



Rochester Hills
Minutes - Draft
Historic Districts Commission /
Historic Districts Study Committee

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HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION

Julie Granthen, Darlene Janulis, Kelly Lyons, Susan McKinnon, Steve Reina, Dr. Richard Stamps, Tom Stephens, Jason Thompson and Charles Tischer

HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE

Christina Calderwood, Julie Granthen, Darlene Janulis, Kelly Lyons, Jason Thompson, Tom Stephens and LaVere Webster

Thursday, October 10, 2019

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jason Thompson called the Joint Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium.

ROLL CALL

Present 10 - Julie Granthen, Darlene Janulis, Kelly Lyons, Susan McKinnon, Richard Stamps, Tom Stephens, Jason Thompson, Charles Tischer, Christina Calderwood and LaVere Webster

Excused 1 - Steve Reina

Quorum present both boards.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2019-0438](#) September 12, 2019 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Lyons, seconded by Janulis, that this matter be Approved as Presented . The motion PASSED by an unanimous vote.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no Communications presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Thompson opened Public Comment at 7:03 p.m. Seeing no one come forward, he closed Public Comment.

NEW BUSINESS

2013-0374

1877 Washington Road (HDC File #13-004)

Applicant: Chris Peyer/CP Ventures LP

Sidwell: 15-01-227-038

District: Winkler Mill Pond

Request: Certificate of Appropriateness

- Paving extension of approx. 250 feet of Washington Road

Present for the applicant was Joe Goodall, Dan's Excavating, 12955 23 Mile Rd., Shelby Township, MI 48315.

Ms. Lyons observed that the project would affect some neighbors' driveways as well, and she asked if they were aware of the proposal. Mr. Goodall said that he did not believe they were. The applicant was trying to improve the road, and would be just going to the second driveway of 1877 Washington. The other day when Mr. Goodall met with the Road Commission, they asked if they could include the next two driveways, because there was a drainage problem. There was a lump of gravel in the neighbor's drive that was about six inches high to stop the water from going down that driveway. They would get rid of the gravel and lower the road enough to go into the catch basins. He offered to talk with the neighbors, but he claimed that the County did not seem to think it was an issue. He maintained that they would do whatever was needed.

Dr. Stamps asked if the width of the road would be the same after it was paved, or if it would be wider. Mr. Goodall said that the asphalt would match the existing asphalt, and it was 25 feet wide. On the north side of Washington going from Dequindre towards Rochester Hills, there would be a safety shoulder of 10 feet, and it would be in front of 1877. That was where the drainage issue would be corrected. There was a pretty steep ditch on the left side, and they would fill that in to make it a little safer. There would be a little gravel shoulder on that side, but the roadway would stay the same width. Dr. Stamps clarified that it would still be a two-lane road.

Ms. Lyons asked if it would still turn into gravel after the paved portion, which Mr. Goodall confirmed. She asked if there was not a problem further down the road. Mr. Goodall said that they had not investigated anything past the end of the drive. The County had funding and a proposal to pave the road last year, but it was turned down by the people who lived there. He did not pave last year, because they said they might. That was shot down, and the County now said that they would never pave

the road.

Dr. Stamps indicated that it was part of his concern. If they paved a little bit, and the next person wanted paving and the next one wanted it, he wondered if they would be starting down a slippery slope where ultimately, the whole road would be paved. It was his understanding that it was supposed to remain a dirt road as part of why people moved out there in the country. He was just trying to think through the ramifications. He was considering what might happen if they approved the paving and more people down the way wanted it. The Road Commission might come back with the State, as they did a couple of years ago, and ask to widen Washington and make it a main feeder to get from I-94 to I-75 with a major boulevard along Tienken. He supposed that the subject request was different. If they were maintaining a two-lane road with ditches and better drainage, it seemed like it would be a nice improvement, as long as it did not move to widening and cutting down trees.

Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Tischer moved the following motion.

MOTION by Tischer, seconded by Janulis, in the matter of City File No. HDC 19-037, the Historic Districts Commission hereby **approves** the request for a **Certificate of Appropriateness** for the paving of approximately 250 feet of Washington Road in front of 1877 Washington Road in the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District, Parcel No. 15-01-227-038, with the following findings.

- 1. The proposed paving project is in the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District and the proposed paving and drainage work is compatible in materials with the district.*
- 2. The proposed road paving and drainage work 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 alternations 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.*

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

Dr. Stamps recalled that several years ago, there was a proposal to realign the boundaries of the historic district to include some of the older buildings and draw a line to say that the newer buildings and the newer, noncontributing homes would be removed from the historic district. He asked Mr. Goodall if he knew what his neighbors might feel if they were invited to no longer be members of the historic district. He noted that it tended to increase the value of a home when it was in an historic district. He asked Mr. Goodall if he had any ideas, but Mr. Goodall said that he honestly did not. Mr. LaVere added that it increased the value by 17%. Dr. Stamps said that they were discussing whether they wanted to change the boundaries, because they did not want to impose on people to have to come before the HDC and ask for permission to pave or something else. However, they did not want to do anything that would hurt anyone's feelings. The HDC was charged with preserving the history as best as they could, and they were trying to determine what was best.

Ms. Lyons suggested that it would be in Mr. Goodall's best interest to confer with the neighbors and make sure that they were aware of the project. She considered that it would be a benefit for him as well.

Ms. Calderwood asked how the road would be maintained when 20 years down the road it was full of potholes. Mr. Goodall said that he believed that the County would maintain it. They would build the road to County standards. They indicated that their maintenance supervisor would take care of it, and they had so far. He said that he could ask, but he assumed that there was no issue with them fixing a pothole.

Ms. Kapelanski confirmed that it was a County owned road, and they would maintain it.

A motion was made by Janulis, seconded by Lyons, that this matter be Approved. The motion PASSED by an unanimous vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2019-0204 Survey Priorities Discussion

(Reference: Staff reports, prepared by Kristine Kidorf, dated September 3, 2019 and October 1, 2019 had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record thereof).

Chairperson Thompson summarized that the members were at a point

where they needed to rank the survey priorities and determine how they should be presented to City Council. He opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Janulis said that with all of the construction work that was being done along Auburn Rd., she thought that the people in the Brooklands area might possibly be more amenable to learning about whether their properties fit in with historical preservation. She felt that it was important, and it would tie in with the work that the City was doing to improve the area. She thought that they might want to look at that before they resurveyed and conducted an intensive level survey, and that evaluating those areas would be an important thing for the members to take on as a priority.

Ms. Kapelanski noted that staff would like the members to rank the three options to present to Council to determine the first through third priorities. They would obviously need buy in and direction from Council to proceed with the priorities. She reminded that it was all in an effort to meet the criteria to maintain the Certified Local Government (CLG) status.

Chairperson Thompson believed that the idea was to have a joint meeting in January or February with Council and the HDC and HDSC to get Council's feedback and direction on the options. Ms. Kapelanski agreed.

Chairperson Thompson noted that Ms. Janulis had mentioned surveying the Brooklands, which was one idea. He asked if there were a couple of more. He recalled the idea of resurveying Winkler Mill and Stoney Creek, mentioned in the 2002 survey, and he asked the members if that was something they wanted to look at.

Dr. Stamps believed that it was on the list as one of the three priorities to rank. He said that if there were structures and homes that did not contribute, it seemed as if it would be easier on the homeowners (and the HDC) not to have to deal with the HDC if they did not contribute to the local history. He thought that was why the original survey in 2002 considered that.

Ms. Kidorf recapped that the three priorities she had identified in the staff report included the first phase of suburban development, which was where Brooklands would fit. If that was chosen as the first priority, the second thing would be to choose which subdivisions they wanted to look at. Another option was resurveying Winkler Mill and Stoney Creek. She agreed that all three had come out of the 2002 survey. The third would be

to conduct intensive level surveys for what remained of the potential list, even though that list did not exist in the Ordinance. They were properties identified in the 2002 survey as having potential to be historic. Those were the three options she had put in the report, but she did not know if there were others, although none had come up in the other discussions in May or September. She thought that they should determine which of the three should be number one, and which should be two and then three. She indicated that just because something was not a priority did not mean they would never look at it. It just meant that they only had so much time and money. They needed to figure out which should be first, and what would be politically supported.

Chairperson Thompson felt that the easiest to present to Council and the one that might draw support the quickest would be to resurvey the contiguous districts. The residents who did not have historic homes in the district would not have to be bothered by government, and he felt that it would be an easier sell politically.

Ms. Lyons said that if they were talking about the ability to market something, they could add that it could also save people a couple of meetings, money and resources.

Dr. Stamps also felt that politically, it would be acceptable and the wise thing to do. Mr. Tischer said that he echoed his colleagues' comments that it would be the prudent way to start off.

Ms. McKinnon asked about people whose home could be included in an historic district but they did not want it to be. She asked if homeowners would be given a choice.

Ms. Kidorf responded that they defined historic district boundaries by what made sense with the history or the story of the district. She said that homeowners would not really be given a choice, per se, and some homes could be in and some out. For the contiguous districts, they would draw the boundaries based on what historic fabric remained to continue to tell the story. If Council directed the HDSC, based on the survey, to look at the boundaries and possibly redraw them, it would re-open a process. There would be a public hearing. If there was a lot of homeowner outcry against the district, Council could choose to de-designate as opposed to redrawing the boundaries. That would come after the resurveying. She thought that they would want to do some public outreach and education as part of the process with any of the choices.

Ms. Lyons said that if they were also thinking about how the story could be impactful in terms of how it might be received, looking at the Avon Township subdivisions in the southern half of the City could also be something well received. It would be about trying to maintain the character of the neighborhoods. They were getting to the point where things were becoming eligible to be on the list. She felt that Rochester Hills was very cautious about maintaining the character of the neighborhoods - there was a certain quality of place. She felt that could be pitched as well.

Mr. Stevens asked if going through the process of resurveying was a common occurrence in other communities. Ms. Kidorf agreed that all CLGs were required to keep surveys up to date. Some communities did it through CDBG funds. Canton Township just resurveyed its existing historic district to look at redrawing the boundaries. Mr. Stevens asked how communities handled changes to areas with regards to the people who lived there. He asked if they went into the neighborhoods to talk to people.

Chairperson Thompson felt that reaching out and educating would definitely have to be part of the process of letting people know. He did not think they had gotten a lot of push back from homeowners in the contiguous districts. It came more from individuals who did not know their property was designated. Most people were happy and wanted to be in the district. They might find the opposite problem, and people in the newer homes would not want to be delisted.

Dr. Stamps said that he was not sure if the younger neighborhoods would want to join in or not. He asked how many CLGs there were in southeast Michigan. He knew that Rochester Hills had been one of the first. Ms. Kidorf advised that there were 30 in Michigan, but she did not know about southeast Michigan. Dr. Stamps said that Rochester Hills was one of few, so it was special to have the designation. He hoped that they could maintain it, but wondered how to do it in the best way.

Chairperson Thompson said that it would be part of the initial education process for the new Council members after the election. Before the joint meeting, staff could help them understand the uniqueness and significance of being one of 30 in the entire State and why it was important and why they were seeking Council's direction.

Ms. Janulis asked how long it would take to resurvey the Winkler Mill and Stoney Creek districts. Ms. Kidorf said that it would depend on how it was

done. If they had the funding, and they could bid it out for a consultant to do, it could be a six-month process. If they used volunteers or staff, it could take nine months or a year. The subdivision surveys would take longer - a year or two. There would need to be more research. If they could bid it out with a scope of work and hire someone, it would be less. Ms. Janulis clarified that resurveying would be the smaller of the three projects.

Ms. Calderwood liked the idea of adding the Brooklands. She pointed out that there was a lot of buzz about the corridor, and she thought that it would be a good sell. It was exciting and recognized some history. In terms of the surveying, she asked if there would ever be the possibility of partnering with Oakland University history students to do some of the legwork. Ms. Kidorf thought that was a possibility, and that maybe there could also be volunteers from the Historical Society and even the HDC/HDSC. There were ways to do it beyond a cash outlay for a consultant.

Ms. Janulis read from the staff report, "Evaluating the first phase of the subdivision development in Avon Township." She suggested that they could take that evaluation and narrow the field to do the Auburn corridor and the Brooklands area instead of trying to do all of Avon Township. She asked if that would be feasible. Ms. Kidorf said that the process would be to do some general research on the whole township on subdivisions in general with a suburbanization theme. Out of that, they could choose one or two subdivisions. Brooklands would be a big one to choose, but they could see how it fit into the bigger story. Ms. Janulis liked the idea of narrowing down the scope to that area, because it would give them a sense of what they were in for when they did it City-wide. It would be trial and error, but it might help them do a better job moving forward with other subdivisions.

Chairperson Thompson suggested that they could even break the Brooklands into smaller components. They could do the south side of Auburn, for example, and then the north. It did not have to be the entire Brooklands plat at one time.

Dr. Stamps said that regarding the idea about redefining the boundaries, he did not think that they wanted to mess with Stoney Creek, which he thought was fine. His concern was with Winkler Mill. The thing that tied it into the historic district was the fact that they had waterfront property as part of the mill. He suggested just looking at Winkler Mill. He liked doing a subdivision, and they had to decide when to do it.

Ms. Janulis said that she had been thinking a lot about it, and she was excited about it. She pointed out that it was not just the redevelopment and improving Auburn Rd. but to get the attention of the people there before they did something to their homes, which would make them no longer eligible because something was added on or the front porch was redone in such a way that it took away from the historical value. That was why she hoped they could do something in that area before it got carried away with some redevelopment.

Chairperson Thompson thought that was a good point. There had been a lot of redevelopment. The empty lots were getting decent sized, expensive homes, which was nice for him. He had lived there for several years, and he was trying to figure out which homes might qualify.

Chairperson Granthen asked if they had to rank. She had been on several committees where they just provided names for promotion, but they were not ranked. She wondered if they had to rank them for City Council rather than having them all on the same level. That way, Council could pick what was most important. They could be equally valuable to the HDC, and if Council had a preference, it could choose.

Ms. Kapelanski agreed that would be one way to present it to Council. Staff's idea was that they would state what the HDC/HDSC were most interested in pursuing. Council could always change the order. Chairperson Granthen suggested putting a new one first, and then adding resurveying next. Ms. Kapelanski said that there could be two number ones and a number two if the Commissioners wished. She reminded that they would need Council's support to pursue any of those.

Ms. Kidorf said that the Commissioners were the experts. While Council might not agree or take their recommendations, conceivably the HDC/HDSC knew more about historic preservation than Council. She thought that they should go forward with some recommendation.

Ms. Lyons said that if that was their charge, to her, it logically made more sense to add a district that they were concerned about than to prioritize excluding some houses that were an issue for a few people. They wanted to make sure they were protecting what was there. Chairperson Thompson asked if that was a suggestion to survey the Brooklands, which she confirmed.

Ms. Janulis said that regarding evaluating the first phase of suburban

development, instead of Avon Township, they could say Brooklands and modify that and under resurveying, they could add Winkler Mill and remove Stoney Creek. Those could be their primary targets for Council to look at. If they wanted to conduct an intensive level survey, she would take the best five on Ms. Kidorf's list and have that as a secondary proposal to Council.

Mr. Tischer felt that the easiest sell would be the resurveying of Winkler Mill. He thought that they should start there. He was in favor of adding more, but in his opinion, they should just start with Winkler Mill.

Jason Thompson said that if, at any point, it got to the homeowner who objected, it would be over. He could not see Council supporting something over the objection of a homeowner unless it were so significant.

Ms. Kidorf claimed that just because they were surveying Brooklands, it did not mean that they were automatically adding it as a historic district. The way to present it might be to say that they were trying to understand more of the recent history of the City. She had no idea of whether Brooklands would even be eligible to be added. They were just trying to understand what was out there and understand a very important piece of Rochester Hills.

Ms. Calderwood thought that the Mayor and City Council had been trying to build excitement around the redevelopment of the corridor. She thought that surveying would fit right into their plans and goal of building community and building awareness around the area. They were trying to make what was once an anonymous business road into more of a neighborhood in the community.

Mr. Tischer agreed with that. If they did decide on that, he thought that they should take Ms. Kidorf's approach that they were just surveying. It would not be the full trigger. Chairperson Thompson said that even if they went towards designation, the HDSC would have to study and hold a public hearing. It would take a year or two. Ultimately, designation would not occur until the Ordinance had been passed by Council.

Ms. Janulis indicated that the word was "evaluating." It would be the first phase, and then they could survey any related subs. They would only be evaluating that area for its potential. They wanted people to buy into that and to be proud if their home was deemed of historical significance. They did not want pushback, and she felt that it was a good opportunity for the

community. Chairperson Thompson said that was where the education component would come in so there was only knowledgeable pushback, if any.

Ms. Kidorf said that the way to think of all of it was that it was an education effort. The CLG requirement was just survey; it was not designation. No matter what the outcome, even if something was not eligible for the National Register, they had met the requirements for the CLG.

Dr. Stamps said that if they put it in that context, their purpose in doing the survey would be to gather data, get photos taken and get as much information before something was destroyed and gone. It made sense to gather and analyze the data and make evaluations of whether something was eligible.

Ms. Kapelanski said that something else to keep in mind was that Council would have to appropriate funds in order for them to do that. So they needed to keep in mind the difference in the ask and the amount of dollars between the three options.

Ms. Lyons asked Ms. Kidorf if she would comment on the third option. The timeline had not been addressed in terms of accomplishing that. Ms. Kidorf said that if all of those properties were surveyed it would take at least a year.

Chairperson Thompson asked if anyone wanted to comment about prioritizing. Mr. Tischler summarized that number one would be resurveying Winkler Mill and number two would be evaluating Brooklands. He agreed with the comment about the buzz around the Auburn Rd. corridor. He thought they would be the top two, keeping the political and the monetary sides in mind. He did not think that a motion was necessary. Chairperson Thompson agreed, and said that staff just needed direction about the primary and secondary.

Ms. Lyons asked if staff would be looking at costs. Ms. Kidorf thought that they could get some ranges of costs. The Brooklands would be significantly more to do, because they had no information. Winkler Mill work was done with the 2002 survey. For the first two priorities, she could write up what would need to be done for each, for example, the research, the photos and the mechanics.

Ms. McKinnon stated that there would have to be transparency for people in the neighborhoods. If they were out photographing, people would

wonder why. She was not objecting to anything, but it seemed as if they had to somehow let people know their purpose and how it could benefit people.

Mr. Tischer felt that would be part of the whole education process built into the plan they would undertake when they started to survey, whether it was door to door leaflets or another method of communication. They had to let people know that there might be someone in front of their house taking a picture or two. Chairperson Thompson said that it would not involve going onto someone's property. It would be no different than when Google drove by and took pictures. They did not ask. He agreed that it would be part of the education process. Again, it all hinged on Council, which might choose to do nothing.

Ms. Janulis said that initially when she had asked the timeline for resurveying, she was told six to nine months for both districts. She suggested that when it was a little more defined, that Ms. Kidorf could give them the timeline for just Winkler Mill. If that would only take four to six months, it might be more beneficial to get the shorter project out of the way and then work on the bigger project, which would take a couple of years. They could feel assured that they had accomplished something worthwhile.

Chairperson Thompson wondered how much of a benefit it would be for the HDC/HDSC to have an idea of the time and budget ranges for the order they proposed to Council. He felt that it would be helpful. Dr. Stamps agreed. If staff could come back and let them know how long and how much, it would be very useful to help make an educated decision. Chairperson Thompson summarized that they had at least narrowed it down to two, and it was a matter of which order they wanted to propose to Council.

Mr. Tischer thought that if they could know the costs using volunteers or using a professional company, which would be different, it would be great to have those options.

Ms. Calderwood felt that community involvement was part of the hype. It involved people and it built community, and that was only a positive and a great approach and less expensive.

Dr. Stamps remarked that he loved volunteers for the first two or three times they showed up and the next six times they did not. He liked community involvement, and he felt it was important. If they really wanted

to get something done and they were depending on volunteers, they would have to set a standard and be good motivators.

Ms. Lyons asked if the City decided not to do any of the options if that would be a problem for their classification. Ms. Kidorf said that they would just have to tell the State what they came up with and tried to do and what Council said. She knew that not all of the 30 communities were doing active surveys. She did not really think it would be a problem.

Mr. Tischer asked staff if they had a good idea of what the HDS/HDSC was looking for. Ms. Kidorf agreed that they did, and that she would be happy to write something up. If they did not have a reason to meet between October and January, she suggested that she could email some information. Ms. Kapelanski said that she could, but no one could comment on anything.

Ms. Janulis agreed that the members could not vote, but she thought that if they were given the information, they could tell staff whether or not they thought a meeting was needed. Chairperson Thompson felt that the safest thing would be to schedule another meeting, even if it was short. They wanted to be compliant with the Open Meetings Act. He expected to see a broad range of costs, because it was too difficult to get specific numbers without having enough information. They could get an idea of which could be done the soonest.

Ms. Kidorf said that she would put information together, and if they had an application for November, they would talk about it then. If not, they could meet on January 9, which would be early enough to get everything ready for Council. Chairperson Thompson added that even if they did not meet until January 9, they could have election of officers to determine who would present to Council in addition to staff.

Dr. Stamps said that in coming up with the cost estimates, he knew that the 2002 survey looked at x number of properties, and there was cost data that could be used.

Mr. Tischer noted that a couple of members would be up for re-appointment in December. Ms. Kapelanski thought that it might make more sense to meet in December. Chairperson Thompson said that they would plan on that, which would give staff extra time to get prepared for the joint meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Stamps asked the status of the barn on Crooks. Ms. Kapelanski advised that Mr. Sage of Building went there. He thought it looked okay, and he would be keeping an eye on it. Dr. Stamps concluded that they were doing their job of monitoring. Ms. Kidorf said that she had two calls, one from a gentleman who wanted to build a senior living house on the property and use the barn. Another woman wanted to use the barn for weddings. Both had zoning/use issues, but people were trying to think about how to creatively use the property.

Ms. Kapelanski reminded the members to watch their emails after the election of new Council members. They would start looking at dates for a joint meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Regular HDC and HDSC meetings are scheduled for November 13, 2019 (subsequently cancelled).

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the HDC/HDSC and upon motion by Ms. Janulis, seconded by Ms. Lyons, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the Joint Meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Jason R. Thompson, Chairperson
Historic Districts Commission

Charles Tischer, Secretary

Julie Granthen, Chairperson
Historic Districts Study Committee

Darlene Janulis, Secretary