E. Clinton St                      **ZIP Code:** 60432

**Current Property Owner (if known):** George Werden Buck Boys & Girls Club of Joliet

**Historic Name and/or Original Owner (if known):** The Joliet Jewish Federation

**Current Use:** Boys and Girls Club/Recreational Center

**Historic Use:** Religious

**Year Built (if known):** 1928; c. 1969 (Natatorium Addition)

**Year Rehabilitated, Renovated, Restored (if known):** 2025-2026

**Architectural Style/Form (if known):** Byzantine Revival

**Reason for nomination:** *Please provide a short description, between 50 and 500 words, explaining the project or person being nominated. The statement should clearly identify the purpose and scope of work, unusual challenges or innovative approaches, sensitive treatment of historic fabric, long-term impact and any other information that supports the nomination as being exceptional. Attach an additional page if needed.*

The George Werden Buck Boys & Girls Club of Joliet realized a need for extensive tuckpointing on the upper portion of the North elevation during 2025. They began the work of removing and reassembling the exterior bricks in the fall of that year. While doing so they managed to recreate the original decorative brick patterns throughout in order to maintain original architectural details. The tuckpointing work was completed by P&J Masonry Restoration Professionals.

**Images:** *Please provide a minimum of five photographs or quality digital photographs in .jpg format on a CD ROM, flash drive, or by email highlighting the project. Before and after pictures are encouraged.*

ATTACHED

**Submitted By:** \_Candace Johnson & Sara Stovall, Commissioners, Historic Preservation Commission

**Phone:** [REDACTED]                      **Email:** [REDACTED]

**Home Address:** [REDACTED]                      **City:** Joliet                      **State:** IL                      **ZIP:** 60435

April 2026



April 2025



# Annual Joliet Historic Preservation Award

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*A recognition of properties that have undergone recent exterior and/or interior preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive use, or sympathetic additions as well as for people who exhibit dedication to the field of historic preservation.*

**DEADLINE:** Friday, April 10, 2026

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Joliet Historic Preservation Commission  
150 W. Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

**EMAIL NOMINATION FORM TO:**  
[HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov](mailto:HistoricPreservation@joliet.gov)

**Property Address:** 416 North Chicago Street      **ZIP Code :** 60432

**Current Property Owner (if known):** St. Joseph Church (Diocese of Joliet )

**Historic Name and/or Original Owner (if known):** St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church (Slovenian)

**Current Use:** Roman Catholic Church / active Worship and Faith Community

**Historic Use:** Roman Catholic Church / active Worship and Faith Community

**Year Built (if known):** 1904-1905

**Year Rehabilitated, Renovated, Restored (if known):** 2026

**Architectural Style/Form (if known):** Romanesque Revival

**Reason for nomination:** *Please provide a short description, between 50 and 500 words, explaining the project or person being nominated. The statement should clearly identify the purpose and scope of work, unusual challenges or innovative approaches, sensitive treatment of historic fabric, long-term impact and any other information that supports the nomination as being exceptional. Attach an additional page if needed.*

St. Joseph Catholic Church at 416 North Chicago Street is being nominated for a 2026 Joliet Historic Preservation Award for the exterior lighting that was recently installed. This was a \$100,000 project. This lighting enhances the architectural features of the church; in particular, the limestone façade and the dual towers at the front of the building. In addition, the lighting certainly highlights the building in the evening and at night, commanding a very noticeable presence in Downtown Joliet.

Over the past years, the St. Joseph Congregation has been diligent in maintaining the historical integrity of this building and preserving and maintaining the work of architect William J. Brinkmann. In addition to the physical tasks related to the church building, the parishioners of the church support an active and vibrant faith community which contributes to the cultural fabric of the City of Joliet.

**Images:** *Please provide a minimum of five photographs or quality digital photographs in .jpg format on a CD ROM, flash drive, or by email highlighting the project. Before and after pictures are encouraged.*

**Submitted By:** \_ Sharon Merwin, Joliet Historic Preservation Commissioner

**Phone:** [REDACTED]      **Email:** [REDACTED]

**Home Address:** [REDACTED]      **City:** Joliet      **State:** IL      **ZIP:** 60435







# City of Joliet

150 West Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432

## Memo

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**File #:** TMP-9774

**Agenda Date:**4/22/2026

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