



Rochester Hills

Minutes

Historic Districts Commission

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Chairperson Brian R. Dunphy, Vice Chairperson Jason Thompson
Members: Steven Branstner, Dr. Jay Eastman, Nicole Franey, Micheal Kilpatrick,
Dr. Richard Stamps, Charles Tischer, Nicholas Winters

Thursday, December 8, 2011

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dunphy called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium.

ROLL CALL

Present 8 - Richard Stamps, Micheal Kilpatrick, Brian Dunphy, Jason Thompson, Nicole Franey, Dr. Jay Eastman, Nicholas Winters and Charles Tischer

Absent 1 - Steven Branstner

Also Present: James Breuckman, Manager of Planning
Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting
Sandi DiSipio, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2011-0559 October 13, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Kilpatrick, seconded by Eastman, that this matter be Approved as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Stamps, Kilpatrick, Dunphy, Thompson, Franey, Eastman, Winters and Tischer

Absent 1 - Branstner

COMMUNICATIONS

No communications were brought forward. Chairperson Dunphy introduced and welcomed Mr. Charles "Chip" Tischer, our new Commissioner. He also recognized and thanked Ms. Nicole Franey for her service and contribution to the Commission, as this is her last meeting. She will be greatly missed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the audience came forward with any comments on non-agenda items.

NEW BUSINESS**2011-0560** 3861 S. Adams Road (HDC File #05-004)

Applicant: Michael J. Gordon

Sidwell: 15-31-301-011

District: Non-contiguous

Request: Certificate of Appropriateness

- Removal of additions, replacing roofing, siding, windows and doors

Chairperson Dunphy read the request into the record and called for an overview of the staff report. Ms. Kidorf explained this is a single resource property at 3861 South Adams. The stone house is an upright and wing in the Greek Revival style. It is the only stone Greek Revival style house in the City, so it is very important. The original wood frame structure was constructed in 1824, and in 1840 the stone upright and wing section were constructed possibly by Daniel Grey. An historical timeline provided by a previous applicant was also provided to the Commission for information. As some of the Commissioners may remember, a mixed-use development was previously approved for this site which also involved rehabilitation of the main house. That project has since fallen through, and there is a new owner of the property. They've presented a lot of information to the Commission for an expanded application, however, tonight the owner would like to focus on removing the 1950's and 1980's east wing to the property and also the enclosed front porch, rehabilitating the 1983 non-contributing garage structure, completing some investigation and securing the house for winter. In the spring, the owner will return to the Commission with more information about replacing the windows, some work on the stone and other major repairs to the house. The original survey sheets state the house was part of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War and the windows are hand-blown glass. Photographs taken by staff indicate the house has several different components; the additions are generally non-contributing although Ms. Kidorf believes the western-most section of the east addition contains the original 1824 house. Ms. Kidorf is recommending the Commission allow the removal of the east and west additions, however while doing this work, to carefully make sure that there are no remnants of the front porch in the west addition and no remnants of the 1824 house in the east addition. The garage is non-conforming, so approval for the proposed work is recommended.

Mr. Mike Gordon, Moiseev/Gordon Associates, the architect and applicant representing the client/owner, Catholic Door Ministries, introduced himself and thanked Ms. Kidorf for all of her assistance. Mr. Gordon indicated they wish to take this as a slow process and feels the best process is to carefully remove the two incompatible additions and complete the necessary research. The contractor is going to remove the boards and photograph and measure each window. Representatives from the City and Ms. Kidorf are invited to be present during the work. The windows will then be re-boarded for the winter while they continue to research the best way to restore the windows that need to be restored, and replace and replicate the ones that have been altered or removed. Mr. Gordon indicated there is a cistern within the footprint of the structure that will be uncovered and revealed - this was part of the Underground Railroad.

There is also a well on the site that will be maintained. The property is extremely overgrown, and site challenges include the fact that there is no electricity to the site, the floor of the 1950 addition has collapsed and ceilings on both floors are only seven feet high. Power will be restored so the contractors can get inside and complete additional investigation. Mr. Gordon would like to discuss three issues - 1) the immediacy of what the developer wants to do - stabilize the property and complete the appropriate investigation so that they can come back with a comprehensive and detailed plan for how to restore the building back to its original condition; 2) where the developer sees this project moving down the road so the Commission knows what's coming; and 3) to discuss options for the windows. Once the structure is stabilized, the preliminary engineering will be done to bring utilities into the site that are appropriate for the future expansion including a main sanctuary to the back of the property and a schoolhouse attached by a small glass extension to the rear. The goal is to restore the property so that the street view is what the house would have looked like in the 1800's. These plans are in the fund-raising mode now and the church may be built in phases. The school may be built as the original sanctuary, while the actual sanctuary is being built, transfer the congregation to the sanctuary and then convert the small sanctuary into the school. A lot of options are being reviewed, this is a long-term commitment and may take a number of years to complete.

Chairperson Dunphy asked Mr. Gordon to walk the Commission through the drawings and clarify exactly what the developer is proposing to do. Mr. Gordon pointed to the last addition to the house and indicated he has been in that space and feels the original house is pretty much gone as this area is a 1980's kitchen in ruins. This is where the floor has collapsed into the crawlspace. The addition to the west - there may have been an original porch in there somewhere, but that won't be known until they start removing the plywood. The second story of the house is probably also an addition because the window configuration is not anywhere near what could have been envisioned. Until we get inside and see the dimension of the lumber that created the headers we won't be able to determine when they were milled or cut. Mr. Gordon is proposing the removal of a skylight on the roof and removal of the brush within 10 feet of the house, the trees will remain. As the plywood is removed, each window will be measured, recorded and photographed. The garage will be restored and act as a contractor storage facility/meeting area while the restoration is taking place. In the eventual scheme, the garage will be abandoned.

Chairperson Dunphy inquired as to the timeline, when demolition might begin and end. Mr. Gordon explained the contractor is waiting for results of this meeting, hopefully sign a contract next week and begin work immediately to get the structure secured for winter. Once the frost laws are off in the spring, the work can begin. The contractor will need to work with the Engineering Department relative to the road grade and retention issues. The client would like to be up and running by the end of 2012.

Mr. Kilpatrick asked if the house could be winterized without removing the additions. Mr. Gordon explained the eastern addition is beyond salvaging, it may fall apart on its own. This addition does not serve a purpose in the future. Ms. Kidorf added that if anything remains of the original house it would be

contained in this eastern addition, but there is no way to know that without doing some demolition. Mr. Gordon commented that the original north and east walls are completely gone. The developer is committed to preserving whatever can be preserved.

Dr. Stamps stated that what the developer is proposing is fantastic and very exciting. He suggested that as the developer gets into the remodel stage and things are being removed, that if possible, an archeology-type person be in attendance to lend expertise and assistance - to gather window glass and old nail samples, etc.

Ms. Franey is very happy that someone is restoring this property. She asked if protocol in a true restoration was to have someone with an archeological background check in on the work periodically once the approval was given. Chairperson Dunphy clarified that this could be a condition of approval if the Commission wanted. Ms. Franey asked if there was any historical value to the brush around the house proposed to be removed. Ms. Kidorf indicated she reviewed the photographs and does not see anything of historic value within the 10 feet of brush scheduled to be removed around the structure.

MOTION by Thompson, seconded by Eastman, in the matter of File No. HDC 05-004, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of the front (west) and rear (east) additions, securing the house for winter, repair of the house soffit and fascia, capping the chimney, installation of gutters and downspouts, and on the garage installing new windows, doors, siding, trim, gutters and downspouts as proposed for the single-resource historic district located at 3861 S. Adams Road, Parcel Identification Number 15-31-301-011, with the following Findings and Conditions:

Findings:

1. The property is a single resource historic district, however the front and rear additions and the garage are not contributing features to the district. The original 1824 house is contained within the east addition but has been heavily altered on the exterior.
2. The plans for the removal of the east and west additions of the house; securing the house for winter; repair of the soffit and fascia to match the existing; installation of gutters and downspouts; capping the chimney; and repairs to the garage do not appear to remove any character defining features to the house and the non-contributing garage.
3. The proposed additions and rehabilitation of the existing non-contributing resource are in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation and Guidelines Numbers 2, 4, 5 and 6 as follows:
 - 2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
 - 4) Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5) *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

6) *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

Conditions:

1. *During removal of the front (west) addition remnants or materials from an original or older front porch will be noted, photographed and saved if they exist.*

2. *During removal of the rear (east) addition, materials from the original 1824 house will be noted, photographed and saved if they exist.*

3. *Care will be taken to not damage or destroy historic materials on the house during the removal of the additions.*

4. *The repairs shall be completed in accordance with the plans dated received by the City's Planning & Development Department November 21, 2011 with the exception of the window and door replacement, second floor siding repair/replacement, and stone cleaning and tuck pointing on the house and site work including construction of the deceleration lane, asphalt driveway, retention area and gravel drive and parking lot.*

5. *All work proposed for the subject site shall receive all appropriate Building Department permits prior to any work being performed.*

6. *No work is being requested or approved regarding other outbuildings or site features on the property at this time. The proposed work to the house windows, doors, siding and stone; construction of the deceleration lane, asphalt driveway, retention area and gravel drive and parking lot; and any work other than what is indicated on the plans dated received by the Planning & Development Department November 21, 2011 will require additional review and approval by the City's Historic Districts Commission.*

7. *A student or other qualified person trained in historical archeology shall be involved in monitoring the work as it proceeds.*

A motion was made by Thompson, seconded by Eastman, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Stamps, Kilpatrick, Dunphy, Thompson, Franey, Eastman, Winters and Tischer

Absent 1 - Branstner

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Establish 2012 Meeting Schedule

A motion to establish and approve the 2012 HDC meeting schedule is required by the Commission.

MOTION by Thompson, seconded by Kilpatrick, **Moved**, that the HDC establishes the 2012 meeting schedule as the second Thursday of every month starting at 7:00 p.m.

Ayes: All Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The Chair reminded Commissioners the next Regular Meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2012.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Kilpatrick, seconded by Eastman, Chairman Dunphy adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

*Brian R. Dunphy, Chairperson
Historic Districts Commission
City of Rochester Hills*

Sandi DiSipio, Recording Secretary