



December 11, 2023

Mrs. Jennifer MacDonald
Planning Specialist City of
Rochester Hills 1000 Rochester
Hills Dr.
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Jennifer:

Below is the Response to the comments regarding the city's historic consultants review Recently for the Putmans Residence Located at 947 Tienken Rd.

Putnam Residence Narrative

To begin, our primary goal is to preserve the original home—the 2-story portion of the house. The one-story addition is not part of the original 1870s house. Furthermore, the entire dwelling is not properly tied to the foundation, making it vulnerable to deterioration and decay. By relocating the small barn, we have the opportunity to provide a stable, concrete-poured foundation, aligning with Sec. 118-33 of the Rochester Hills building ordinance, "Duty to maintain and repair." This section stipulates that every resource in any historic district shall be maintained to:

- (1) Prevent deterioration of exterior walls or vertical supports, roofs, horizontal members, exterior chimneys, exterior plaster or mortar, and any documented exterior architectural feature.
- (2) Prevent deterioration by the weather due to inadequate weatherproofing of exterior walls, roofs, and foundations, including the necessity of replacing broken windows and doors if the deterioration has or is likely to cause structural weakness or otherwise affect the continuation of the resource as a historic resource.

This change will not affect the defining character of the building. Moreover, the relocation ensures that Designhaus safeguards its unique features and charm.

Secondly, the addition represents what constitutes a habitable environment by today's standards. Properties change over time to reflect societal and cultural changes, adding to the timeless legacy of the existing building and breathing new life into the structure. Additions that expand on existing structures are not prohibited by the National Parks Service, as long as the addition is subservient to the original, a larger floor plan should be considered. We argue that placing the new addition nestled between trees, while the existing two-story structure remains situated alongside the road and in front of the proposed structure, minimizes primary views to the addition while accentuating the original, resulting in the historic house being visually more dominant. The addition will remain a pleasant backdrop to the existing building, leading into the third topic of discussion.

Our design respects the original while differentiating the addition from the old, complementing the traditional homesteads elements. The design will be constructed with 4" vinyl siding in contrast to the existing 6" cedar planks. The windows will be proportionally similar but larger in scale with a more modern style of trim. The

white of the proposed windows will be complementary but not derivative. The stone for the proposed retaining wall will be sourced directly from the site, complementing the color of the existing brick. The roof will be constructed with asphalt shingles, as opposed to the wood shake shingles of the existing.

In summary, by approving the Putnam residence project, you would be preserving a piece of American architectural history, improving the property's curb appeal, and allowing the continued development of a project that seeks to incorporate the building within its design, continuing its history into the modern day.