



# Rochester Hills

## Minutes - Draft

### Historic Districts Commission

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Rochester Hills, MI  
48309  
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Home Page:  
[www.rochesterhills.org](http://www.rochesterhills.org)

*Chairperson Jason Thompson, Vice Chairperson Julie Granthen*  
*Members: Katherine Altherr-Rogers, Darlene Janulis, Kelly Lyons, Carol Morlan,*  
*Dr. Richard Stamps, Tom Stephens, Charles Tischer*

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Thursday, February 11, 2021

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

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## CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jason Thompson called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. using Zoom software.

## ROLL CALL

**Present** 9 - Julie Granthen, Darlene Janulis, Kelly Lyons, Richard Stamps, Tom Stephens, Jason Thompson, Charles Tischer, Katherine Altherr-Rogers and Carol Morlan

*Quorum present.*

*Also present: Kristen Kapelanski, Manager of Planning*  
*Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting*  
*Maureen Gentry, Recording Secretary*

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2021-0061](#) January 14, 2021 Regular Meeting

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

**Aye** 9 - Granthen, Janulis, Lyons, Stamps, Stephens, Thompson, Tischer, Altherr-Rogers and Morlan

## COMMUNICATIONS

*There were no Communications presented.*

## PUBLIC COMMENT

*Chairperson Thompson opened Public Comment at 7:03 p.m. Seeing no one wishing to speak online or in the Auditorium and no communications received, he closed Public Comment.*

## NEW BUSINESS

2021-0062

Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness - City File No. 21-003 - to demolish a single-family house on 3.1 acres located at 1500 Mill Race in the Stoney Creek Historic District off of Washington Rd., zoned RE Residential Estate, Parcel No. 15-01-100-026, Adam Randels, The Adams Group, Applicant  
*(Reference: Staff report, prepared by Kristine Kidorf, dated February 1, 2021 and associated application documents and photos had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record thereof).*

*Present for the applicant was Adam Randels, The Adams Group, Inc., 1700 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI 48307.*

*Upon questioning by Chairperson Thompson, Ms. Kidorf said that she did not have anything further to add to the staff report. She noted that it was a non-contributing property, and approval of the request would meet the Secretary of Interior Standards.*

*Chairperson Thompson stated that the matter seemed straight-forward. He asked if the Commissioners had any comments.*

*Dr. Stamps said that he thought that the report was well written. It was an area they understood and the same challenge they had with noncontributing properties in the area. He said that he was ready to make a motion and move forward. Chairperson Thompson first asked the applicant if he had anything to present, which he did not.*

*Dr. Stamps asked Mr. Randels if he was aware that the house was in an historic district when he moved in. Mr. Randels explained that he was the contractor on behalf of the owner, so he could not speak to that. Dr. Stamps said that hopefully, when people moved into an historic district, they read the signs stating that they were entering into an historic district. If people purchased in the district, they purchased into something with local guidelines. He hoped that the real estate people and others were educated about that to teach people who wanted to move in. He asked Mr. Randels if he knew whether the owner liked being in an historic district.*

*Mr. Randels said that within the last 15 years, the owner had built a new home on an adjacent property, so he felt that she must have understood the processes. He would agree that she liked it very much. Dr. Stamps said that he was just trying to address the issue of the value of living in an historic district. Even if it was not a contributing structure, people liked being there, because it raised the value of their property and had a nice neighborhood feel about it.*

Chairperson Thompson asked if there was any public comment on the matter. Ms. Kapelanski said that there was no one with a hand raised, although there were a couple of attendees. She announced that if anyone on the meeting wished to speak, it would be the time to use the "Raise Hand" feature. She saw no one do that or otherwise asking to speak.

Hearing no further discussion Ms. Janulis moved the following.

**MOTION** by Janulis, seconded by Tischer, in the matter of File No. HDC 21-003, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the house and site restoration as proposed at 1500 Mill Race Road in the Stoney Creek Historic District, Parcel Identification Number 70-15-01-100-026, with the following Findings and Conditions:

- 1) The house proposed for demolition is in the Stoney Creek Historic District and **is not** contributing to the district;
- 2) The proposed site restoration on the heavily treed lot **is** compatible with the district; and
- 3) The proposed house demolition and site restoration **is** in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines, in particular standard number 9 as follows:
  9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

**A motion was made by Janulis, seconded by Tischer, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye** 9 - Granthen, Janulis, Lyons, Stamps, Stephens, Thompson, Tischer, Altherr-Rogers and Morlan

Chairperson Thompson stated for the record that the motion had passed unanimously, and he thanked Mr. Randels.

**2019-0113**

Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the house at 947 E. Tienken Road, on the north side of Tienken east of Sheldon in the Stoney Creek Historic District and rebuild it further north from Tienken Road, zoned R-1 One Family Residential, Parcel No. 15-02-426-005, Ralph Putnam, Applicant

*(Reference: Staff report, prepared by Kristine Kidorf, dated February 1, 2021 and associated application documents and photos had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record thereof).*

*Present for the applicant was Ralph Putnam, 967 E. Tienken Rd., Rochester Hills, MI 48306.*

*Ms. Kidorf noted that when the applicant spoke with her, she was not clear about what he was trying to do. She said that it somewhat explained the incomplete application. Mr. Putnam told her that he wanted to demolish, but now it might be to reconstruct, and she wondered if the applicant could clarify.*

*Dr. Stamps said that he had read the report, and could understand Ms. Kidorf's challenge in trying to figure out what was going on. The HDC came into existence after citizens and the elected representatives passed an Ordinance that created the HDC which placed eligible structures on the historic district list. To get on the district, the structures, the property, etc. had to pass certain guidelines. Those Ordinance guidelines stated that the HDC would follow the Secretary of Interior's guidelines. To be listed, a property had meet certain criteria. In the guidelines from the Secretary of Interior, it also said that if someone wanted to delist, there were certain requirements to be met. He did not think that the proposal fulfilled the requirements that qualified to delist and demolish. He realized that they were two different things. To delist, there had to be some reasoning. He reminded that someone could not buy an historic house and just tear it down or change or move it. Just wanting to do something did not qualify under the reasons to delist. He thought that they needed to understand the requirements. If the request to delist did not meet the guidelines, he stated that the HDC should not approve it. He asked the reasons to qualify for a delisting.*

*Chairperson Thompson explained that a delisting was a separate process than the request. A Certificate of Appropriateness by the HDC was needed for a demolition. City Council would have to direct the Study Committee to undertake a delisting request and prepare a report.*

*Ms. Kidorf added that a delisting was not within the purview of the HDC. She agreed that at City Council's direction, a delisting request would be referred to the Historic Districts Study Committee. There were specific criteria for a delisting. The subject property was within a larger historic district, not a single resource, so the request would have to be for the entire Stoney Creek Village Historic District to be delisted. That was not*

*on the table for discussion. They were going to discuss whether it was appropriate or not to demolish and reconstruct the house further north on the property.*

*Dr. Stamps thanked them for the clarification. He asked Mr. Putnam how he proposed to demolish the home and maintain the structure in its historic sense. It would not be in its historic location if moved. To him, there were a lot of loose ends that did not quite make sense. He looked forward to what others had to say.*

*Ms. Kidorf stated that it did not meet the Secretary of Interior standards for demolishing a contributing property in an historic district.*

*Mr. Putnam explained that he would like to reproduce the house in another location and save it. He claimed that half of the house was not repairable. It had no foundation, and there was no support, but there was a part of the house that could be saved. He was a builder, and he had five builders and three architects look at it. He wanted to save the house, because he loved it, but part of it could not be saved. He thought that it would be possible to move the original part of the house. He was told by the Building Dept. that it was in the right-of-way, and it had to be moved back. He invited everyone to come over and inspect the house. If anyone had an idea of what to do with it, he would like to hear that, because he hated seeing it go down. He waited over ten years to buy the house, and he loved it, and he would hate to see it go down without saving any of it. He thought that would happen if it was not moved back. The road was going to be widened in order to be able to turn into the Museum. He stated that it was unreasonable to even think about saving the addition. It had an area that drained into the original part of the house, and there was water damage. He mentioned the roof trusses and having no foundation. He saw Mr. McKay's (Director of the Museum) email in the packet, so he called him and asked him to come check out the home. He thought that Mr. McKay would be attending the meeting. He claimed that Mr. McKay agreed 100% with everything he had brought up. Mr. Putnam said that he would like to move the house to the back of the lot. He added that there was no way to turn around. There had been a lot of damage done to the house by the sound waves from the road, because it sat on the road. He suggested that moving it would be a way to keep an historical house forever. As it was, he maintained that no one would redo it, because it would be crazy to even try. He felt that it would eventually have to be torn down because of the road. He thought that they should try to save what could be saved and reuse any materials from the part that would be torn down. He was ready to do something to it besides let it sit*

*and rot, and he welcomed anyone to come over and see exactly what was going on.*

*Chairperson Thompson asked if there was anyone who wished to publicly comment.*

*Ms. Kapelanski said that no one had a hand raised. There were a couple of attendees, so she announced that if anyone wished to speak, it would be the time to use the "Raise Hand" feature. She saw no one raise a hand.*

*Mr. Putnam said that he would save any materials he could. They could help with reconstruction when the original house was moved. He would put it exactly back the way it was when it was first built. He said that the door was not on the original part of the house; it was on the addition in the center and had a little porch, and he would like to put it back where it was.*

*Chairperson Thompson asked if it was possible to move the house back, if it would still keep its designation. He reminded that part of what contributed to a district was where a structure sat on the property. He asked if moving back on the property would change that.*

*Ms. Kidorf said that it would not necessarily change it. It would affect the setting to some extent, but it might not affect it so much that it would be considered non-contributing. Throughout history, houses had been moved. If it was on the same property and set back some distance, there was the potential to meet the Secretary of Interior standards. She stated that they needed a lot more detail, indicating that her version of reconstructing was probably different than Mr. Putnam's. They would need very specific plans for exactly where it would be going and what materials would be reused, and what the final appearance would look like.*

*Dr. Stamps asked about the plans for the rest of the buildings on the property. To him, they were one of the exciting values of the property. There was a house, barn and shed and other outbuildings. He stated that they were fantastic. He asked if they would also be moved back. Mr. Putnam said that they were rotted sheds, and he put \$1,000 each into them and jacked them up and put posts under them to keep them off the ground. They had already rotted down about 20 inches. He put wood shingles on both sheds and the outbuilding. He did not plan on moving them. He said that he loved historical properties. He grew up in Alabama out in the sticks where there were shacks, but he loved them. Eventually, they all disappeared, however. He was 100% in on saving the house. He*

said that if they came up with the best plan, he would go with it. He claimed that he had \$12,000 already tied up for nothing. He was trying to do something for the house and move on, and he only had so much time left. It was his chance to correct the house and make it a little better. It was very dangerous being on the road, and he warned that someone could get killed backing out into the road. That was one reason to move the house back. He reiterated that eventually, the road would take the house, and no one would have a plan at that time.

Ms. Lyons advised that the Road Commission had come before the HDC with other projects. They needed to get the HDC's permission to make road changes in the district.

Mr. Tischer thanked Mr. Putnam for his passion for the home and the district. He asked if he knew when the addition was put on, noting that Mr. Putnam wanted to set back the original house. Mr. Putnam said that the addition was built in the 1800's. Mr. Tischer said that from the pictures it looked old, and he just wanted to confirm that it was not a new addition. Mr. Putnam said that the front and the side had cedar siding, so the addition was not old, but it would have to be torn apart. He decided to apply for a demolition for that part, but he wanted to try to save the house as much as he could. Mr. Tischer said that he was struggling with what part of the house would be saved. They would need to see more concrete plans about what would be removed and where the original house would be moved. He understood what Mr. Putnam wanted to do, but personally, he needed to see more plans.

Mr. Putnam remarked that he could make a long story short if they just stopped by. He said that the house had been on his bucket list. Mr. Tischer said that he needed to see some plans on paper before he could move forward. Mr. Putnam explained that he wanted to get some kind of okay that it was a feasible plan so he could move on. He reiterated that it would be a lot of easier if everyone just stopped by. The addition had 2 x 12 oak boards on a beam that went around the house. The owners pasted newspaper on the oak planks in 1868, which he presumed was to keep the cold out.

Ms. Janulis indicated that she also had a lot of questions. Conceptually, she agreed with Mr. Putnam. She thought that it was a great idea, and she was glad that he personally had the resources to move and save the house. She had been concerned about where exactly the house would go in relation to the other buildings of historical significance. She needed to know what materials he would be able to save and what the façade would

look like. She said that she agreed with the plan in spirit, but until she had more details, she would not know what she was voting for. Conceptually, she thought that it was a good idea. They all understood the need to move it away from the right-of-way, but they were also concerned about the other buildings. They were glad to know that he had the talent to repair them.

Mr. Putnam said that originally, he wanted to demolish the whole thing, but if possible, he would like to save the original part of the house. It had a beautiful floor. Ms. Janulis said that she did not think that anyone wanted to prohibit him from improving the property and making the house livable. She would be happy to work with him to make it compatible so that they could vote for the undertaking. They did need a little more detail. Mr. Putnam said that was why he was there. He claimed that the easiest thing for him would be to do nothing. He could let it sit, but he was trying to do something to save the house. He said that he would not go through a circus to do it, but he was willing to do something. Mr. McKay had told him that he would try to come up with some kind of plan. Mr. Putnam asked them to tell him what they wanted him to do.

Ms. Kidorf thought that Mr. Putnam would need to do a site plan and drawings to get a Building permit. Ms. Kapelanski agreed that he would have to do a plot plan and permit review drawings for a permit. Ms. Kidorf said that the HDC was asking for the same thing he would have to provide to get a permit.

Ms. Alther-Rogers said that the house was very much on the edge of the right-of-way according to the maps, but the barn was 100% in the right-of-way. There was no proposal for the barn and whether it would be moved and saved. Mr. Putnam said that he would love to save the barn, and it would have to be moved, too. He pointed out that it could jam the whole parcel with historical buildings. He thought that something would have to go because of the road, and he was hoping that the HDC would help him out.

Dr. Stamps reminded the HDC and staff that it was not that many years ago when there was a proposal to widen Tienken Rd. There had been a lot of discussion. The widening was voted down and did not happen. The width of the bridge was expanded. He did not envision Tienken Rd. being widened and intruding more into the property. If the barn was 100 feet back, he felt that it would survive. He thanked Mr. Putnam for shoring up the barn and the other buildings. They just had to decide if he could move the core of the house and remove the addition, even though it was

*over 100 years old. He had a question about moving or demolishing it. He asked if the plan was to tear the building down, save the materials and use them to rebuild another house on a nice, cement foundation.*

*Mr. Putnam related that he was trying to move the original house only. The rest of the house was not repairable. He wanted to move and turn the house 90 degrees and put it back the way it was originally, but not with the addition. He added that the roof had not been built correctly.*

*Dr. Stamps suggested that Mr. Putnam would have to draw up plans to get a Building permit, and he could show those plans to the HDC. Mr. Putnam said that he had to talk to the Building Dept. to see if they would require a whole new septic system or other things. He had to make sure that they would let him move the house if approved. As far as the barn, he hoped that the HDC could help him figure out where to place it. He claimed that it was doomed, but he would do anything he could to save it.*

*Ms. Lyons asked what guidance could be provided to Mr. Putnam while the options were being pursued.*

*Ms. Kapelanski felt that it would make sense for Mr. Putnam to touch base with the Building Dept. and see what their requirements were in terms of the septic and other things that had to be done in order to relocate. She felt that would be the first step, and she recommended that Tim Hollis, Deputy Director of Building, would be a good person to talk to about it.*

*Ms. Kidorf thought that the documents Mr. Putnam would need for a Building permit would be pretty close to what the HDC would need. The HDC might ask for more notes on the drawings or a little more detail about some of the historic materials. In general, the site plan and things he would need for the Building Dept. would be what the HDC would need to be able to review the application.*

*Mr. Putnam said that as far as the right-of-way in front of the Museum, he did not know if they would use it to make a turn into the Museum eventually. They might need to widen the road for that.*

*Dr. Stamps said that he could not speak for the Museum, but he did not think that there was a plan to make a turn lane and intrude onto Mr. Putnam's property. Ms. Alther-Rogers advised that the Museum driveway was currently being relocated towards Runyon Rd. and the traffic circle. It was being moved to the east, not to the west.*

*Ms. Janulis asked if there was someone who could be an advocate for Mr. Putnam at City Hall to steer him in the right direction and make it as easy as possible for him to work on the project and get the necessary paperwork. Ms. Kapelanski said that currently, City Hall was closed to the public, but people could come in if they had an appointment only. She recommended that Mr. Putnam call Mr. Hollis. He would be a good advocate. Once that was squared away, Ms. Kidorf would be happy to look at some email drawings and let him know if they were adequate for the HDC's purposes.*

*Dr. Stamps thanked Mr. Putnam for his invitation to visit. As soon as the snow went away, perhaps they could come. He said that he was fascinated by Mr. Putnam's desire to relocate the front door and return it to its original nature. He asked Ms. Kidorf if that would be okay, in the rebuilding of the house, to move the door to where it was originally. He asked if there were any guidelines. It was a modification that would take a later addition and return it back to its original state.*

*Ms. Kidorf said that she would have to determine where the door was. She recalled that it was part of the significance of the building, but she would have to look at it more closely. It might be okay to add a door where it was historically, but if the door that was there now was significant, it could not be moved.*

*Mr. Putnam believed that the door was moved in the 1960's. Ms. Kidorf said that if that was the case, it would be appropriate to move the door back. Mr. Putnam commented that the house would be better if the nice floor could be protected. If he moved the door, it would open into the "showroom." He said that it would be difficult to bring the upstairs into compliance, as it was not structurally sound.*

*Ms. Lyons asked if it was one of those moments where it was more appropriate to put it on hold than to vote. Mr. Tischer said that he was ready to make a motion to postpone until they had more information.*

**MOTION** by Tischer, seconded by Lyons that in the matter of City File No. 19-009.2, the Historic District Commission **postpones** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to move and reconstruct the house further north on the property and remove the addition at 947 E. Tienken Rd. in the Stoney Creek Historic District, Parcel No. 15-02-426-005 so the applicant can provide more details and information.

**A motion was made by Tischer, seconded by Lyons, that this matter be Postponed. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye** 9 - Granthen, Janulis, Lyons, Stamps, Stephens, Thompson, Tischer, Altherr-Rogers and Morlan

*Chairperson Thompson stated for the record that the motion had passed.*

*Dr. Stamps indicated that he would like to support Mr. Putnam and his endeavor. He thought that when Mr. Putnam went to the Building Dept. and talked about demolishing, that would raise red flags. He thought that they could come up with better wording, such as "they would like to save the building by moving it to a better location." He was in favor of the motion to postpone, and he encouraged Mr. Putnam to move forward. He wanted Mr. Putnam to know that he had friends on the HDC. They also loved the house, but when they heard a word like demolish, it scared them. They wanted to work together and support Mr. Putnam and provide advocates and figure out the best way to proceed.*

*Mr. Putnam said that he only saw an application for a demo. So he went that route for the addition.*

*Ms. Janulis thanked Mr. Putnam for his energy. She said that she would like to take him up on his offer, and when he knew where he wanted to move the house, it would make more sense to go out at that time. She had driven by, but she would like to see where the other buildings would be in relation to the house's new location. It would help her support the project if she knew where the new location would be.*

*Chairperson Thompson asked Mr. Putnam to please come back with more information. The HDC did want to work with him. They appreciated his passion, and he thanked Mr. Putnam for the time and money he had put into strengthening the buildings already.*

*Mr. Putnam said that he loved the house and waited 15 years to get it. He felt that it was meant for him to have it. He said that he would see what he could do as far as getting other information. He suggested that they should talk to Mr. McKay, and said that he would see them again.*

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*Dr. Stamps wondered if the newly passed historic tax credit, which had gone through the process and been signed by the Governor, could be used for some of Mr. Putnam's work. He wondered if the project would be an appropriate candidate for tax credits. It was in the district, and work was to be done. He suggested that anything they could do to help Mr.*

*Putnam come up with funds and resources would be very appropriate.*

*Ms. Kidorf agreed that the status of the State Historic Tax Credit had been passed, and there was \$5 million available for the entire State for the year. However, the State Historic Preservation Office had just entered the rule making process, and they had been told that at a minimum, the rule making process would take at least a year. There would not even be an application to apply for the credit for at least a year. She agreed that conceivably, the project could be eligible for the tax credit, if the State agreed that it would meet the Secretary of Interior standards. She could not predict how they would judge the work, partly because they did not know exactly what the work would be, but there was the potential, but not for a year or so.*

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Chairperson Thompson reminded the Commissioners that the next Regular Meeting was scheduled for March 11, 2021 (subsequently cancelled).

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business to come before the Historic Districts Commission and upon motion by Stephens, seconded by Janulis, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:00 p.m.

### ROLL CALL VOTE:

All Ayes

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Jason R. Thompson, Chairperson  
Rochester Hills  
Historic Districts Commission

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Charles Tischer, Secretary