

PRELIMINARY REPORT
ROCHESTER HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE
1585 SOUTH ROCHESTER ROAD
ROCHESTER HILLS, MICHIGAN
Draft November 25, 2009

CHARGE OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE

The historic districts study committee was appointed by the Rochester Hills City council on December 15, 1999, pursuant to the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 118, as amended in 2009. 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 study committee report for a proposed historic district. Study committee members serve two year terms. A list of current committee members follows.

Pursuant to Chapter 118, Section 129, the City Council referred a request for elimination of the historic district located at 1585 S. Rochester Road to the Historic Districts Study Committee on September 28, 2009. The study committee is to make a recommendation back to Council within 180 days.

STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Dziurman is 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 over fifteen years, many of those years as chairperson.

James Hannick is a long-time Rochester Hills resident with an interest and knowledge of local history.

Peggy Schodowski has a strong background in research and analysis, and is currently employed part-time 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.

Dr. 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.

Murray Woolf is a general contractor and founder of a vocational school.

Kristine M. Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting, assisted the study committee with their work.

INVENTORY

An initial survey was conducted by Avon Township (now Rochester Hills) in 1978, out of which the property at 1585 S. Rochester Road was designated a local historic district. In 1993 and 1994, the staff members of the Rochester Hills Museum updated the photo documentation of properties previously designated. A photographic inventory of the 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. Additional photographs were taken in October, 2009 as part of the preparation of this report.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

The district consists of an approximately twenty-seven acre parcel located on the east side of Rochester Road, about halfway between Hamlin and Avon Roads, approximately a mile-and-a-half south of downtown Rochester. The parcel is an irregularly shaped rectangle, the southern portion of the lot extends further east. The site slopes gently from north to south and east to west. There are clusters of newer trees along Rochester Road.

There is one house on the property, near the northwest corner, that is surrounded by mature trees and overgrown shrubbery. A gravel driveway enters the property south of the house from Rochester Road and curves up around to the back of the garage. The house is a two-story cross-gabled, Neoclassical style with two wings to the east, a one-and-a-half story wing and one-story garage. The house was originally constructed about 1900 as a Queen Anne farmhouse and was remodeled at an unknown date. The garage was added in 1975.

The entire house is clad in aluminum siding with aluminum trim. The two-story section of the house is on a stone foundation and has an offset cruciform plan with the north and south sections being three-bays wide by one-bay deep. The east and west sections are two-bays wide by one-bay deep. There is a massive brick chimney in the center. The eaves have dentil molding.

The south façade contains the main entry in the two-story section of the house. There is a full height front porch with a pediment surrounded by dentil molding and supported by square columns on concrete bases and a brick foundation. The main wall has two, eight-over-twelve double-hung windows with shutters at the first floor and a paneled door with a pilaster and entablature surround. The second floor has three, eight-over-eight double hung windows with shutters. There is a fanlight window in the center of the pediment. The wing is five bays wide and has a one-story, shed roof porch across the front. The first floor has a door and irregularly shaped windows. The second floor has five, eight-over-eight double-hung windows and shutters near the top of the wall with pediments above. The garage has a pedestrian door and three, one-over-one double hung windows.

The west elevation, which faces Rochester Road, has eight-over-twelve windows with shutters at the first floor and eight-over-eight windows with shutters at the second floor. Wide aluminum trim, possibly covering corner pilasters, run up the sides to the gable end which is surrounded by dentil molding.

The north elevation has regularly spaced eight-over-twelve and eight-over-eight double-hung windows with shutters at the first and second floor of the two-story section. The gable end over the wing has cornice returns and dentil molding. The flat-roofed addition to the wing has a double door entrance accessed by a non-original steps and platform. Cellar windows are located in a well under the steps and there is a massive, non-original brick and stone chimney near the east end of the elevation. The chimney has an arched niche near the top. Eight-over-eight double-hung windows with shutters are located at the first and second floors. The garage addition has a two-car wide paneled overhead door.

The east elevation is topped by the gable end and flat roof of the one-and-a-half-story wing and the gable end of the garage. There are eight-over-eight double-hung windows in the second floor of the wing and a single, centered one-over-one double-hung window in the garage.

COUNT OF HISTORIC AND NON-HISTORIC RESOURCES

There is zero historic and one non-historic resource in the district. The single house in the district is non-historic.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Parcel ID 15-23-300-001

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The district consists of the entire intact parcel that remains of the property historically associated with the house. Portions of the property were sold for redevelopment.

To the south of the district is a retail nursery operation, to the east, west, and north are newer housing subdivisions.

HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT

The district is an approximately twenty-seven acre parcel that remains of a one-hundred-and-three acre farmstead. The existing house on the property was constructed about 1900, according to the 2002 *Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey*. Sixty-five acres of property were purchased in 1902 and 1903 by E. C. Crout (also spelled Kraut or Krout). He was the son of T.H. Crout, a farmer who relocated to Rochester with his family in 1869 from Northampton County, Pennsylvania. E. C. Crout created the Fairview Stock Farm on the property, and according to the 1903 *Biographical Record and Leading Citizens of Oakland County*, "Mr. Crout has spared no expense in fitting up this farm, having expended some \$7,000 in buildings along, all of these being of the most modern, sanitary kind, fitted with heating and private gas apparatus, telephone and steam fittings and all so attractive, substantial and convenient as to place Fairview Stock Farm far beyond anything of its kind in this section of the state."

Crout continued to purchase adjacent acreage and in 1914 his estate sold 103.56 acres to Frank Parmenter. An advertisement for the Hamlin Place Subdivision identifies "Frank Parmeter's (sic) Fairview Farm." The photograph shows the house in the Queen Anne form, with a porch and entrance facing Rochester Road. The south elevation contains a side gable and two-story bay window in about the same location as the current front porch which has a brick foundation. The photograph shows numerous outbuildings, including barns and a shelter along the interurban railroad that ran in front of the property on Rochester Road.

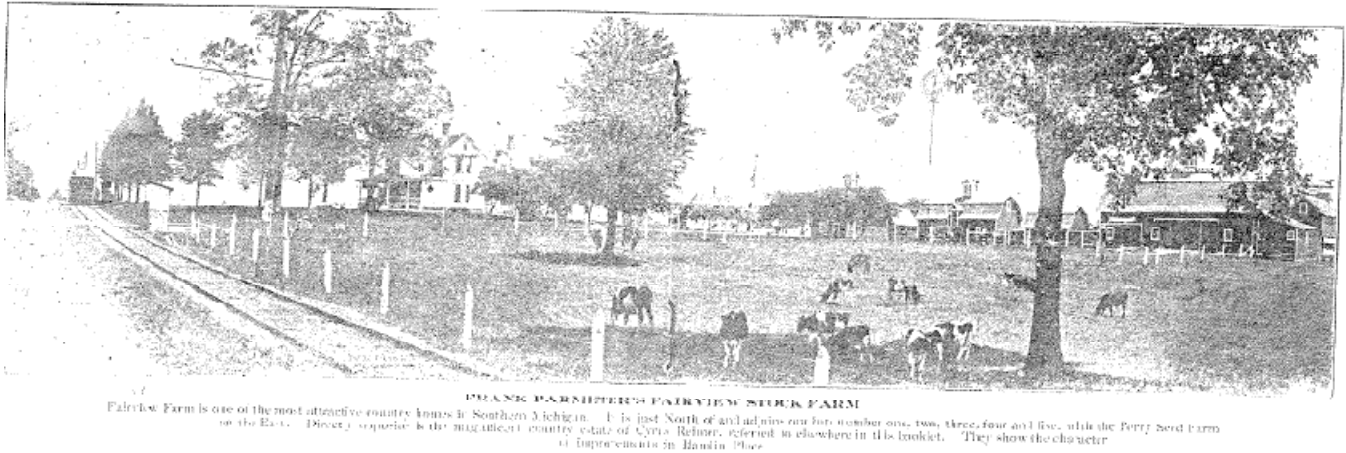


Photo 1 Illustration from Hamlin Place Subdivision Advertisement, courtesy of Rochester Hills Museum.

Parmenter sold the property to A. Moore in 1916. The property changed hands several times, including reverting back to Moore between then and 1935, when the estate of A. Moore entered into a land contract with Wayne H. and Ethna M. Eddy for the property. The Eddy's officially purchased the property in 1936 and took occupancy after April 1, 1936 when a tenant's lease expired.

Wayne. H. Eddy was the owner and president of the Allen Cooler and Ventilator Company in Rochester. He had previously worked for General Motors and the Packard Motor Car Company before going into business for himself. He died at the age of 71 in 1965, and his wife, Hyacinth Eddy, continued to own the property. In 1975 Ms. Eddy added the one-story garage to the east end of the house. In 1976-77 Ms. Eddy demolished a horse barn on the property that was damaged in a storm and constructed a new horse barn of about the same size. In 1986 Ms. Eddy sold the property for development. The housing subdivision to the east was created after that time.

In 1993 the second house on the property, and all of the remaining outbuildings were ordered demolished by the City of Rochester Hills building official because of their deteriorated condition. This was during a time when the historic district ordinance only covered the main house and one hundred feet around it. In 1995 the ordinance was amended to include the entire parcel of the designated property.

CRITERIA FOR DISTRICT ELIMINATION

Pursuant to Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 118, as amended in 2009, and PA 169 of 1970 as amended, if considering elimination of a historic district, the study committee shall follow the procedures set

forth in this division for issuing a preliminary report, holding a public hearing and issuing a final report, but with the intent of showing one or more of the following:

- 1) Lost physical characteristics. The historic district has lost those physical characteristics that enabled establishment of the district;
- 2) Insignificance. The historic district was not significant in a way previously defined; or
- 3) Defective procedure. The historic district was established pursuant to defective procedures. (Section 118-34, Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances)

Lost Physical Characteristics

The house at 1585 S. Rochester Road has not changed from the time of designation in 1978. The barns, second house, and other outbuildings on the property were demolished; however they were not included with the original designation. Therefore the district has not lost its original physical characteristics from when it was designated.

Insignificance

In 1978, when the Avon Township Historic District Study Committee conducted their investigation of potential historic districts in the township they had relatively little guidance. Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act, PA 169 of 1970, instructed study committees to conduct studies and research and make a written report on the cultural, social, economic, political, architectural, or historical significance of the property under consideration. The law did not specify how to go about this study, what the report should include, or what criteria should be used to evaluate historical significance. Furthermore, in the 1970s methods to identify and evaluate historic properties were less sophisticated than they are today.

A primary purpose of the 2002 Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey was to re-evaluate all of the properties that were designated in 1978. This was because the practice of historic preservation has progressed greatly since then and techniques for identifying and evaluating historic properties have advanced notably. Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act has been amended extensively. The 1992 amendments specify requirements for study committee reports in some detail and require study committees to be guided by the evaluation criteria for the National Register of Historic Places.

Rochester Hills' historic preservation ordinance has also undergone substantive amendment, in large part to follow state law. The original ordinance limited the local historic district to one hundred feet from the primary structure. This was amended in 1995 to include the entire parcel in the local historic district. Thus, it became necessary to evaluate all of the resources on the property. Finally, the former Avon Township had grown and changed tremendously since 1978. It was necessary to evaluate the historic districts within the context of the Rochester Hills of 2002.

After the 1992 amendments to Public Act 169 of 1970, and prior to 2002, Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended (PA 169) required that study committees be "shall guided by" the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In 2002, the State Historic Preservation Office, per Section 399.205 (3) of PA 169, adopted rules regarding local historic district designation that every study committee is required to follow. Those rules state

that any local historic district--single or multiple resource--"shall follow" the criteria for listing in the national register. Any local historic district established between 1992 and 2002 was created under the "shall be guided by" requirement, which then existed in Public Act 169. Previous to the 2002 rules, PA 169 of 1970 allowed the local community more autonomy in determining what they considered to be historic and worthy of protection. Therefore not meeting the national register criteria is not valid grounds to de-designate a single resource historic district designated before 2002.

National Register Criteria A and C are relevant to the designation of 1585 South Rochester Road. Evaluation of the property according to these criteria leads to the conclusion that the property is not architecturally significant as originally thought.

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:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Agriculture is the central theme in the city's history and is its most significant pattern of events. Note that the events referred to in National Register Criterion A are not necessarily single events. As explained in *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*: "Criterion A recognizes properties associated with single events, such as the founding of a town, or with a pattern of events, repeated activities, or historic trends, such as the gradual rise of a port city's prominence in trade and commerce."¹ Further in the 2002 survey report evaluation standards are given in order for a former farm to meet the agricultural context. It states, "Domestic property types including single and multiple family houses may contribute to the agricultural theme when they are associated with other farm buildings or landscape features. A farmhouse alone is significant under the theme of agriculture only when it is associated with a farm of outstanding significance to the agricultural history of the township."²

The original study committee determined that the property contributed to the pattern of settlement and agriculture as the house was constructed about 1900 as part of Fairview Farm. Little is known about the Fairview Farm, or how long it existed. According to the *Biographical Record of Leading Citizens of Oakland County, Michigan* in 1903, under the ownership of E.C. Crout the farm had sixty-five acres and was a farm for the sale of stock. Mr. Crout had 150 head of Berkshire hogs, bred and shipped Hereford cattle with two bulls, and raised Barred Plymouth Rock chickens. Although the 1903 account made claims that the farm was important, it does not appear to have ever reached the prominence of the other farms in the township such as Van Hoosen Farm, Great Oaks Stock Farm, or Ferry-Morse. No other documentation or information was located about the farm or the owners, including the Eddy's or his company, Allen Cooler and Ventilating Company.

¹ National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin 15 (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, n.d.), 12.

² Jane Busch, *Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey* (Rochester Hills: City of Rochester Hills, 2002), 26.

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 2002 survey report states, “residential architecture dominates Rochester Hills, and most of the houses that have been designated are single-family houses, usually former farmhouses, some with associated outbuildings.”³ Evaluation standards for architecture include properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, form, or style. Buildings that are significant for their architecture must possess a high level of integrity of design. However requirements for integrity must also consider whether that type, form, or style is rare or common.⁴

The construction date of 1585 S. Rochester Road is about 1900 with a significant remodeling at an unknown date. Although currently Neoclassical in style, the house was originally constructed as a Queen Anne facing Rochester Road with a front, wrap-around porch. It could be concluded that the Eddy’s remodeled the house before moving into the property in 1936; however there is no evidence or documentation to support that theory. No information was uncovered that showed the remodeling into Neoclassical was architect designed.

Examination of the house indicates that the Neoclassical remodeling was probably done in the 1940s and 50s. This is based on the type of brick used under the front porch, the moldings used to create the columns, and the style of the north side chimney. All of these materials appear to be from the 1940s or 50s, not from an earlier period. The main part of the house has part of the old roof projecting above the added front porch. Aluminum siding and trim was added to the property at an unknown date. The Neoclassical form such as the full height porch, dentil molding and cornice returns were retained.

The 2002 survey report states that the Fairview Farmhouse is one of four properties in Rochester Hills that is Neoclassical in style. The other three properties are the ca. 1910 Burch House located at 1812 S. Rochester Road; the house at 1608 Walton Boulevard constructed in 1892; and the house at 1415 John R. The house at 1585 S. Rochester has the second-most amount of architectural integrity of the four examples; the Burch house is the only other designated property. The Burch house has the highest degree of architectural integrity. The other two houses do not have enough architectural integrity to warrant designation.

From a distance the house appears intact, just with the addition of the aluminum siding. Closer inspection reveals that there is not a high level of integrity of design. The house appears to be cobbled together with many different elements. The front porch columns are not typical of columns used in the style in that they are thin square columns with trim pieces added. There is vertical aluminum siding around the top of the front porch where an entablature would typically be located. The corner boards and dentils are covered with aluminum trim. The front door has been replaced with a standard panel door and the door surround is not correctly proportioned, in particular the strip of dentil molding at the top.

In summary the house at 1585 S. Livernois Road is not significant in the way the original study committee thought. It is significant with events or persons significant in the history of Rochester Hills as it pertains to

³ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

agriculture and Fairview Farms, however all of the outbuildings have been demolished. Therefore the property does not retain enough architectural integrity under Criteria A and the agriculture context. The change of the house's architecture from Queen Anne to Neoclassical was done at an unknown date, most likely in the 1940s or 50s. Therefore the Neoclassical style of the house is not as early as previously thought, and it is not an outstanding example of the style because of the details of the construction. It is not significant to the architecture of Rochester Hills.

Defective Procedure

The procedures followed in establishing the 1585 South Rochester Road Historic District were not defective. When the property was designated a local historic district in 1978, the Avon Township Board and Avon Township Study Committee correctly followed the procedures prescribed by state law at that time. The study committee adopted evaluation criteria, conducted an inventory, prepared inventory sheets on each property, prepared a preliminary and a final report, drafted an ordinance, and undertook the required transmittals and public hearing. Of the several hundred properties that the study committee inventoried, sixty-five were recommended for local historic district designation. The Avon Township Board designated thirty-one of these as non-contiguous historic districts each containing one building and the remainder as part of the Stoney Creek and Winkler Mill Pond Historic Districts.

The historic districts ordinance that Avon Township adopted in 1978 limited a non-contiguous district to the designated structure on the property and the area within one hundred feet from that structure (or to the property line if that was less than one hundred feet away). In 1995, the city of Rochester Hills amended their ordinance to include the entire parcel with all of its historic and non-historic resources.⁵ This was done to comply with the changes in state law.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study committee finds that the house at 1585 South Rochester Road should no longer be designated as a local historic district. The original study committee did not have the benefit of the complete history of the property. The house does not possess the historic or architectural integrity needed for it to be considered significant for its architecture. It is not an outstanding example of the Neoclassical style. Neither is it associated with a person or event significant to the history of Rochester Hills.

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⁵ Rochester Hills Historic Districts Study Committee. "Preliminary Historic District Study Committee Report, Demay-Potere Farm Historic District, Rochester Hills, Michigan" no date, p. 13.

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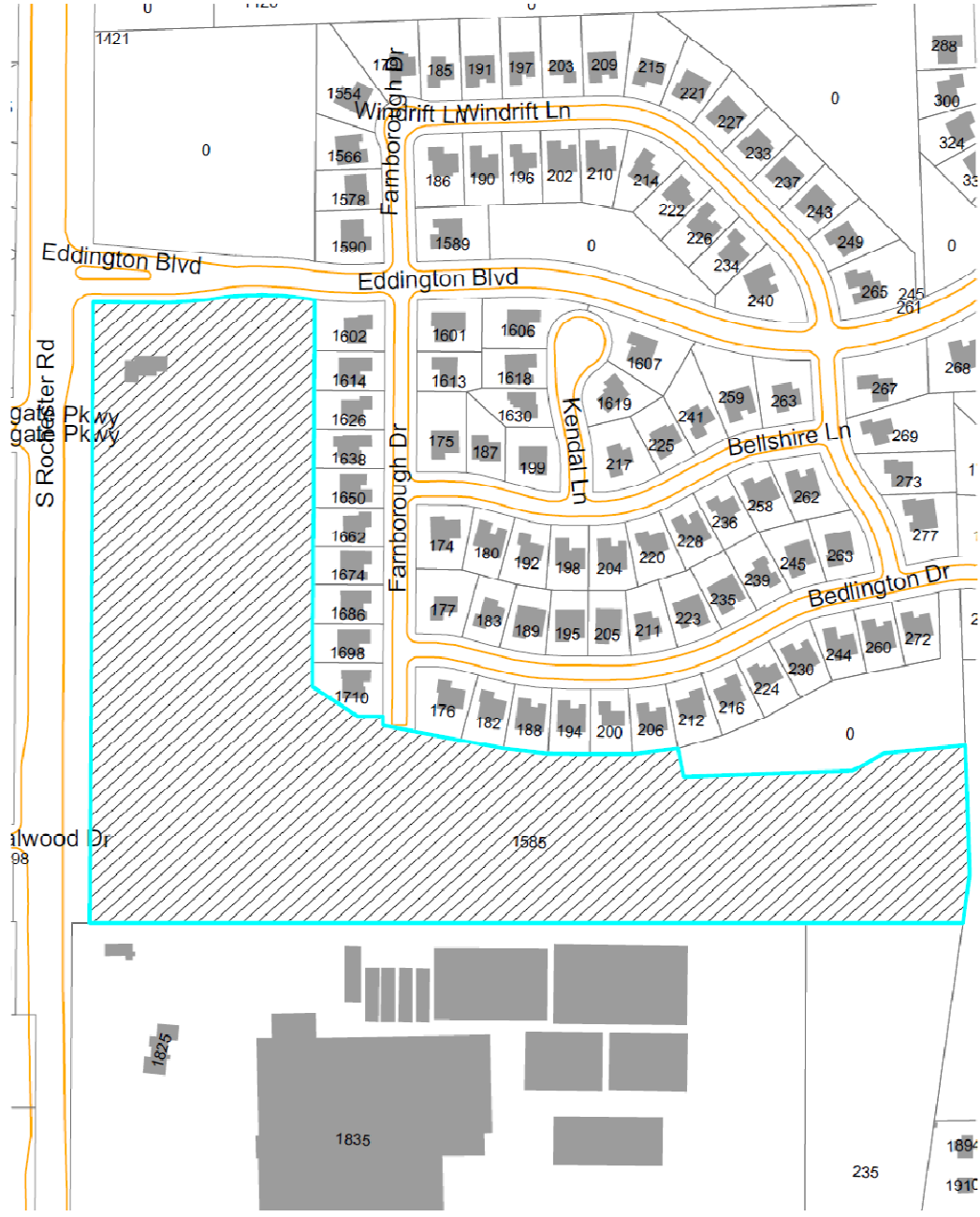
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“Wayne H. Eddy, obituary,” *Detroit Free Press*, December 8, 1965.

DISTRICT MAP

1585 S. Rochester Road 15-23-300-035



- Legend**
- Tax Parcel
 - Road Edge
 - Subject Parcel

Aerial photographs as of April 2008.
Tax Parcel lines were obtained on 07-01-09 from Oakland County.
Although the information provided by this map is believed to be reliable, its accuracy is not warranted in any way. The City of Rochester Hills assumes no liability for any claims arising from the use of this map.

11-9-09

1 inch = 267 feet

PHOTOGRAPHS



View of 1585 S. Rochester Road from the southwest, looking north, October, 2009



South elevation looking northwest, October, 2009



North and west elevations looking southeast, October, 2009



East elevation looking southwest, October, 2009



Detail of main entrance looking north, note non-proportional columns and door surround, October, 2009