

**Rochester Hills City Council Members:**

I believe your agenda on July 26 will consider removing 1021 Harding from the Historic Districts Commission's list. Having lived in both Rochester Hills and Rochester for the last 40 yrs, I perceive that house (and to some extent the adjacent barn) as part of a vanishing history of this area and have some personal interest in preserving that.

Resolving the current condition of the property certainly merits the City's attention. The circumstances of the house fire were undoubtedly devastating for the involved family and unfortunately have left the property as somewhat of an eyesore. Realistically, even long before the fire, the property got very little historical preservation attention. What we perceive to be the owner's intended position on the property is perhaps understandable – in today's climate it is likely worth more if the house was leveled and the parcel subdivided for re-development.

We have made two offers on the property recently. We think they approximate the market value of the HDC-listed property in its current condition (those details could certainly be made available if important to the Council). To us, it is an attractive property to consider restoring for use as our long-term primary residence. Our intent would be to aesthetically reflect its heritage as the Eureka Fruit Farm. We envision it as a recognizable and attractive reminder of the legacy of the Rochester area.

Restoration would appear to be a very expensive project, but not infeasible. Our assessment of the remaining integrity of house and barn are admittedly somewhat uniformed – we have walked the property with the owner's agent, but we have not been permitted an inside view or independent structural assessment of the buildings. Even with this challenge of assessing the property, we have made cash offers with no contingencies.

The purpose of our note is to make it clear that there is interest in restoration of the current parcel/buildings consistent with the HDC's intent. We certainly recognize that the City Council may need to evaluate other aspects of the owner's petition to de-list the property.

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