

~~Chairperson Thompson asked if anyone else wished to speak on this matter. Upon hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 6:50 PM.~~

~~Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee was pleased to receive the input and thanked the representatives from the school for attending the Hearing.~~

~~This matter was Discussed~~

6B. 2006-0425

PUBLIC HEARING - FILE NO. HDSC 04-005

Location: 1290 E. Auburn Road; 1304 E. Auburn Road; 1344 E. Auburn and 1356 E. Auburn Road, located on the south side of Auburn Road, east of John R Road and west of Dequindre Road, and further identified as Parcel Numbers 15-36-126-004 (1290 E. Auburn); 15-36-126-005 (1304 W. Auburn), and 15-36-126-029 (1344 and 1356 E. Auburn), zoned R-3 (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.

Chairperson Thompson explained the information received at this Public Hearing would be included in the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) Final Report for the properties commonly identified as 1290 E. Auburn Road, 1304 E. Auburn Road, 1344 E. Auburn Road and 1356 E. Auburn Road.

Chairperson Thompson stated that 1290 E. Auburn Road, 1304 E. Auburn Road, 1344 E. Auburn Road and 1356 E. Auburn Road had been studied by the Historic Districts Study Committee in accordance with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and a Preliminary Report had been prepared. 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 forwarded to City Council for action.

Chairperson Thompson summarized the procedure used to establish a district. 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 the Study Committee transmitted a copy of the Preliminary Report for review and recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Office on November 30, 2007. He noted a Staff Report and Comments were received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State Review Board on January 29, 2008.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-131 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Public Hearing is to be held sixty (60) days after the transmittal 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 all property owners of record on April 11, 2008.

Chairperson Thompson stated that notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Rochester Eccentric on April 13, 2008, 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, 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.

Dr. Stamps asked if all the property owners were notified about the Public Hearing. Mr. Delacourt stated that copies of the Preliminary Report and Notice of the Public Hearing were sent to each of the affected addresses and to all addresses associated

with the tax rolls for the parcels. He stated the Planning & Development Department did not receive any comment back from any of the property owners, and those notices were mailed to the same address used for water and tax bills.

Chairperson Thompson opened the Public Hearing at 6:55 PM.

Anita Holtz, 1290 E. Auburn Road, expressed her concern about the 1304 E. Auburn Road property and whether that property owner actually received notice of the Public Hearing.

Mr. Delacourt noted that property was a rental property and stated that notice had been sent to the property owner of record, as reflected on the City's tax rolls, along with a second address recently added to the tax roll information. He commented no response had been received from that property owner. He noted the City had attempted to make contact with that property owner on several occasions and had not received any response.

Ms. Holtz stated she was part of the bloodline of the Frank family that was born and raised on the property, noting her mother still resided at 1290 E. Auburn, as does her cousin, Ray Frank, who resides at 1356 E. Auburn Road. She commented that the third house, 1344 E. Auburn Road was still within the Frank family. She noted the rental property, 1304 E. Auburn Road, is no longer in the family.

Ms. Holtz stated the family members had concerns that there were elderly family residents residing at 1356 E. Auburn and 1290 E. Auburn, and eventually the next generation would inherit those properties. The next generation's concern about becoming a designated historical property is that the houses were built in the late 1940s, modified in the 1950s, and the structures themselves did not really have any historical significance. She agreed the property had been in the Frank family since the early 1800s, but if it became a historic district, it would be difficult to sell the property. She noted the children of the current residents would not be living on the property, and that was one of their biggest concerns. She commented that had the designation happened twenty years ago and there was something of great building significance left, she would be One Hundred Percent for the designation and would have pitched in to help it along. However, unfortunately now it would become a white elephant if it became a historic district. She did not know how they could sell the properties or market them when people were looking for new modern, updated items, and these were just older, single-story family homes. She stated it would be very difficult to entice buyers, other than the fact they sat on a lot of property. If the property is designated historic, then the existing homes could not be razed and new homes built.

Ms. Holtz stated that was their dilemma. They loved the property; they were born and raised there, and it was their roots and their earth. She noted her mother was in

her mid-80's, and her cousin was in his 90's, and the next generation was concerned about what they would do with the property after the older generation is gone.

Ms. Holtz referred to the house located at 1304 E. Auburn Road, and stated she would love for someone to embrace that home and to restore it to what it was, and she would be willing to help them do that. She did not think there was enough money to restore it, and the gentleman who owned it right now would not even have a hint of interest in restoring the home, unless he could be enticed with a large paycheck to take the house off his hands. She noted the home was only a rental to the current owner, and he did not have any attraction to the home.

Ms. Holtz stated she was not aware of the process, but asked if that house was deemed historical, whether the City could purchase the home and restore it to what it was, although she understood that was not the purpose of the Study Committee. She commented even the 1304 E. Auburn Road house had expired; it was past its time; it was over 143 years old; and although it was a grand structure, it was falling apart. She stated that was unfortunate, but true. She commented she had read the building materials on that house, and it was listed as asbestos, that some of the walls were made of asbestos, which was not a real positive thing to have in trying to restore a house. She stated she did not believe the current owner would do any restoration to the home, and commented that perhaps it would be struck by lightning and the house go out in a blaze of glory. Otherwise, the house will just fall down. She noted that if designated, the home would be considered demolition by neglect.

Ms. Holtz stated that as much as the family would love for the properties to be historical properties, or as had been mentioned by Dr. Stamps, become a part of the community and become an active working farm for the education system, she felt the buildings that would have been important for that to happen are already gone. She stated if the properties were to become historical, they would become albatrosses for the family.

Ms. Holtz stated that was how the family felt at this time, and stated they appreciated the Study Committee's time and efforts. She requested to be advised of the next step in the process.

Chairperson Thompson called for any other public comments. Upon hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 7:01 PM.

Chairperson Thompson thanked Ms. Holtz for her comments and stated the Committee appreciated the input.

This matter was Discussed

~~7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS~~