# 920 South Boulevard W.

### Historic Districts Study Committee Final Report City of Rochester Hills Oakland County



Prepared by:
Historic Districts Study Committee

July, 2007

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# **Historic Districts Study Committee Final Report**

#### FINAL HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT 920 SOUTH BOULEVARD ROCHESTER HILLS, MICHIGAN

#### CHARGE OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE

The Historic Districts Study Committee was appointed by Rochester Hills City Council on December 15, 1999, pursuant to the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 118, as amended in 1999. The Study Committee is a standing committee charged with conducting the duties and activities of a study committee on a continuing basis. These duties include inventory, research, and preparation of a preliminary historic district study committee report for a proposed historic district. Study Committee Members serve two year terms. A list of current Committee Members follows.

#### STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Dziurman, a registered architect with a practice focused on historic preservation, meets the federal professional qualification standards for historic architect. He has served on the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission for fifteen years, many of those years as chairperson.

Peggy Schodowski has a strong background in research and analysis, and is currently employed parttime as a Marketing Director/Research Analyst for a locally owned company. She has recently provided research assistance to a local private school regarding the historic background of their school building, and has also assisted several local communities with research about historic buildings.

Michael Sinclair is a member of the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission, and resides in a historic home. He undertook the restoration of his ca. 1830 home that had been vacant and neglected for over twenty years, and has extensively researched his property and the beginning settlements of the community.

Richard Stamps is an associate professor of anthropology at Oakland University. A professional archaeologist with a strong interest in history, he is also a member of the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission.

Jason Thompson is Chairperson of the Historic Districts Study Committee, and is a member of the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission. He has received a Bachelor's Degree in History from Oakland University, and a Masters of Public Administration from Oakland University. His academic and work activities include a strong background in research and grant writing.

Lavere Webster is an art and antiques conservator who lives in one of the city's designated local historic districts. He has served on the board of directors of the Rochester-Avon Historical Society for more than six years.

Pamela Whateley is a minister and healing counselor interested in the city's building and development. She served for two years on the subcommittee for the City's Earl Borden Historic Preservation Award.

Kristine M. Kidorf and Jane C. Busch assisted the study committee with their work.

#### INVENTORY

A photographic inventory of the studied district was conducted in 2002 as part of the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey. Copies of the inventory forms are located at the Rochester Hills Planning Department, the Rochester Hills Museum, and the State Historic Preservation Office. A review of the site by Committee Member Dziurman in August, 2006 included several photographs, copies of which are attached.

Additional "windshield" survey work was conducted in February, 2007, by members of the study committee with assistance from Kristine M. Kidorf to identify additional Colonial Revival style properties within the City of Rochester Hills. Copies of the inventory forms are located at the Rochester Hills Planning Department. Survey forms with updated photographs of properties not in designated historic districts have been included.

#### DESCRIPITON OF THE DISTRICT

920 South Boulevard is located in the southwest corner Section 34 and consists of a two-story house and a small storage shed on lot that is approximately two and a half acres in size. The property is primarily flat and the house is setback slightly from South Boulevard. There are large deciduous and evergreen trees between the house and the road, and the rear of the lot has a large number of trees. A small storage shed is on the east side of the property and a gravel driveway enters the site between the house and the shed.

The two-story, side gable house with Craftsman details, faces South Boulevard. It has a rectangular footprint, with a one-story wing on the west gable end, and a one-story addition to the east gable end. The house and west wing sit on a raised foundation of decorative concrete block that resembles rusticated stone. The house walls are sided with what appears to be asbestos-cement shingle siding. The symmetrical five bay wide front façade has a center entrance with a single door flanked on each side with a narrow double hung window. The one bay wide gable-roof porch is not original and is supported by pillars, has a dentil cornice and cornice returns. The pediment contains raised decorative woodwork in a splay pattern that previously held a decorative eagle.

All of the symmetrically arranged windows are four-over-one double hung with four vertical panes in the upper sash. Each bay has one window at the first and second floor levels. The tops of the second floor windows touch the eave and the center window above the entrance is shorter than the remaining second floor windows. The asphalt shingle covered gable roof has brick chimneys near both ends. The flat roofed one-story wing on the west end has remnants of a balustrade on the house wall at the second floor. There is a group of three double hung windows in the center of the wing's front wall.

The west elevation of the wing has a three-sided bay containing windows on all sides, and the main house has a door and one window at the second floor, and two narrow double hung windows in the attic in line with the second floor door and window.

The back of the house has a central door covered with a shed roof porch next to an enclosed gable-roof entry to the cellar door. Double hung windows are located on both sides, and the second floor contains three matching windows spaced equally in the center of the second floor. The west ell has a rectangular shaped window in the center.

The east end of the house has a one-story, gable roof, sunroom that was previously a porch. It has a brick walls with one-over-one double hung windows surrounding all three sides and a door in the center of the gable end that accesses a set of steps. The second floor of the main house has two windows and there is a single window centered in the attic.

The one-story, gable roof shed is located to the northeast of the house and is rectangular in form with a one-story shed roof addition to the north. The shed has vertical wood siding and an asphalt covered roof. The west gable end has two swing-out doors. The addition on the north side has corrugated metal walls and roof. There is a small window opening on the north side. The shed is in fair to poor condition.

#### **RESOURCE LIST:**

House – Non-contributing – A two-story, five bay wide, side gabled house with cementitious siding, and one-story wings at both ends. Other than the siding, a missing balustrade on the roof of the wing, and the smaller front porch, the house does not appear to have changed from its original construction. Unknown construction date.

Shed – Non-contributing - The site currently contains a one-story gable roof storage building. The structure has swing doors and vertical wood siding. The date of construction is unknown but it appears to be post WW II.

#### COUNT OF HISTORIC AND NON-HISTORIC RESOURCES:

The proposed 920 South Boulevard Historic District contains no historic (contributing) and two non-historic (non-contributing) resources.

#### **BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The studied 920 South Boulevard Historic District consists of the following parcel:

#### 15-34-352-012

Further described as: Town 3 North, Range 11 East, Section 34, Part of the southwest one-quarter of the southwest one-quarter; Beginning at a point on the South section line East 331.28 feet; from the southwest section corner; thence North 88-35-00 East 325 feet; on section line; thence North 04-48-00 West 337.99 feet; thence South 88-35-00 West 325 feet; thence South 04-48-00 East 337.99 feet; to the Point of Beginning; 2.52 acres

#### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The studied 920 South Boulevard Historic District, located in Section 34, consists of one parcel containing the land historically associated with the property. The area to the north is residentially developed; the property to the south (across South Boulevard) is in the City of Troy and contains a senior health care facility; the property immediately adjacent to the east is residential, and the parcel immediately adjacent to the west is a vacant parcel zoned residential. The age of the surrounding properties is significantly newer than the house at 920 South Boulevard, primarily being constructed in the 1970s and later.

#### HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT

The two and a half acres currently comprising 920 South Boulevard were part of a larger property originally deeded from the United States Government to M. Olmstead in 1819. The parcel was split between Avon and Troy Townships. The 1872 atlas shows a house at approximately the same location as the existing house as part of a fifty seven acre parcel belonging to J.C. Runyan who had acquired the property in 1866 and owned it until 1897. Runyan also owned 52 acres directly across the road in Troy Township. The entire parcel in both townships was purchased in 1923 Walter W. Smith.

In 1924 Smith sold the three and a half acres containing 920 South Boulevard to Louis and Francis Wardowski. The lot size was 500 feet by 337.99 feet. Louis Wardowski was involved with real estate and owned orange and grapefruit groves in Texas.<sup>1</sup>

In 1924 Walter W. Smith, Arthur Bassett, and Levi L. Barbour, mortgagee, platted the Bassett & Smith Flowing Spring Acres No. 1 subdivision on the property surrounding, but not including 920 South Boulevard and across the road in Troy Township. It was accepted by the Avon Township Board in March of 1924, and recorded in the Oakland County Register of Deed's Office in May, 1925. It does not appear that the subdivision was ever developed. Bassett & Smith was a large real estate firm out of Detroit. Walter Smith founded the firm of Bassett & Smith with Arthur Bassett in 1910. The firm was a pioneer in subdividing land between Detroit and Royal Oak, and subdivided a large amount of land near Pontiac and Dearborn. In 1919 Walter Smith was elected president of the Detroit Real Estate Board.<sup>2</sup>

The house on the property is listed in the city assessor's records as being built in 1910. A March 24, 1929 article in *The Detroit News* discusses the family and the antiques collected by Wardowski. A picture with the article shows the house at 920 South Boulevard with a larger front porch, narrower siding, and the enclosed room on the east end. Louis and Francis Wardowski lived at the house with their nine children until 1935 when the property was sold.

From 1935 the property was owned by three different owners until 1953 when it was sold to the Hildebrandt family, owners of the property in 2007. A sale of the property in 1946 reduced the parcel by about an acre to two and half acres.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISTRICT

Pursuant to both the Michigan Local Historic Districts Act (PA 169 of 1970, as amended) and the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 118, as amended in 1999, the study committee is to be guided by the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This *does not* mean that a local historic district must be eligible for the National Register. Shortly after the 1992 amendments to the Local Historic Districts Act, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network issued a guide to the amendments that explained how the National Register criteria should be used:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> William Ottaway, "\$100,000 Art in Farmhouse." The Detroit News, March 24, 1929.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Clarence Burton, History of the City of Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan, vol. 3, Walter M. Smith (Detroit: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1930), 905.

While communities must be "guided" by the National Register criteria, they are not bound by them; communities are free to establish criteria which are guided by the national criteria but relate to local conditions, history, and character.<sup>3</sup>

Although the criteria are the same for National Register and local historic district designation, a specific resource may be eligible for local but not national designation. The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of properties that are significant in American history. A property may be significant at the national, state, or local level, but even locally significant resources must be representative of a broader national theme. For example, a house form that is only found in southeast Michigan may be important to our understanding of historic American house forms. Resources may be eligible for designation because they are outstanding or because they are typical, i.e. an excellent example of a representative type. For typical resources that are locally significant, National Register eligibility tends to look at a larger region. For example, a barn might be the best example of a dairy barn in Rochester Hills, but there could be dozens of dairy barns in Oakland County that are better examples. The barn would be eligible for local designation in Rochester Hills as the best example in the city of an important type of barn but not eligible for National Register designation. Properties that are eligible for the National Register must also have a very high level of integrity. A property with integrity retains the important physical characteristics that it had historically, enabling it to convey a sense of the past. Under a local historic preservation ordinance, local governments have the option of protecting properties that are historically significant according to the criteria but are not quite up to National Register standards for integrity.4

The property at 920 South Boulevard was originally thought to be a locally significant example of the Colonial Revival style of architecture, one of only fifteen examples of the style remaining in Rochester Hills. However, further research revealed that the house was not originally constructed as Colonial Revival, and the house had been altered within the past fifty years. The primary alteration was the replacement of the front porch. The 1929 Detroit News article included a photograph of the house in which shows a large front porch with a gable front roof. The porch was at least twice the size of the existing front porch, had simple columns and the gable was sided in clapboard. It was more in keeping with the Craftsman style windows that are in the house. The existing porch was probably constructed sometime in the 1950s and has not acquired significance.

Therefore, the study committee finds that the 920 South Boulevard Historic District does not appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, and should not be designated as a local historic district.

#### The National Register Criteria

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Michigan Historic Preservation Network, "A Guide to Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act," (Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Lansing, Mi., n.d., photocopy), 3. The Michigan Historic Preservation Network was one of the primary authors of the amendments to the Local Historic Districts Act.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The evaluation of resources for National Register listing and local historic district designation is discussed on pages 5 and 6 of the report for the 2002 survey. The same section of the report explains how National Register and local historic district eligibility is indicated in the survey database and on the inventory forms.

C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The Colonial Revival style has been diverse and enduring in twentieth century America and Avon Township followed suit. Surveyed houses, dating from the late 1910s to the late 1940s, include Cape Cod cottages, gambrel roof Dutch Colonials, and two story side gabled houses derived from the New England Large. At the high end of the spectrum is Lawnridge Hall, 1385 S. Adams Road, designed for prominent lumberman and insurance broker Donald C. Wilson by architect J. Ivan Dyce. Completed ca. 1930, this large, picturesque house has a central projecting pedimented pavilion and details such as dormer and multi-pane windows, large brick chimneys, and a recessed side entry with arches.

The Colonial Revival style encompasses remodeling as well as new construction. A good example of this is the mill house historically associated with Winkler Mill, built ca. 1835–40 as a simple New England 1 ½ cottage with frieze windows. Colonial Revival style living room and dining room additions made during the 1920s and 1930s include a large living room fireplace, stairway with curved railing and turned newel post, and arched glass fronted china cabinets. The city's premier example of a Colonial Revival style remodeling is undoubtedly the Van Hoosen Farm House, remodeled by Sarah Van Hoosen Jones with her mother Alice and aunt Bertha Van Hoosen in 1926 and 1927. The Nathaniel Millerd House, the house that Sarah built for farm manager Morris Place in 1936, and their farm store, At the Sign of the Black and White Cow, are all examples of existing Colonial Revival style houses in the city.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the 2002 survey effort, a windshield survey was conducted by members of the study committee to identify other Colonial Revival style houses in the City of Rochester Hills. These two surveys identified a total of twenty five Colonial Revival style houses, ten of which were built since 1965, and seven of which were built from about 1920 through 1950. The remaining eight houses have estimated construction dates between 1840 and 1920, the earlier houses were remodeled in the Colonial Revival style.

The house at 920 South Boulevard is one of the three houses originally built on South Boulevard, the main road between the City of Pontiac to the west and the City of Utica to the east. All three of those houses still exist today.

Because of the front porch replacement and other alterations, the house at 920 South Boulevard is not significant under Criterion C and does not appear to have enough integrity to be designated a historic district.

#### CONCLUSION

The study committee does not recommend that the property at 920 South Boulevard be designated as a historic district at this time. The architecture of the property does not appear to be significant to the architecture of Rochester Hills. If more information is discovered on the history of the property the district may be re-evaluated at that time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Jane Busch, Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey, 2002, pgs. 30-31.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Oakland County Register of Deeds, Liber 216, Page 49.

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Sarin, Anne. E-mail to Peggy Schodowski, March, 2007.

#### **DISTRICT MAP**

### 920 South Blvd W. 15-34-352-012

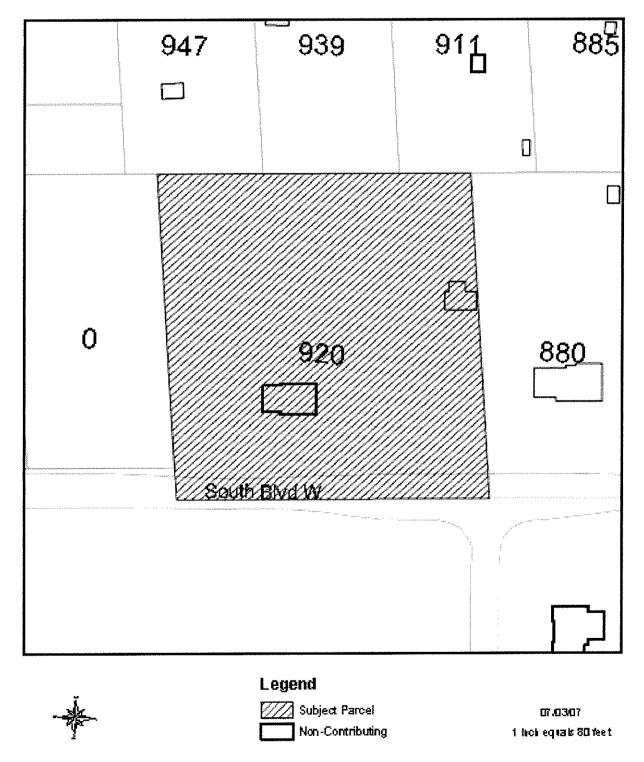




Figure 1 - View of front from southeast. J. Dzuirman, 2006.



Figure 2 - View from southwest. K. Kidorf, February, 2007.



Figure 3 - View of rear from northwest. J. Dzuirman, 2006.



Figure 4 - View of shed from west, J. Dzuirman, 2006



Figure 5 - View of shed from north, J. Dzuirman, 2006.

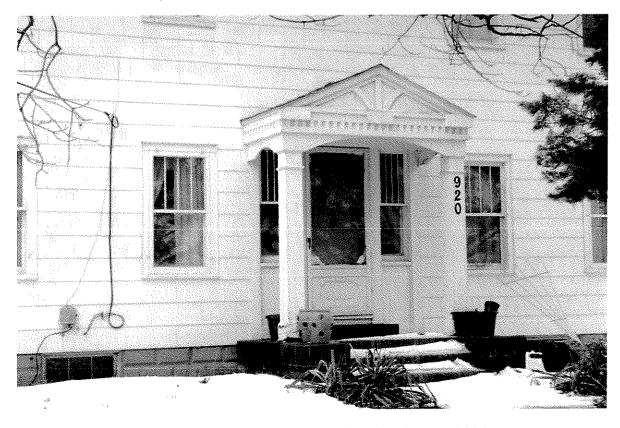


Figure 6 - Detail of front porch, K. Kidorf, February, 2007.



Figure 7 - View of entire property from southeast, K. Kidorf, February, 2007.

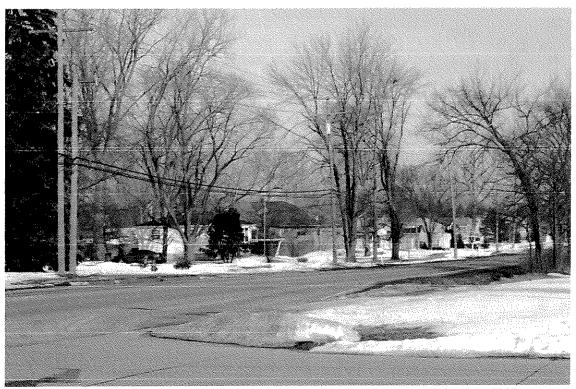


Figure 8 - North side of South Blvd. to east of 920, K. Kidorf, February, 2007.

APPENDIX – Summary of additional information provided by study committee member Peggy Schodowski

Wardowski Family -

Louis Wardowski – owned property from 1924 – 1935 1880 – 1943 – living at 1102 S. Washington Royal Oak when died Louis was a stone mason at age 19 (1900 census – Detroit), then a grocer (1910), then went into real estate (1920).

Worked for Bassett & Smith – son Al says Louis sold off 1 acre lots around property – Bassett & Smith operated out of Dime Building in Detroit. Minnie Booth's father also worked in the Dime Building. Minnie Booth owned the property from 1915 to 1923, and sold the property to Walter Smith of Bassett & Smith.

Married to Angelina – until 1910 – 5 children Married to Frances – 1910 – 1943, she died in 1975 – 5 children

House was there when they moved in. 1929 article says Louis remodeled the house, so perhaps he added the west end, the porch, and east end, possibly turning a farmhouse into Arts/Crafts/style house. Wardowski children recall hauling stone in to build the fireplace since Louis had been a stone mason.

1928 photograph of Irrigated Farmer Corporation – unknown location – Google search didn't turn up anything except in Utah

Son Whitey says he didn't think Texas ranch had citrus, but this contradicts the newspaper article, and a history by Al who lived with a half-brother growing citrus in Texas.

Louis Wardowski may have purchased Mountain View orchards in Romeo and Blossom Orchard in Leslie, MI – Mountain View owned Blossom – Al Wardowski then ended up working at Blossom Orchard

Hildebrandt Family -

Tim and Greg Hildebrandt moved to the house with their parents in 1953 when they were about 14 years old. The twin Hildebrandt brothers graduated from Avondale High School. They were skilled at drawing, and provided caricatures for a fundraiser at nearby Stiles school. Their professional art career began when they were 19 years old.

The Hildebrandt brothers became world renowned illustrators, together working on Lord of the Rings, Star Wars and numerous movies. After working together for many years each went on to work individually on various projects. Tim Hildebrandt died in 2006 at the age of 67.

# Appendix I State Historic Preservation Office Comments



#### STATE OF MICHIGAN

JENNIFER GRANHOLM GOVERNOR

# DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARTS AND LIBRARIES LANSING

DR. WILLIAM ANDERSON DIRECTOR

4\anl >7 March 14, 2007

Mr. Derek Delacourt 1000 Rochester Hills Drive Rochester Hills, MI 49309

Dear Mr. Delacourt:

Staff members of the State Historic Preservation Office have reviewed the preliminary historic district study committee report for the 920 South Boulevard Historic District. Our comments on the report are enclosed. We offer these comments in order to assist communities to prepare final study committee reports that meet the requirements of Michigan's *Local Historic Districts Act* and that provide a strong legal basis for protecting historically significant resources. Please be advised that the State Historic Preservation Office does not have the authority to give legal advice. Nevertheless, we do have experience working with the provisions of Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended and we are often called on to share our interpretation with local governments. The final authority on whether this district is the city council. According to section 399.203 (3) (b) of the Act "the legislative body of the local unit, at its discretion, may introduce and pass or reject an ordinance or ordinances."

The report will be presented to the State Historic Preservation Review Board and the Michigan Historical Commission at their next scheduled meetings on May 11 and June 7, respectively. Should they have any comments, they will be forwarded to you.

We appreciate the continued efforts by the city of the Rochester Hills to protect its historic resources. If we can assist you further, please contact Amy Arnold at 517-335-2729 or ArnoldA@michigan.gov.

Sincerely

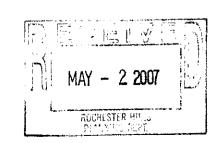
Brian D. Conway

State Historic Preservation Officer

**BDC:ALA** 

cc: file

Enclosure



#### State Historic Preservation Office Michigan Historical Center

#### Staff Comments, April 27, 2007 920 South Boulevard Historic District, Rochester Hills

In August 2002, the Michigan Historical Center adopted the Criteria for Evaluating Resources for Inclusion in Local Historic Districts. These criteria state that a single resource district is one that "is determined to have individual historic significance using the criteria for eligibility established by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places." The study committee report for 920 South Boulevard states the resource is significant under Criterion C: Design/Construction. According to National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation to qualify under this criterion a property must exhibit the distinctive features that commonly recur in the style or period of construction. The criteria also state that "a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction" and "A structure is eligible as a specimen of its type or period of construction if it is an important example (within its context) of building practices of a particular time in history. For properties that prepresent the variation, evolution, or transition of construction types, it must be demonstrated that the variation, etc. was an important phase of the architectural development of the area of community in that it had an impact as evidenced by later buildings." Even though this is an isolated resource geographically, we do not believe that as a vernacular example of the Colonial Revival style meets the criteria for a "specimen" or individual resource established by the Secretary of the Interior.

The report does not contain much information on the property owners and their contribution to the development of Rochester Hills. Perhaps more research in this area will reveal that the property is significant for its association with Walter Smith or Louis and Francis Wardowski at the local level.

PA 169 of 1970, as amended, requires a description of the boundaries in writing and on maps (§3(1)(d)(iv)). No map was included with the report.

## **Appendix II**

**Planning Commission Meeting Comments** 

based or something clse. He felt it was an appropriate conversation fo the Committee so they could make a recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Mr. Schroeder said he would like the City to become a member of the USGBC, and he asked Mr. Goldsmith what it cost. Mr. Goldsmith advised that a national membership was available, where cities would be involved in the processes and have input. That was about \$500. For the chapter, it was \$125 and there could be up to 12 active members. He added that being in a chapter was a very proactive approach.

Mr. Anzek thanked the presenters, noting that the City had a long history of trying to do the right thing, and he mentioned the Wetland Ordinance, the Tree Ordinance, and the Steep Slope Ordinance. At previous meetings, Mr. Schroeder had suggested to many applicants that they should consider green building and the LEED program, but they brought up the cost factor. Mr. Anzek asked Mr. Goldsmith if there was anything being done by lending institutions to help developers trying to get certification.

Mr. Goldsmith replied that it had started, and he reiterated that insurance companies were providing lower premiums. Mr. Anzek stated that he liked incentives, and that he looked forward to the next presentation.

Mr. Schroeder asked if Staff had gotten an update of plant materials for green roofs. Mr. Delacourt said they did not have anything yet, but he was waiting for an update of the landscape material section, including natural plantings for green roofs.

Mr. Boswell thanked Mr. Goldsmith, and said that the presentation was very informative, and that the Commission looked forward to the next meeting.

Discussed

Discussed.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2007-0410

Historic Districts Study Committee Preliminary Report for 920 South Boulevard.

(Reference: Memo prepared by Derek Delacourt, dated June 15, 2007, and Historic Districts Preliminary Study Report had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)

Mr. Delacourt related that when the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) completed a report, the Ordinance required that it be given to the Planning Commission for any comments. HDSC was recommending

that the property not be designated because it did not meet the four criteria identified in the National Register for designation as a local historic district.

**MOTION** by Kaltsounis, seconded by Schroeder, the Rochester Hills Planning Commission hereby receives and files the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) Preliminary Report regarding 920 South Boulevard, and thanks and supports the Committee's continued efforts.

A motion was made by Kaltsounis, seconded by Schroeder, that this matter be Accepted. The motion carried by the following vote:

#### Accepted

Aye:

Boswell, Brnabic, Dettloff, Hardenburg, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder and

Yukon

Absent:

Hooper

#### NEXT MEETING DATE

The Chair reminded the Commissioners that the July 3, 2007 regular meeting was cancelled due to the holiday, and that the next regular meeting was scheduled for July 17, 2007.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Commission, the Chair adjourned the regular meeting at 9:15 p.m., Michigan time.

William F. Boswell, Chairperson Rochester Hills Planning Commission

Maureen Centry, Recording Secretary

Approved as printed at the July 17, 2007 regular Planning Commission meeting.

# Appendix III Intensive Level Survey Sheets

#### State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office Intensive Level Survey

#### Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey

#### Address

Street: 920 South Blvd.

City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP 48307

Current Name: Historic Name:

#### **Evaluations**

Resources on Property/Status

D/single dwelling

D/single dwelling

Contributes to: -

NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible
Contributing: More Data Needed

SHPO Evaluation:

Historic Use:

Current Use:

Owner Type:

#### Photo

Filename: RHPhotos\South Blvd\920 South Blvd.jpg

Roll: Frame:

View: Northwest
Credit: Burke Jenkins

Caption: 920 South Blvd, Rochester Hills, MI

#### Main Building

Private

Foundation Roof: Period of Significance:

1. Concrete 1. Asphalt

2. Brick 2. Area of Significance:

3. 3. 1 Wall: Other: 2 1. Brick 3

2. Arch/Builder:
 3. Date Built: ca. 1910

Architectural Classification:

Material Notes:

Description: Two story side gabled house. One story west wing with square bay. One story east side enclosed

porch addition with brick lower walls. Asbestos siding or some similar looking artificial siding. 4/1

windows. Two brick chimneys. Pedimented entrance porch. Front door with sidelights.

Other Buildings/Features: Barn/storage building.

Significant Persons:

Statement of Significance 1872 atlas map--J.C. Runyan, 57 acres, house in approximately this location. 1896 atlas map--J.C.

Runyan, 60 acres, house. 1908 atlas map, A.A. Hovey, 57 acres, house. 1947 atlas map—seems to be a small parcel held by Kolt or Kalt, about 3 acres. Not identifiable in rural property inventory.

Tax record gives date built as 1910.

References: City of Rochester Hills Assessor's Office; Atlas maps 1872, 1896, 1908, 1947

Surveyor's Comments: Need more history and context in order to evaluate.

#### State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office Intensive Level Survey

#### Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey

#### Address

Street: 920

South Blvd.

City: Rochester Hills

County: Oakland

ZIP 48307

Current Name: Historic Name:

#### **Evaluations**

Resources on Property/Status

Contributes to:

NR Eligible:

Not NR Eligible

Contributing:

More Data Needed

SHPO Evaluation:

#### Photo

Filename: RHPhotos\South Blvd\920a South Blvd 2.jpg

Roll:

Frame:

Historic Use:

Current Use:

D/secondary structure

Owner Type: Private

View: East

Credit: Burke Jenkins

Caption: 920 South Blvd, Rochester Hills, MI

#### Main Building

Foundation	Roof:	Period of Significance
1.	1. Asphalt	
2.	2.	Area of Significance:
3.	3.	1
Wall:	Other:	2
1. Wood	1.	3
2.	2.	Arch/Builder:
3.	3.	Date Built:

Architectural Classification:

Material Notes:

Description:

One story gable roof barn/storage building with shed attached on north. Swing doors. Board and

batten siding. Concrete block foundation?

Other Buildings/Features:

Significant Persons:

Statement of Significance

References:

Surveyor's Comments:

# Appendix IV Public Hearing Notice



#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Notice is hereby given that the City of Rochester Hills Historic Districts Study Committee will hold a Public Hearing on <u>Thursday</u>, <u>June 14</u>, <u>2007</u> at <u>5:30 PM</u> at the City Municipal Offices, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive, Rochester Hills, Oakland County, Michigan to consider the following:

#### **PUBLIC HEARING - FILE NO. HDSC 07-001**

Location: 920 South Boulevard W., located on the north side of South Boulevard, west of

Rochester Road and east of Livernois Road, further identified as Parcel Number

15-34-352-012, zoned R-2 (One Family Residential).

Purpose: To receive public comment regarding a proposal to establish the subject property

as a Historic District within the City of Rochester Hills, in accordance with Public Act 267 of 1976 (MCL 15.261 et seq., MSA 5.3407(3) et seq.) and the Rochester

Hills Historical Preservation Ordinance, Section 118-131.

If you have any questions or comments, please call the Planning Department at (248) 656-4660 during regular business hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, or attend the public hearing on the scheduled date.

Jason Thompson, Chairperson Historic Districts Study Committee

Dated this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May, 2007 at Rochester Hills, Michigan Publication date: May 27, 2007

(The City of Rochester Hills will provide necessary reasonable aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services are invited to contact the Facilities Division at 656-4648 Forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting. Our staff will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements.)

# Appendix V

**Public Comment** 

#### 5. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Chairperson Thompson asked if there were any announcements or communications. Dr. Stamps stated that the Heritage X Conference would be held on September 12, 2007 at Oakland University's Meadowbrook Hall and was being co-sponsored by the Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Office and the Oakland County Historical Commission. He encouraged the members to participate in the event. No other announcements or communications were provided.

(Arrive: Member Schodowski 5:32 PM)

#### 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received on any non-Agenda items.

#### 7. PUBLIC HEARING – FILE NO. HDSC 07-001

Chairperson Thompson recited the location of the site and purpose of the Public Hearing for the record, as follows:

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Hills Historical Preservation Ordinance, Section 118-131.

Chairperson Thompson explained the information received at this Public Hearing would be included in the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) Final Report for the property commonly identified as 920 South Boulevard W., which Report would be presented to City Council.

Chairperson Thompson stated that 920 South Boulevard W. had been studied by the Historic Districts Study Committee in accordance with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and a Preliminary Report had been generated during the first half of 2007. He explained the minutes from this Public Hearing would be included in the Final Report, along with all other relevant material. He noted that once the Final Report is completed, it would be forward to City Council for action.

Chairperson Thompson summarized the procedure used to establish a district for the record. He explained the duties of the Study Committee outlined in Section 118-130 of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances included conducting a photographic inventory of the resource; conducting basic research regarding the proposed historic district; determining the number of historical and non-historical resources within the proposed district; preparing the Preliminary Report, which included the charge of the Committee, the composition of the Committee, the boundaries of the

proposed historic district, the history of the proposed historic district, the significance of the proposed district, and the Committee's recommendation to establish, modify or eliminate.

Chairperson Thompson stated that on October 18, 2006, the Historic Districts Commission requested review rights be granted to the Study Committee in regards to 920 South Boulevard W. City Council originally granted six (6) months review rights that expired on April 18, 2007. On April 4, 2007, the Study Committee requested an extension of review rights from City Council, which was denied. On April 25, 2007, the matter was reconsidered by City Council, and City Council rescinded its denial and granted an extension of review rights for an additional ninety (90) days, through July 18, 2007.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Study Committee transmitted a copy of the Preliminary Report for review and recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Office on April 24, 2007. He noted a Staff Report and Comments were received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on April 27, 2007. He indicated that on May 5, 2007, the State Review Board reviewed the Preliminary Report, and approved the SHPO Staff Report and Comments.

Chairperson Thompson stated that on June 19, 2007, the Preliminary Report would be provided to the City's Planning Commission.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-131 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Public Hearing is to be held within sixty (60) days of transmission of the Preliminary Report to the SHPO. The Public Hearing is held in accordance with Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended (the Open Meetings Act), which includes notice to the property owner of any proposed district no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the Public Hearing. He noted written notice was provided to the property owner of record on May 25, 2007.

Chairperson Thompson stated that notice of the Public Hearing was published in the <u>Eccentric</u> on May 27, 2007, as required by Ordinance to be published one time only at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of hearing.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-132 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Study Committee would prepare a Final Report with a recommendation, along with any recommendation received from the Planning Commission, to be submitted within one (1) year after holding the Public Hearing to the Mayor and City Council. He noted if the Study Committee's recommendation was to establish a district, the Final Report would include a draft Ordinance Amendment.

Chairperson Thompson noted for the record that if the Study Committee's recommendation was to establish a district that any final action on this matter would be taken by City Council.

Chairperson Thompson stated the intent of the Public Hearing was not to conduct a debate or dialog between the members of the HDSC and the public, but rather to allow the public to place any comments or concerns they may have on public record to be provided to City Council. He noted the HDSC Members would be available for questions at the conclusion of the Public Hearing.

Approved as presented at the September 17, 2007 Rescheduled Historic Districts Study Committee Meeting

Chairperson Thompson opened the Public Hearing at 5:43 PM.

Joseph D. Karr, 1446 Vistaview Drive, Rochester Hills, stated he represented the Germaine Agnes Hildebrandt Revocable Trust, who is the owner of the property at 920 South Boulevard, as attorney-in-fact. He stated he had previously addressed City Council regarding the Committee's actions involving the property, and wanted to clarify the Trust's position. He stated for the record that the Trust was opposed to the proposed historic designation, or any other action that could potentially encumber the sale of the property. He indicated the property was the sole remaining asset of the Trust, and its disposal had become necessary to continue the health and daily living care expenses of the Trustee, Germaine Agnes Hildebrandt, who is a 93-year old widow and long-term resident of Rochester Hills, and who currently resides in a local assisted living facility.

Mr. Karr stated the Trust was currently in negotiations with a potential buyer for the property, and such a designation, if granted, would impede the potential purchaser from developing the property as intended, thus jeopardizing the sale and putting Mrs. Hildebrandt's care at risk through lack of funding.

Mr. Karr stated that the Staff Comments from the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office regarding the Preliminary Report indicate that the principal structure on the property did not meet the criteria to be granted such a designation. Additionally, the Trust believed the Committee had yet to demonstrate the association of the Hildebrandts or any of the previous owners with the property as having any meaningful historic significance.

Mr. Karr stated the Committee had yet to bring forth a plan that demonstrated how the property might be used under the designation to the benefit of the citizens of the Community, including Mrs. Hildebrandt. He stated that the Trust, acting in the best interest of Mrs. Hildebrandt's health and well being, requests that the Committee take no further action that may impede or encumber the Trust's ability to dispose of the property on her behalf.

Mr. Karr stated that in essence, the Trust was asking the Study Committee to take the moral high ground and set aside what minimal historical benefit the property might have, and consider the care needs of Mrs. Hildebrandt, who had devoted over 50 years of her life to the Community and the citizens of Rochester Hills.

Chairperson Thompson noted that Mr. Karr submitted a copy of his remarks to the Chair, and stated for the record that Mr. Karr's written comments would be made a part of the record hereof.

Chairperson Thompson called for any other public comments. Upon hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 5:47 PM.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Public Hearing portion of the meeting had been completed. He suggested the Committee move on to Agenda Item 8B, 920 South Boulevard W., and return to Agenda Item 8A after the discussion regarding Agenda Item 8B was complete. The Committee unanimously agreed to proceed with Agenda Item 8B at this time.

#### 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 8B. 920 South Boulevard W.
  - Discussion Regarding Extension of Review Rights
    - Response from State Historic Preservation Review Board

Chairperson Thompson reminded the Committee that review rights were granted by City Council to the Historic Districts Commission for the period through July 18, 2007. He noted that he thought the Committee had gathered a lot of information on the property, but based on the comments the Committee had received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State Review Board, he did not think there was sufficient information to move forward with a recommendation for designation. He suggested if the Committee agreed, that the Committee consider making a motion to have City Council terminate the review rights. He was not sure there was any benefit to retaining the review rights over the property any longer.

Dr. Stamps pointed out the Committee had carried out its charge of looking at the structure and the history of the individuals who lived in the house to see how the structure fit into the overall history of the Community. He thought the Committee had, through the in-depth research conducted by Ms. Schodowski, looked this property over as closely as possible. He noted that he had a personal feel for the house in driving down that street, seeing the house and thinking how unique it was. He pointed out the Committee's study about how many Colonial Revival houses remained in the City, had revealed there were not many; and that the subject house was one of the few examples left. He felt the Committee had done a good job, and had added to and made a contribution to history by compiling the record, which would always be there. He did not feel the Committee needed to move forward.

Chairperson Thompson stated he thought the Committee should finish the process, such as finishing the Final Report and sending it out with a recommendation. He explained what he was asking for, and wanted clarification from the Committee about, was whether or not the Committee should ask City Council to lift the review rights.

Dr. Stamps stated that if the property was not designated historic, he thought the options available to the Trust would be somewhat limited. He indicated if the owners came back in six months and indicated they thought the property had some historic value, they could request that the property be designated.

Mr. Delacourt stated that whether the property was designated, or had historic value as an undesignated property, allowed for flexibility in use and design standards in the Ordinance.

Dr. Stamps thought the property owner should be aware that there could be some flexibility available through the historic designation.

Chairperson Thompson thanked Ms. Schodowski for the tremendous amount of time she spent researching the people associated with the property. He agreed the Committee had done the job it was charged with doing, but he did not feel the property merited extending the review rights.

Mr. Verschueren suggested it might be a good idea to put together a video about the site with the assistance of the City's Media Specialists, which would provide a video record of the property. Ms. Whateley noted the house was currently boarded up. Mr. Verschueren stated the boards would be removed before the structure was razed. He pointed out the Committee would have to have permission from the property owner. He thought it might be nice to have a video record of the structure, rather than just digital photographs.

Chairperson Thompson stated that Mr. Verschueren's suggestion could be discussed on the next meeting Agenda. Mr. Verschueren stated he made the suggestion because he thought a video on the property might be of interest to the Community. Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee could discuss the idea further at a future meeting, and suggested the Committee might want to work with property owners of designated homes.

Ms. Schodowski referred to the SHPO comments about the report not containing much information about the property owners, which was true at the time the Preliminary Report was submitted. She stated she received more information about the various property owners after the Preliminary Report had been submitted. She felt there was some amazing information about the house, such as the stone fireplace that was built by the Wardowski family from stones gathered on the property by the children. She stated she would be sorry to see the house go, noting she had worked as quickly and as diligently as she could. She agreed at this point the Committee did not have enough time to dig deeper, although she felt she had uncovered very enticing and interesting information. She noted that there was not enough time for the Committee to obtain sufficient information to merit a designation based on the criteria for people and events.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee had to meet certain criteria from the National Register Standards, and although the information researched by Ms. Schodowski was very interesting, it had not met the National Register criteria threshold. He noted he did not believe the Committee had the time to conduct more extensive research.

Mr. Delacourt explained the review rights had a time frame, which were Council granted and ran to July 18, 2007. He stated the investigation itself did not have a specific time frame, other than the requirement that one year from the date of the Public Hearing, the Committee had to present its results to City Council. He noted that with respect to the review rights, the Committee could request they be cancelled, continued or allowed to run out. He stated the Committee could continue with its research and investigation, and if the Committee discovered information that met the National Register criteria, that information could be presented to Council with the Final Report. He pointed out the Committee had a deadline to provide a response to Council by July 18, 2007 regarding the review rights, but had a year from the Public Hearing to complete the Final Report.

Chairperson Thompson thought any substantive information had to be discovered by the Committee by July 18, 2007. He did not believe Council would extend any additional review rights to the Committee for this property. He pointed out the Committee had a number of properties on the Potential List, and should consider how much time they wanted to allocate to any one particular property.

Dr. Stamps asked Ms. Schodowski if she believed there was some information yet to be found that would meet the National Register criteria.

Ms. Schodowski stated she had not had time to research other property owners, such as J.C. Runyan, who was being researched by Staff at the Van Hoosen Museum. She stated she did not agree with the State's opinion on Minnie Booth, who was of significance during that era. She acknowledged that although Minnie Booth lived in Detroit, she did own the property; however, she still had to research whether there was a home on the property used by Ms. Booth as a summer home. She felt if that fact were discovered, the National Register criteria could be met.

Ms. Schodowski stated that in discussions with Staff at the Van Hoosen Museum, the question was raised as to whether Minnie Booth was related to the Cranbrook Booths. She understood the Cranbrook Booths were from Cranbrook, England. She indicated that based on recent research, she believed Minnie Booth's grandparents came from Vermont, and Minnie Booth was born in Ohio, and then lived in Detroit.

Ms. Schodowski stated the Flowing Springs Subdivision and the people connected to it were also interesting. She noted it appeared Minnie Booth's father, Elijah, worked at the Dime Bank Building in Detroit, and apparently Mr. Wardowski, who owned the property, also worked at the Dime Bank Building, in association with the people who platted the Bassett and Smith Flowing Springs Subdivision. She stated she had noticed that across South Boulevard on the Troy side of what was the Flowing Springs Subdivision is a street named Booth. She indicated she was researching the name of that street through the Troy Museum.

Ms. Schodowski stated much information pointed back to the Dime Bank Building, and what she understood from Whitey Wardowski, a gentleman in his 90's, was that his father, Louis, and Smith and Bassett, and possibly the Booths, were all tied in with a series of land defaults, and they would buy those properties. She explained one of the Wardowski's that was involved in agriculture, acquired farms and orchards through bank defaults. She stated this was interesting information relating to the 1920s/Depression Era.

Chairperson Thompson asked whether that information would be sufficient to meet the requirements of National Register Criteria C. He also questioned whether that information would be relevant enough for Council to consider a designation.

Ms. Schodowski believed, based on her observations at the April 25, 2007 Council meeting, that Council found the information about Minnie Booth to be significant.

Dr. Stamps thought the Committee needed to finish the report, document it, feel good about it, and if in the future the property was documented with video, that would be fine.

Approved as presented at the September 17, 2007 Rescheduled Historic Districts Study Committee Meeting

Chairperson Thompson asked if a formal motion would be required to request that Council rescind the review rights. Mr. Delacourt suggested that if the Committee wanted to ask Council to drop the review rights prior to the 90 days expiring, a motion be made that the Committee recommends to City Council that the review rights be lifted with a reason why the request was being made. He stated the motion could also include a sentence that explained this was not the Committee's recommendation, but that the Committee would continue to finalize the report and bring forward a recommendation.

Dr. Stamps suggested a motion including the following points:

MOTION by Stamps, in the matter of HDSC File No. 07-001, that the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission requests City Council rescind the review rights extended through July 18, 2007 for the property known as 920 South Boulevard W., Parcel Identification Number 15-34-352-012. The Committee hereby thanks Council for extending the review rights, but based on the information gathered to date, the Committee has come to the conclusion that the information gathered does not meet either the Committee's high standards or the standards of the National Register Criteria. Further, the Committee hereby submits its Final Report on the property, and does not recommend that the resource be designated as a non-contiguous Rochester Hills Historic District.

Chairperson Thompson asked if the Committee was prepared to make a recommendation at this point in time. He stated his suggestion was to request that the review rights be rescinded.

Mr. Delacourt asked Dr. Stamps if he intended his motion to include a recommendation that the property not be designated. He clarified if that was the intent, then the proper motion was on the floor, and the vote taken would actually finalize the Report and the Final Report would be taken to City Council with a recommendation.

Chairperson Thompson asked the motion maker if that was the intent of his motion. Dr. Stamps stated that was the intent of his motion. Chairperson Thompson stated he would second the proposed motion. He called for discussion on the motion on the floor. Ms. Whateley asked for clarification on the proposed motion. Chairperson Thompson stated the motion was to request that Council lift the review rights; that the Committee would not be recommending designation, and would be submitting a Final Report. He noted if the motion carried, the Committee would consider itself finished with the study on the property.

Mr. Verschueren asked if a condition should be included that in the event some additional information was discovered, the Committee would revisit the study.

Mr. Delacourt stated the condition could be added, but advised the Committee had that right by Ordinance. He explained that just because the Committee was not recommending designation at this time did not mean the Committee could not revisit the study if additional information was found.

Dr. Stamps stated that as motion maker he did not feel the motion should be amended as the Committee had that right. He agreed if the Committee found more information, they could revisit the study.

Mr. Verschueren suggested the condition be included just as a clarification of the Committee's rights. Chairperson Thompson noted the condition would not change the intent of the motion. Dr. Stamps accepted the addition of the condition, which was agreed to by the motion seconder.

Mr. Delacourt stated that rather than being included as a condition, the statement should be included as a finding to the motion. The motion maker and seconder agreed to add the statement as a finding to the motion.

Chairperson Thompson called for any additional discussion on the motion on the floor. Upon hearing none, he called for a roll call vote.

#### Complete Motion as Voted:

**MOTION** by Stamps, seconded by Thompson, in the matter of HDSC File No. 07-001, that the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) hereby requests that City Council rescind the review rights extended through July 18, 2007, for the property known as 920 South Boulevard W., Parcel Identification Number 15-34-352-012.

Further, the Committee hereby thanks City Council for extending the review rights, but based on the information gathered by the Committee to date, the Committee has come to the conclusion that the information does not meet either the Committee's high standards or the standards for designation under the National Register Criteria.

Further, the HDSC will complete and submit its Final Report on the property known as 920 South Boulevard W., and will not recommend that the property be designated as a non-contiguous Rochester Hills Historic District, with the following finding:

#### Finding:

1. Although the HDSC will not recommend historic designation at this time, the Committee acknowledges that if additional information is found or brought forward, the Committee reserves the right to reopen research on this property at a later date.

#### Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Whateley, Schodowski, Verschueren, Webster, Thompson, Stamps

Nays: None

Absent: Dziurman MOTION CARRIED

Chairperson Thompson noted for the record that the motion had passed unanimously. He thanked Mr. Karr for attending the Public Hearing and putting his comments on the record.

Dr. Stamps advised Mr. Karr that if he or any potential developer wanted to have the property designated, and could assist with providing justification for the designation, the Committee would by happy to work with them toward that end.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee would now return to Agenda Item 7A (Ferry Court).

#### 8A. Ferry Court (Wayside Park) (HDC File #03-002)

- Update on presentation to City Council

Chairperson Thompson noted that the Committee had made a presentation to City Council at its June 13, 2007 meeting, and complimented Mr. Dziurman on putting together such an excellent presentation. He commented it was his understanding that Council had not voted to designate the property.

Dr. Stamps though the Committee should congratulate Mr. Dziurman for the fine job he did in presenting the general concept of what the Committee was and what it was supposed to do. He stated Mr. Dziurman had presented very fine information about the resource, and the Committee had done everything it could do, but Council denied the designation.

Mr. Webster stated he heard comments after the Council meeting that Mr. Dziurman's presentation was going to be used as a model for other historic district commissions to follow. He noted what a great compliment that was. Mrs. Schodowski stated she had seen it on the State Historic Preservation Office website earlier in the day.

Chairperson Thompson commented that Mr. Dziurman brought a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience to both the Study Committee and the Historic Districts Commission, and did a fantastic job.

Mr. Delacourt stated that despite the outcome, he complimented the Committee on following the process, and the fact the Committee had made every effort to work with Mr. and Mrs. Ball with respect to the site. He thought the Committee should be proud of the way it handled itself through the entire process and in looking at every option and angle to deal with the property, and trying to provide the most flexibility to the property owner. He thought Mr. and Mrs. Ball appreciated the time the Committee spent on the project.

Dr. Stamps stated for the record that the Preliminary Reports for 920 South Boulevard W. and Ferry Court could not have happened without the strong staff support the Committee received. He explained the City's staff support was completely different from what the County Historical Commission experienced from their staff.