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CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS

**P**lanning and  
Development

FROM: Derek Delacourt 

DATE: October 13, 2008

TO: Planning Commissioners

RE: Frank Farm

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The City's Historic Districts Study Committee has completed a Preliminary Report regarding the proposed designation of the Frank Farm, which would be comprised of three parcels located on the south side of Auburn Road, east of John R and west of Dequindre, further identified as 1290 E. Auburn Road; 1304 E. Auburn Road; 1344 E. Auburn Road and 1356 E. Auburn Road. The largest parcel is adjacent to the Reuther Middle School and contains two homes addressed as 1344 and 1356 E. Auburn Road. A copy of the Preliminary Report is attached.

Section 118-130 (Duties of Study Committee) of the City's Historical Preservation Ordinance requires that the Preliminary Report be transmitted to the City's Planning Commission for review and recommendation.

The Preliminary Report was also transmitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for review and comment. A copy of the State's comments is attached.

The Ordinance also requires the Study Committee to hold a Public Hearing to take public comment regarding the proposed designation, which was done on April 30, 2008. A copy of the Minutes from the April 30, 2008 Public Hearing are attached.

The Planning Commission is being asked to review the Preliminary Report with a view towards whether the proposed designation would have any impact on the City's Master Land Use Plan or any other development related issues.

Following is a proposed motion for your consideration in this matter:

**RESOLVED** that upon review of the Historic Districts Study Committee Preliminary Report regarding the proposed designation of Frank Farm property (identified as 1290 E. Auburn Road; 1304 E. Auburn Road; 1344 E. Auburn Road and 1356 E. Auburn Road), the City of Rochester Hills Planning Commission has determined that the proposed designation **will/will not** have any impact on the property with respect to the City's Master Land Use Plan or any other development related issues.

Attachments: Preliminary Report  
Location Map  
Survey Sheet  
State Historic Preservation Office Comments  
04-30-08 Public Hearing Minutes

PRELIMINARY HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT  
FRANK FARM HISTORIC DISTRICT  
ROCHESTER HILLS, MICHIGAN

INTRODUCTION

In 2002 the city of Rochester Hills engaged Jane C. Busch, LLC, in collaboration with Hamilton Anderson Associates, Inc., to undertake a survey of local historic districts. The survey was designed to augment and update information about the city's designated and potential local historic districts. The recommendations of the survey included designating the Frank Farm on East Auburn Road as a local historic district. Pursuant to Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act (PA 169 of 1970, as amended) and Chapter 118 of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances, the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Study Committee has prepared this report on the Frank Farm.

CHARGE OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE

The historic districts study committee was established by the Rochester Hills City Council on December 15, 1999, pursuant to the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 118, as amended in 1999. The study committee is a standing committee charged with conducting the duties and activities of a study committee on a continuing basis. These duties include inventory, research, and preparation of historic district study committee reports to establish or eliminate proposed historic districts. Study committee members serve two year terms. A list of current committee members follows.

STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*John Dziurman*, a registered architect with a practice focused on historic preservation, meets the federal professional qualification standards for historic architect. He has served on the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission for twenty years, many of those years as chairperson.

*Peggy Schodowski* has a strong background in research and analysis, and is currently employed part-time as Marketing Director/Research Analyst for a locally-owned company. She has recently provided research assistance to a local private school regarding the historic background of their school building, and has also assisted several local communities with research about historic buildings.

*Richard Stamps* is an associate professor of anthropology at Oakland University. A professional archaeologist with a strong interest in history, he is also a member of the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission.

*Jason Thompson* is chairperson of the Historic Districts Study Committee, and is a member of the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Commission. He has received a bachelor's degree in history from Oakland University, and a master's degree in public

administration from Oakland University. His academic and work activities include a strong background in research and grant writing.

*Gerard Verschueren* has been involved with many of the city's boards and commissions over the last fifteen years. Originally from the Netherlands, he owned a European company specializing in the repair and restoration of churches and castles. He was previously a historical building advisor and consultant for the state of Ohio and a consultant for the Detroit Roofing Consulting Service regarding historical buildings.

*Lavere Webster* is an art and antiques conservator who lives in one of the city's designated local historic districts. He has served on the board of directors of the Rochester-Avon Historical Society for more than six years.

*Pamela Whateley* is a minister and healing counselor interested in the city's building and development. She served for two years on the subcommittee for the city's Earl Borden Historic Preservation Award.

*Jane C. Busch*, historic preservation consultant, assisted the study committee in its work.

## INVENTORY

A photographic inventory of the proposed district was conducted in 2002 as part of the Rochester Hills historic districts survey. Copies of the inventory forms are located at the Rochester Hills Planning Department, the Rochester Hills Museum, and the State Historic Preservation Office. Additional photographs taken in September 2007 as part of the preparation of this report include the Holtz property, which was not part of the 2002 survey.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

The proposed Frank Farm Historic District is located on East Auburn Road in section 36—the southeast corner—of the city of Rochester Hills. The farm is currently divided into three parcels that total 7.93 acres, the remnants of a farm that in the late nineteenth century contained 128 acres, the entire northwest quarter of section 36. The Frank Farm Historic District contains all of the extant buildings associated with the Frank family, consisting of five houses, two garages, workshop, milk house, tool shed, pole barn, and well house. There are also three small storage sheds of recent construction and three temporary structures of undetermined purpose. The district is L-shaped with the bottom of the "L" extending along East Auburn Road. The land is fairly level. Four of the houses are arranged in a line facing the road; from west to east these are 1290, 1304, 1344, and 1356 E. Auburn Road. Outbuildings, including a small fifth house, are behind the houses. Each of the four main houses is accessed by a driveway. An additional driveway enters the district to the west of 1344 and extends to the tool shed and pole barn that are farther back on the property, connecting to the driveways for the houses at 1344 and 1356 to form a semi-circle. The driveway to 1290 is gravel; the driveway to 1356 is paved with asphalt in the front yard; the remainder is dirt.

The north-south property lines at the edges of the district and between each parcel in the district are marked by fences. The western boundary of the district is marked by a wood stockade fence with a low woven wire fence inside of it. The lot lines for 1304 are marked by a chain link fence on the east and south sides; wood fencing on the west side, part of the east side, and dividing the front and rear yards; and woven wire fencing on the sides of the front yard. A chain link fence marks the eastern boundary of the district. The yards immediately around the houses are mostly grass interspersed with trees, decorative shrubs, bedding plants, and flowers. There are a number of large spruce and deciduous trees, including walnut and maple. There are several clusters of large lilac bushes. Behind 1344 and 1356 are large beds of vegetables and flowers, berry bushes, a small corn field, and numerous pear and apple trees. Crops include potatoes, broccoli, zucchini, cucumbers, beans, tomatoes, sunflowers, and gladiolas. The southern portion of the district, south of the pole barn, is a mown field, with a hedge marking the southern boundary.

From west to east and north to south, the buildings are as follows:

**George K. Holtz House** (1290 E. Auburn Road), contributing

One-story, gable-roof T-plan frame house with basement. Concrete block foundation, aluminum siding, asphalt shingle roof. Two entrance doors on west side of house, both with concrete steps. Door toward rear has a gable-roof entrance porch. Awning windows in front extension; mostly 1/1 double-hung windows in remainder of house. Metal chimney in roof of front extension; brick chimney in rear. Built 1945; east side addition 1963.

**Garage**, non-contributing

Front-gabled, two-car frame garage with concrete foundation, aluminum siding, asphalt shingle roof. Built ca. 1946 as one-car garage; expanded into two-car garage in 1978.

**Workshop**, contributing

One-story, rectangular, gable-roof frame building with concrete foundation and asphalt shingle roof. Aluminum siding on three sides; corrugated fiberglass on south (rear) side. Pedestrian door on north side; double swing garage doors with windows on west end. 1/1 double-hung windows on north and east sides. Built in 1950s.

**Lucius L. Frank House** (1304 E. Auburn Road), contributing

Two-story, L-plan, gable-roof frame house with basement; one-story wing on east end and one-story rear ell on west end. Partial-width front porch. Enclosed front and rear porches on wing. The enclosed front and rear porches on the wing have concrete block foundations and asbestos siding. The remainder of the house has a stone foundation and wood clapboard siding. Two entrance doors in front and two in rear. 2/2 double-hung windows in front-gabled section; 1/1 double-hung windows elsewhere. Asphalt shingle roof. Newer brick chimney on front of house; concrete block chimney on west end; older brick chimney in rear ell. Built ca. 1866 as one-and-a-half story upright with one or two one-story wings; a photograph of the house taken before 1900 shows two wings. In the

early 1900s, possibly ca. 1910, the upright and west wing were raised to two stories, and front porches were added to both wings. The remodeled house contained two kitchens—in the east wing and in the west rear ell—and housed two families.

**Brown house/hog house**, contributing

One-story, side-gabled frame house with concrete foundation, aluminum siding, and asphalt shingle roof. Front door into east side. Sliding windows on east side; double-hung windows on north end and west side. Concrete block chimney. Built as a hog house that stood farther back on the lot, near the barn. In the early 1950s George Holtz moved the hog house closer to the Lucius Frank house and enlarged and remodeled it as a residence for rental income. The family called it the brown house.

**Loren B. Frank House** (1344 E. Auburn Road), contributing

Two-story, gable-roof T-plan frame house with basement. Concrete foundation, aluminum siding, and asphalt shingle roof. Large front entrance porch with steeply-pitched gable roof supported by two square wood columns. One-story enclosed rear porch on east side. Wolmanized wood deck with pergola roof on west side toward rear. Front door; rear door into enclosed rear porch; second-story rear door opening to roof of rear porch. Mostly double-hung 1/1 windows. Brick chimney on west side. The house was originally a one-and-a-half story upright with a one-story wing and stood on Dequindre Road. It was likely built in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The Franks moved the house to its current location ca. 1916. On the eve of World War II, ca. 1941, they cut off the wing and turned it to parallel to the upright, raised the house to two stories, changed the roof line so that the front portion is side-gabled, and added the current front porch.

**Garage**, contributing

One-and-a-half story, front-gabled frame two-car garage. Clapboard siding and asphalt shingle roof. Sliding garage doors on overhead track; walk-in door on east side. 1/1 double-hung window in each gable end. Built ca. 1940.

**Milk house**, contributing

Small one-story frame building with drop siding and standing seam metal shed roof. Door on north end. One fixed six-pane window on each end. Two swing-up wood panels on west side. Exposed rafter ends. Built by Harold Weaver during the Depression as a roadside stand where he sold cherry pop on the opposite side of Auburn Road. The Franks moved it across the road to their farm to use as a milk house. Currently used for storage.

**Tool shed**, contributing

Gable-roof frame building with log foundation, a combination of vertical plank and plywood siding, and a corrugated metal roof. Doors on east and south sides. Eight-pane fixed window on north side; window opening on east side. Built late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Originally stood further west on the farm; Ray Frank moved it to its present location. Currently used for storage.

**Pole barn**, non-contributing

Side-gabled pole barn on concrete slab with metal siding. Shed-roof rear extension with plywood siding. Corrugated metal roof with some fiberglass panels. Built 1979.

**Ray B. Frank House** (1356 E. Auburn Road), contributing

One-and-a-half story, side-gabled frame house with basement. One-story addition on west side, set back from front. Cross-gabled projection on east side of front façade. Shallow wood deck in front; wood deck in rear. Poured concrete foundation; brick veneer and aluminum siding; asphalt shingle roof. One door on front façade, one on west side, two in rear. Two front picture windows with sidelights. Shed roof dormer in rear with small skylight adjoining. Basement windows. Most of remaining windows are 1/1 double-hung. Brick chimney at peak of roof. Built 1949–50. Enclosed porch built on west side in 1967; remodeled into dining room addition in 1972. Rear deck built 1990s; front deck built 2005.

**Well house**, contributing

Front-gabled frame well house with horizontal plank walls and wood shingle roof. Concrete steps descend into doorway in east gable end; plank door is currently inside the building. Small window opening in west gable end. Hooks in roof rafters are from previous use of roof on smoke house. Built 1970s using roof from older stone smokehouse on the farm.

COUNT OF HISTORIC AND NON-HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Frank Farm Historic District contains ten historic (contributing) and two non-historic (non-contributing) resources.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Frank Farm Historic District consists of three parcels:

70-15-36-126-004 (1290 E. Auburn Rd.)

70-15-36-126-005 (1304 E. Auburn Rd.)

70-15-36-126-029 (1344 and 1356 E. Auburn Rd.)

The district is bounded as follows:

Beginning at the northwest corner of parcel #70-15-36-126-004, proceed southward 400 feet along the western lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-004, then eastward 100 feet along the southern lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-004 to the southeast corner of the parcel, then continue eastward 69.35 feet along the lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-029, then southward 335.23 feet along the western lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-029 to the southwest corner of the parcel, then eastward 375 feet along the southern lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-029 to the southeast corner of the parcel, then northward 736.57 feet along the eastern lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-029 to the northeast corner of the parcel, then westward 300.84 feet along the northern lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-029 to the northeast corner of parcel #70-15-36-126-005, then continue westward 144.35 feet along the northern lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-005 to the northwest corner of the

parcel, then continue 100 feet along the northern lot line of parcel #70-15-36-126-004 to the place of beginning.

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Frank Farm Historic District contains all of the extant buildings constructed by Lucius L. Frank and his descendents and the former farmland that is still held by the family. Until the late 1950s, the Frank Farm consisted of the entire northwest quarter of section 36, approximately 128 acres. To the east of the district, on land that was formerly part of the farm, is Reuther Middle School, built in 1973. To the west of the district, on land that was formerly part of the farm, is the Avon Manor Estates subdivision, built in the late 1950s and 1960s. Where it fronts East Auburn and John R. roads, most of the former farm consists of residential development. Away from the road, the southern part of the former farm is undeveloped; much of it is woodland. North of the district on the north side of East Auburn Road is a fire station and a mix of residential development dating from pre-World War II to the 1990s.

#### HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT

A collection of predominantly Archaic period Indian artifacts gathered on the Frank Farm indicates the presence of native people prior to the arrival of European Americans. The recorded history of the Frank Farm began in the early nineteenth century, when John Frank purchased land in the northwest quarter of section 36. John Frank (1799–1887) was part of the initial wave of settlement of Avon Township, arriving in 1823, six years after the first white settler in the township.<sup>1</sup> John came from Vermont, unlike the majority of Avon Township settlers, who came from New York. In July 1823 he wrote to his mother in Vermont: “I arrived in the territory of Michigan the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, I had rather a tedious journey, after traveling two hundred miles my feet became so sore that I was obliged to take the stage which cost me 25 dollars more than if I had traveled on foot. My whole expense amounted to fifty dollars.”<sup>2</sup> John purchased 97 acres of land from the government—the east half of the southeast quarter of section 26. While he was building a log house on his land, John boarded with the family of Cyrus Chipman, who two years earlier had settled on the southwest quarter of section 26. In December 1823 John Frank married Cyrus Chipman’s daughter, Arabella (1805–1846).

Following his marriage, John worked building the territorial road from Detroit to Ypsilanti and as a surveyor in the western part of the Michigan territory in addition to working his farm. In 1831 he joined the Michigan territorial militia and by 1837 had been promoted to Colonel. In that year he deeded land on his farm to the school district for the district #3 school, which became known as the Frank school. In about 1840 John built a larger house for his growing family. John and Arabella had eleven children, of

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<sup>1</sup> When Oakland County was created in 1820, the area that would become Avon Township was part of Oakland Township. Avon Township was separated from Oakland Township in 1835. In 1984 the township incorporated as the city of Rochester Hills.

<sup>2</sup> John Frank to Hannah Frank, 13 July 1823. Typed transcription, Ray Frank file, Local History Collection, Rochester Hills Public Library.

whom seven lived to adulthood: Alta, Mary Ann, John C., Nancy, Edwin, Arabella O., and Lucius. Arabella Chipman Frank died in 1846, and in 1849 John married Adeline Kettell (1799–1886) of Troy, Michigan. John and Adeline had no children. John Frank's financial success is evidenced by additional land purchases in Troy and Avon townships, among them the northwest quarter of section 36 in Avon Township. By 1841 he owned the west half of the northwest quarter, and between 1855 and 1860 he purchased the east half of the northwest quarter.

Lucius Lyon Frank (1843–1939) was the youngest of John and Arabella's children to live to adulthood. Lucius stayed on his father's farm until August 1862, when he enlisted to fight in the Civil War, joining Company B of the Twenty-Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry. Lucius served thirty-five months in the Union Army, receiving his honorable discharge in Detroit in July 1865. Letters that Lucius and his brother Edwin—who also served—wrote to their family at home describe their wartime experiences and refer to events at home such as the harvest and who was getting married. In a February 1863 letter to his father written from Camp Ella Bishop in Kentucky, Lucius laid out a detailed plan to have his father invest in sheep on Lucius's behalf. "I want my money to increase as fast as it can, so that I shall have something when I get home. If I should have to stay 3 years you know I will be 21 and past when I get home."<sup>3</sup> In 1865 Lucius returned to Avon Township and to farming. He farmed his father's land on shares and built a house (figure 1) on the land in section 36. In 1867 Lucius married Adeline Kent (1841–1923) of Boston. Adeline Kent's mother was the sister of Adeline Kettell Frank; apparently Lucius met his future wife when she was visiting her aunt in Michigan. Lucius and Adeline had eight children, of whom seven survived to adulthood: John R., Lucius H., Joseph, William, Kate, Harry, and Loren.

The 1870 U.S. census of the products of agriculture lists John Frank as owner of 240 acres of farmland, which approximates the total acreage of the two farms in section 26 and section 36 as shown on an 1872 atlas map. Though the two farms were listed under John Frank, other sources indicate that by then Lucius was responsible for much if not all of the farm work. The Franks' livestock consisted of twelve horses, seven milk cows, four other cattle, forty-four sheep, and ten swine. Crops consisted of winter wheat, Indian corn, oats, buckwheat, wood, Irish potatoes, hay, and clover seed. The Franks produced six hundred pounds of butter. With wheat and wool as its leading products, the Franks' farm operation was typical of Avon Township and Oakland County at that time.

The 1880 census for agriculture lists Lucius L. as the person conducting the farm (a total of 230 acres), specifying that he rented the farm for a share of products. The census shows that some significant changes had taken place in the ten year interval since 1870. The number of horses had decreased to seven, while the number of sheep had increased to seventy-three. There were thirty-two chickens, which were not enumerated in 1870. The Franks' wheat production decreased from 475 to 290 bushels, oats decreased from 350 to 282 bushels, and buckwheat stayed the same at 100 bushels. Corn production increased from 350 to 400 bushels, and potatoes increased from 200 to 775 bushels.

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<sup>3</sup> Lucius L. Frank to John Frank, 18 February 1863. Typed transcription, Lucius L. Frank file, Rochester Hills Museum.



Whereas the 1870 census did not list any orchard products for the Franks, in 1880 they had 180 bearing apple trees and 12 bearing peach trees. To some extent the changes in the Frank farm are consistent with broader changes in Oakland County farming—wheat declined from its peak in 1870, while potatoes and fruit increased in importance. Sheep farming, however, began a steady decline in Oakland County after 1880, whereas the Franks increased their flock appreciably.

Presumably John Frank bequeathed the farm in section 36 to Lucius; an 1896 map of Avon Township shows Lucius as owner of a 121 acre farm—the entire northwest quarter except for 8 ½ acres in the southwest corner that was owned by Lucius’s brother Edwin. In 1902 the former John Frank Farm in section 26 became part of D. M. Ferry & Company’s 568 acre Oakview Seed Farm, and John Frank’s house was occupied by seed farm personnel. Eventually the house was moved to Hamlin Road; it is no longer extant.

In 1909 Kate Frank (1876–1958), the only daughter of Lucius and Adeline, married Henry Holtz (1881–1934), who worked at Oakview Seed Farm. The couple made their home with Kate’s parents.<sup>4</sup> It was at about this time that the Franks enlarged the home that Lucius had built following the Civil War, raising the center portion and west wing to two stories. A photo of the remodeled house shows Lucius, Adeline, Kate, and Kate’s eldest child, Anna Belle, who was born in March 1912 (figure 2). The Holtz family lived in the west side of the house, where they had their own kitchen, and their five children grew up there: Anna Belle, Frank, Mary, Fred, and George.

Loren Burch Frank (1882–1954) was the only one of Lucius and Adeline’s sons to stay and work on the family farm. In 1914 Loren married Alberta Uren (1886–1966) of Lake Linden, Michigan. Shortly after the marriage, the Franks moved a house to the farm from Dequindre Road to serve as the young couple’s residence (figure 3). Loren and Alberta’s only child, Ray Burgan, was born in this house in 1917. By 1920 Loren had taken charge of the farm, though Lucius retained ownership of the property until his death. The 1920 population census describes the farm as a general farming operation. The livestock and crops were much the same as in 1880. Potatoes were the main cash crop; Ray recalled that they stored hundreds of bushels of potatoes in the stone cellar of his grandfather Lucius’s house to sell during the winter. They had eight Guernsey milk cows, but the emphasis of their livestock operation was on their one hundred sheep. Loren gained renown for the quality of the wool from his sheep, winning state, national, and international awards in the 1930s. By then dairy farming predominated in Oakland County—the number of sheep in the county declined from 151,700 in 1880 to 24,700 in 1930.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the Frank Farm was more unusual in the 1920s than it had been in the 1870s. At 118 acres, the Frank Farm was also significantly larger than most Avon Township farms, which averaged 65 acres in 1939.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Although a 1930 atlas map shows Henry Holtz as owner of the 8 ½ acre parcel in the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of section 36—the parcel owned in 1896 by Edwin Frank—there is no evidence that Henry and Kate Holtz and their children lived there.

<sup>5</sup> Eula Pray, *A History of Avon Township, 1820–1940* (Ann Arbor: Nonce Press, 1986), 155–56.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

Ray Frank helped with chores on the farm as soon as he was old enough. He recalls the numerous outbuildings that were needed to prepare products for market as well as produce much of the family's own food. Directly behind the Lucius Frank house were a wood shed, honey house, workshop, tool shed, and hog house. Further east were a cooker house, where hogs were scalded after they were killed; a smoke house; and two chicken houses, accommodating between fifty and one hundred chickens. When fresh milk became an important product, the Franks moved a roadside stand built across Auburn Road to the farm and used it as a milk house. The centerpiece of the farm was the 90 x 24 foot barn, of which the oldest portion had been built by Lucius after the Civil War. The barn had stalls for horses and cows on the east end; a grain bin; hay bay; buggy shed; corn crib; and a sheep shed attached to the rear.<sup>7</sup> By 1938 the barn was wired for electricity. At that date both houses had electric lights, but they were still heated by stoves. Each house had its own outhouse and garage.

When Lucius Frank died in 1939, he divided the farm among his seven children. Kate Holtz had continued to live with her father following the 1934 death of her husband Henry from injuries sustained in an explosion at the seed farm. Lucius left his house and thirty-six acres to Kate. Loren Frank inherited forty-two acres that included the house where his family lived. Loren subsequently purchased his brothers' shares of the farm, but Kate retained hers, continuing to live in the old house. Loren and Ray carried on the farming operation. In 1941, when Ray was contemplating getting married, Loren and Ray remodeled and enlarged their house. Ray did the drawings for the project, which involved cutting off the one-story wing, turning it to parallel the one-and-a-half-story upright, raising the house to two stories, and building a new front porch (figure 4). They also modernized the house's mechanical systems, installing an oil furnace and indoor plumbing with a hot water heating system. They finished the work as the war started. Ray remained on the farm during World War II, as farming was considered essential to the war effort.

In 1945 Ray Frank married Janice Guthrie (b. 1926) of Avon Township. In that year George K. Holtz (1924–1995), the youngest child of Kate and Henry, returned from service in the U.S. Navy and built a small, one-story house just west of the Lucius Frank house, where his mother still lived. George married Myrna Miner (b. 1927) of Oakland County in 1947. He worked for Chrysler. By 1949 Ray and Janice had two children and a third on the way, and they began building a house to the east of the house where they were living with Ray's parents. They designed the house themselves, and when the construction workers went on strike, did much of the construction themselves. Completed in 1950, the one-and-a-half story house had a fireplace and picture window in the living room, a dining nook in the kitchen, and four bedrooms. A large freezer allowed them to reduce the amount of time and effort they spent canning fruits and vegetables. In 1952 Ray began work part time at A & P, while he and his father continued a full-time farming operation. They had about one hundred sheep, eight milk cows, four brood sows, as many as one hundred chickens, and a team of horses. Their primary crops were wheat, oats, corn, and potatoes.

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<sup>7</sup> The barn burned in 1979.

Loren Frank died in 1954. At the time of his death he was chairman of the Avon Township Zoning Board and a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals—planning for future land use in the township even while he represented its disappearing agricultural heritage. The following year Ray began to work full time at A & P. At first he returned home in the evenings to take care of the animals, but soon after the Franks sold their livestock. George Holtz moved the hog house away from the barn and closer to his mother’s house, remodeling it as a rental house to bring in income for his mother. Kate Holtz died in 1958, and the break-up of the farm began soon after. Except for a roughly one-acre parcel containing George Holtz’s house, the western two-thirds of the farm was sold, including the Lucius Frank house. In the late 1950s and 1960s the Avon Manor Estates subdivision was built in the northwest portion of the former farm. Some years later Ray Frank sold about thirty-six of the forty-two acres that Loren Frank had inherited—the eastern side of the farm—to the school district. Reuther Middle School was built there in 1973. The six acres that the Franks retained contained Loren and Ray Frank’s houses and the barn, until the latter burned in 1979. Ray retired from A & P in 1984. Ray and Janice have continued to grow and sell fruit and vegetables. Though it is a small operation, it is the only remnant of commercial farming in Rochester Hills.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISTRICT

Michigan’s *Local Historic Districts Act*, PA 169 of 1970, as amended, requires local historic district study committees to be guided by the evaluation criteria for the National Register of Historic Places in evaluating the significance of historic resources. The act also requires study committees to be guided by any criteria established or approved by the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (Section 3(1)(c)). Shortly after the 1992 amendments to the *Local Historic Districts Act*, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network issued a guide to the amendments that explained how the National Register criteria should be used: “While communities must be ‘guided’ by the National Register criteria, they are not bound by them; communities are free to establish criteria which are guided by the national criteria but relate to local conditions, history, and character.”<sup>8</sup> In 2002, the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries issued criteria that elaborate on historic district boundary determinations and single resource districts. Chapter 118, “Historic Districts,” of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances reiterates the requirement for study committees to be guided by the National Register criteria and any criteria established or approved by the Department of History, Arts and Libraries (Section 118-130(3)).

In accordance with these legal documents and guidelines, the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Study Committee has determined that the Frank Farm Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with a pattern of historical events that has contributed significantly to Rochester Hills history. The areas of significance are agriculture and social history. The district’s period of significance is

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<sup>8</sup> Michigan Historic Preservation Network, “A Guide to Michigan’s Local Historic Districts Act” (Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Lansing, Mi., n.d., photocopy), 3. The Michigan Historic Preservation Network was one of the primary authors of the amendments to the Local Historic Districts Act.

from 1865, when Lucius L. Frank established the Frank Farm, to 1958, when Kate Frank Holtz died and family members began to sell off portions of the farm.

### **The National Register Criteria**

**The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:**

#### **A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.**

The Frank Farm represents three generations of the Frank family, who trace their presence in Avon Township/Rochester Hills to the arrival of John Frank in 1823 and who still occupy the farm today. The Frank family may have the longest tenure of any family in Rochester Hills. The Franks built, moved, and altered buildings on the farm, adapting them as needed as the family grew and changed and as Avon Township grew and changed. Until the mid-twentieth century Avon Township was predominantly a farming community, and the Frank Farm was a full-time farming operation. Changes on the farm after World War II represent the transition to a non-farm economy, although the Franks are unique in Rochester Hills in that they have not abandoned farming completely. The history of the Frank family and the farm buildings is unusually well documented, both through written documents and photographs that preserve the earlier history and through the memories of Ray Frank, born on the farm in 1917. This history provides insight into the function and meaning of ordinary-looking buildings and adds to the value of the farm as a representative of the city's history.

The primary buildings on the farm are four houses that document three generations of the Frank family. Lucius Frank, returning Civil War veteran, built a modest, vernacular Greek Revival style house ca. 1866 when he started his farm and his family, then enlarged it and added a second kitchen ca. 1910 to accommodate his daughter's family. When Loren Frank started his family in 1914, the Franks moved a house from Dequindre Road to the farm. In 1941, when Ray Frank was contemplating marriage, he and his father enlarged and modernized this house. Following World War II, two members of the third generation built new houses on the family farm. In choosing to work for an auto manufacturer, George Holtz represented a pattern that had become increasingly common in Avon Township during the twentieth century. Yet he built his house and raised his family next door to his mother, who was still living in his grandfather's house. Ray Frank, on the other hand, represented the persistence of farming. When his family of four taxed the capacity of the house they shared with his parents, Ray built a new house next door. The houses show some influences from current architectural styles—Arts and Crafts porch columns on the remodeled Loren Frank house, a fashionable picture window on Ray Frank's house. Yet more than current styles, the houses reflect the needs of the family, resulting in distinctive designs.

The farm outbuildings demonstrate the same self-reliance and resourcefulness as the houses. When fresh milk became an important product for them, the Franks moved a roadside stand built across Auburn Road to the farm and used it as a milk house. About the time that they enlarged and modernized their house, Loren and Ray Frank tore down their old garage and built a new one. After the livestock were sold, George Holtz moved and remodeled the hog house into a house to bring in rental income, and built a workshop for himself. The tool shed was moved twice, and Ray reused the roof of the old smokehouse when he built a well house.

Ten out of the twelve buildings on the Frank Farm contribute to its historic significance. The Lucius Frank house looks very much as it did in 1913. The most visible exterior changes are the enclosure of the front and back porches on the east wing and a brick chimney on the front of the house, covering the diamond window in the gable. The addition of aluminum siding and some minor changes in the rear have not significantly altered the Loren B. Frank house, which retains its distinctive appearance. As was typical of small houses built in the early post-World War II era, a side addition was made to the George Holtz house, which also received aluminum siding. The original L-plan house, however, with characteristic awning windows in front, is still readily evident. Similarly, a side addition made to the Ray Frank house is set back from the main house and easily distinguished from the original house; the same is true of the decks. As a farmstead, the integrity of the district is compromised by the loss of the historic barn in 1979. Nevertheless, the tool shed, milk house, and well house convey a sense of the agricultural history of the complex. Although the well house post-dates the period of significance for the district, it is counted as a contributing structure because it is a traditional agricultural building type, it has the roof of the older smokehouse, and it represents the same pattern of adapting to changing circumstances that characterizes the history of the Frank Farm. The landscape, with its vegetable gardens, cornfield, berry bushes, and fruit trees, is strikingly different from the nearby housing developments and school and is instrumental in establishing the historic feeling of the district.

With buildings spanning nearly a century, the Frank Farm represents the different periods in a family's history better than any other property in Rochester Hills. Its closest comparison would be the Van Hoosen Farm in the Stoney Creek Historic District, which was begun by Lemuel Taylor in 1823. The oldest building on the Van Hoosen Farm is the ca. 1840 farmhouse; however, the current appearance of the farmhouse dates to its remodeling in the 1920s. Except for the mid-nineteenth century Red House, which was moved to the farm in the 1950s, the extant buildings on the Van Hoosen Farm all date to the early twentieth century and primarily represent the 350-acre model dairy farm that Sarah Van Hoosen Jones created from her ancestors' farm. This represents a different aspect of Avon Township's agricultural history than is represented by the Frank Farm. Comparison may also be made to the Levi Cole Farm in the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District. Levi Cole purchased the land in 1825 and built the extant Greek Revival-style house ca. 1835–50. The farm remained in the family of Cole's son-in-law, Theodore Cook, into the early twentieth century. With two houses, a barn, milk house, chicken house, and storage building, the Cole Farm is one of the most intact farmsteads in Rochester Hills. At least two of the buildings, however—the barn and the second

house—were built after the farm had passed out of the family. Altogether, there are less than twenty farmsteads (consisting of a farmhouse and at least one agricultural outbuilding) left in Rochester Hills, representing a very small proportion of the 229 farms in Avon Township in 1939.<sup>9</sup> As long as they retain integrity, all of these farmsteads are worthy of preservation as representatives of the township's agricultural history.

**D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.**

Ray Frank's collection of artifacts found on the Frank Farm includes twelve points, two bifaces, two celts, and a bannerstone, dating primarily to the Archaic period. These artifacts were found throughout the farm, from what is now east of the Reuther school to John R. Road on the west. Further investigation is needed to determine the archaeological potential of the current historic district, which represents only a small portion of the former Frank Farm.

CONCLUSION

In sum, the Rochester Hills Historic Districts Study Committee finds that the Frank Farm is significant as the tangible presence of one family's long history in Avon Township. The Frank family and their farm embody the essential patterns of the township's history. The study committee recommends that the Frank Farm be designated as a local historic district.

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———. Interviews by Jane Busch. June 14, 2002 and September 7, 2007. Rochester Hills, Michigan.

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<sup>9</sup> Pray, *Avon Township*, 52.

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"Utica Wool Grower Wins in State, National and International." Undated newspaper clipping, Lauren B. Frank file, Rochester Hills Museum.





Figure 1. Lucius L. Frank House, before 1900. Courtesy of Ray Frank.

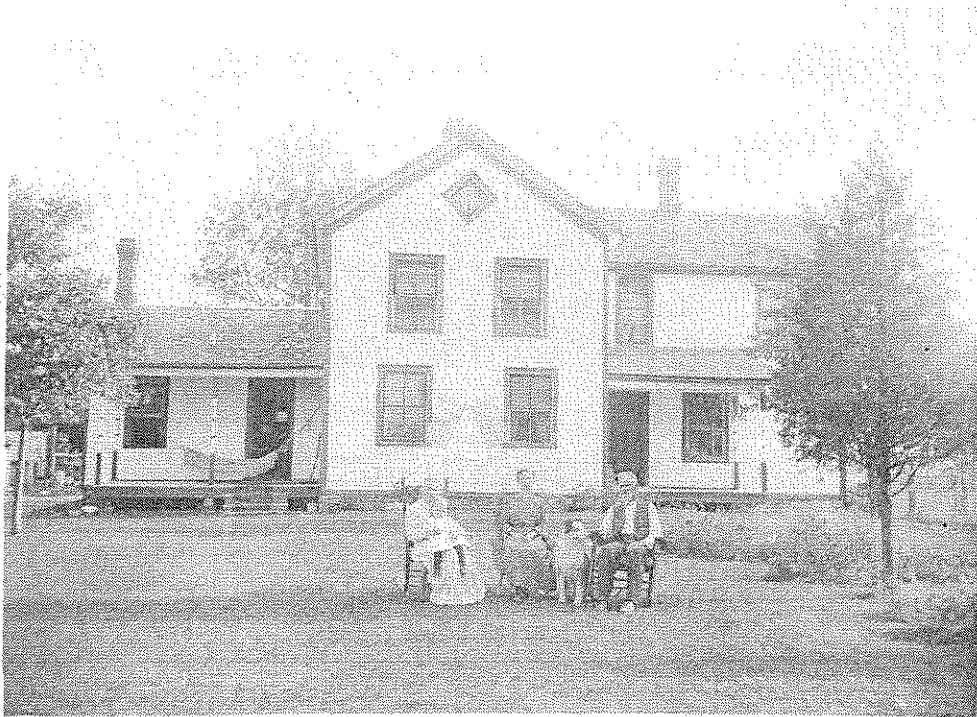


Figure 2. Lucius L. Frank House after remodeling, ca. 1913. From left to right: Adeline Frank holding Anna Bell Holtz, Kate Holtz, Lucius Frank. Courtesy of Ray Frank.



Figure 3. Loren B. Frank House, 1916. Courtesy of Ray Frank.

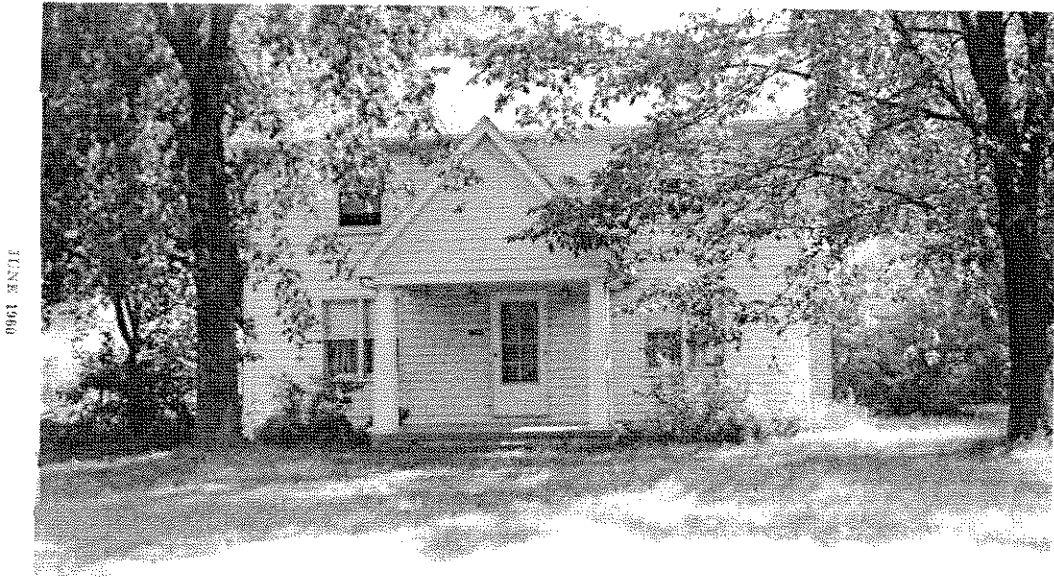


Figure 4. Loren B. Frank House after remodeling, 1960. Courtesy of Ray Frank.

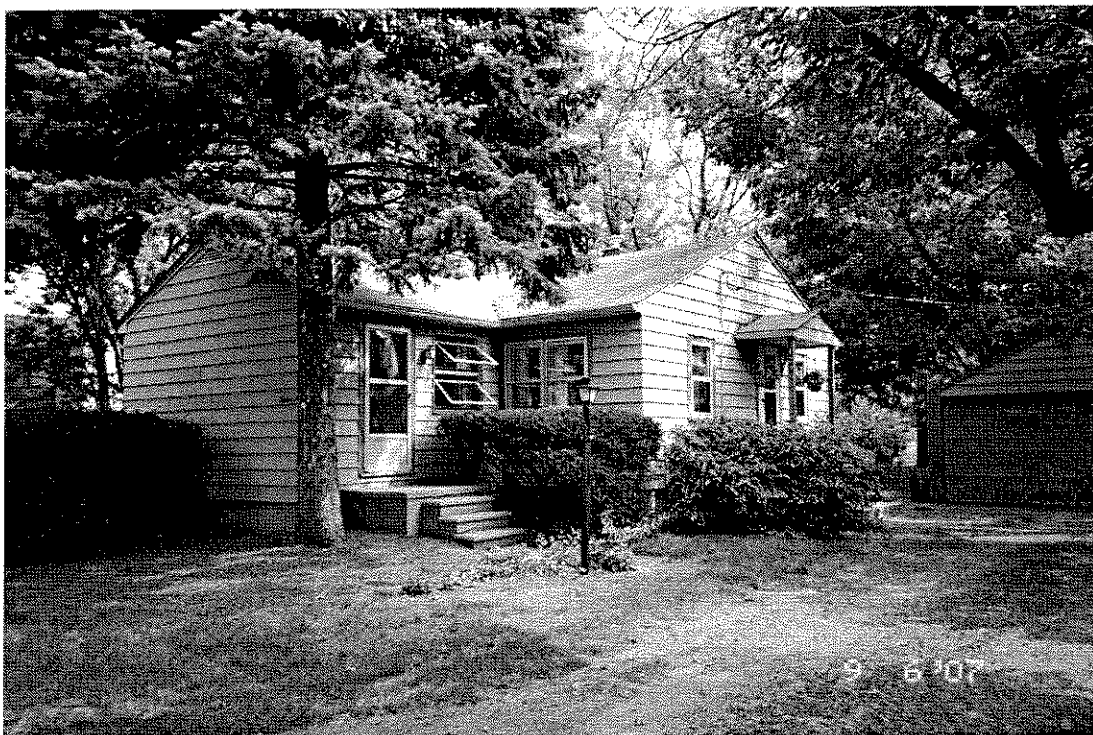


Photo 1. George K. Holtz House, 1290 E. Auburn Road, looking southeast.



Photo 2. Lucius L. Frank House, 1304 E. Auburn Road, looking southeast.



Photo 3. Loren B. Frank House, 1344 E. Auburn Road, looking southwest.



Photo 4. Ray B. Frank House, 1356 E. Auburn Road, looking southwest. Milk house visible on right.



Photo 5. Well house, looking southwest.

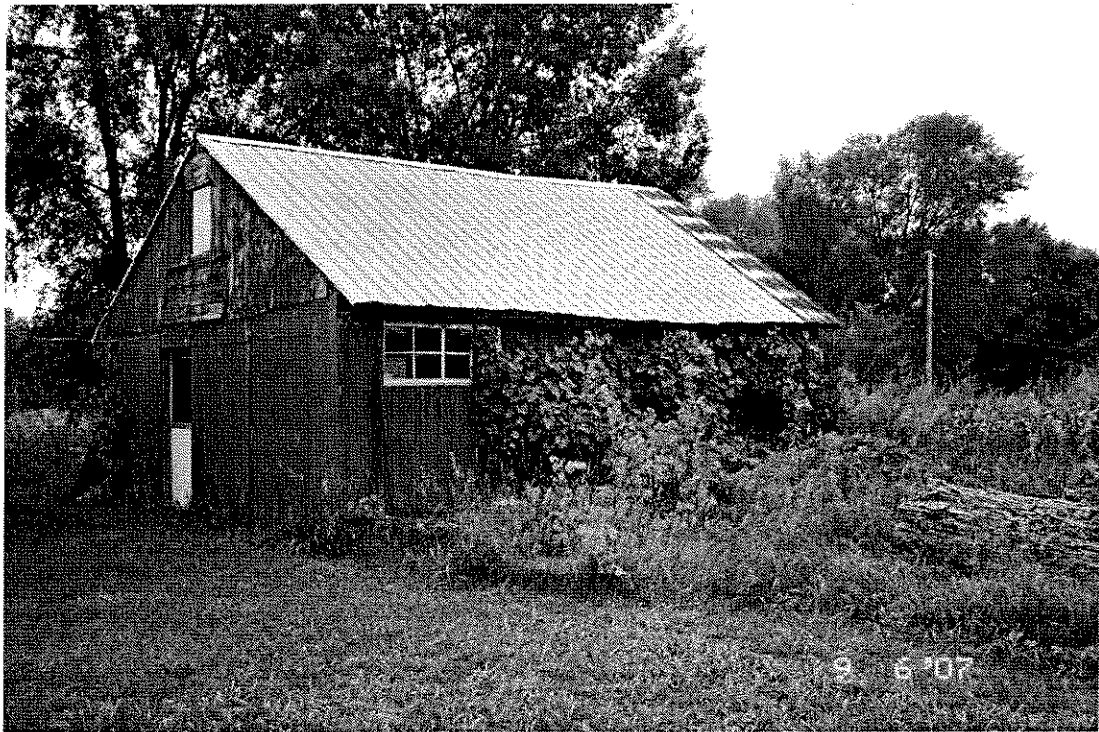


Photo 6. Tool shed, looking southwest.



Photo 7. Loren Frank House garage, looking northeast. Milk house visible on right.



Photo 8. View south from behind Ray Frank House. Pole barn on right.

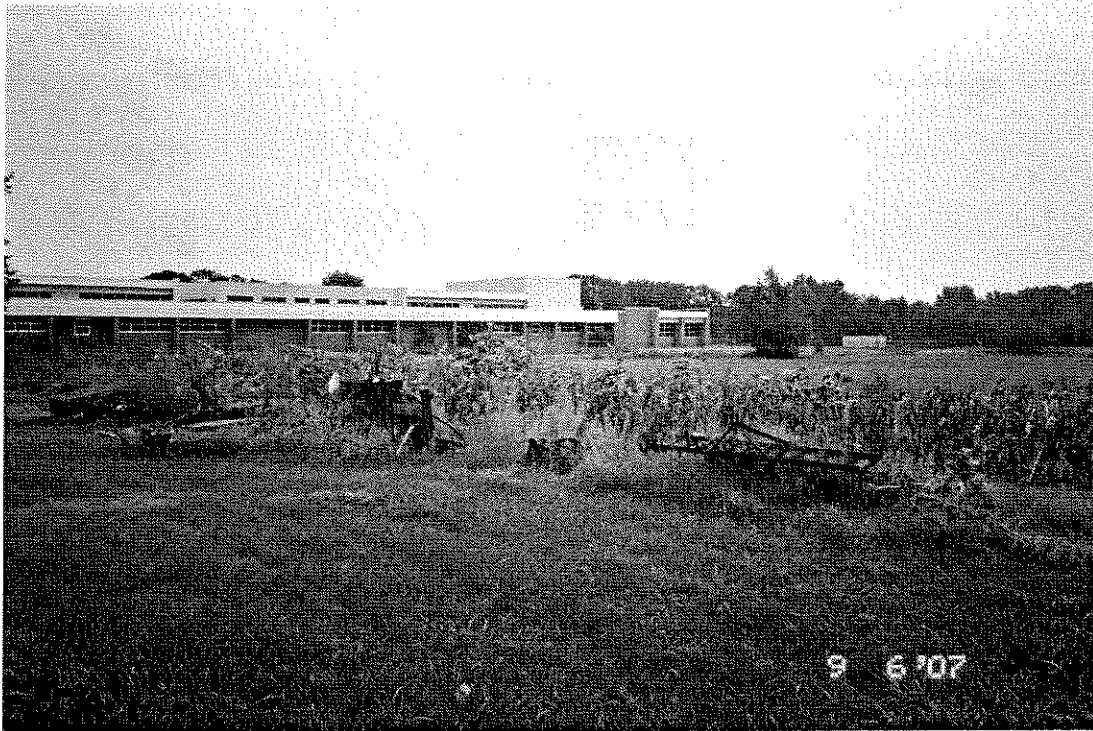


Photo 9. Reuther School, looking southeast from rear yard of Ray Frank House.



Photo 10. North side of East Auburn Road, looking northwest from in front of Ray Frank House.

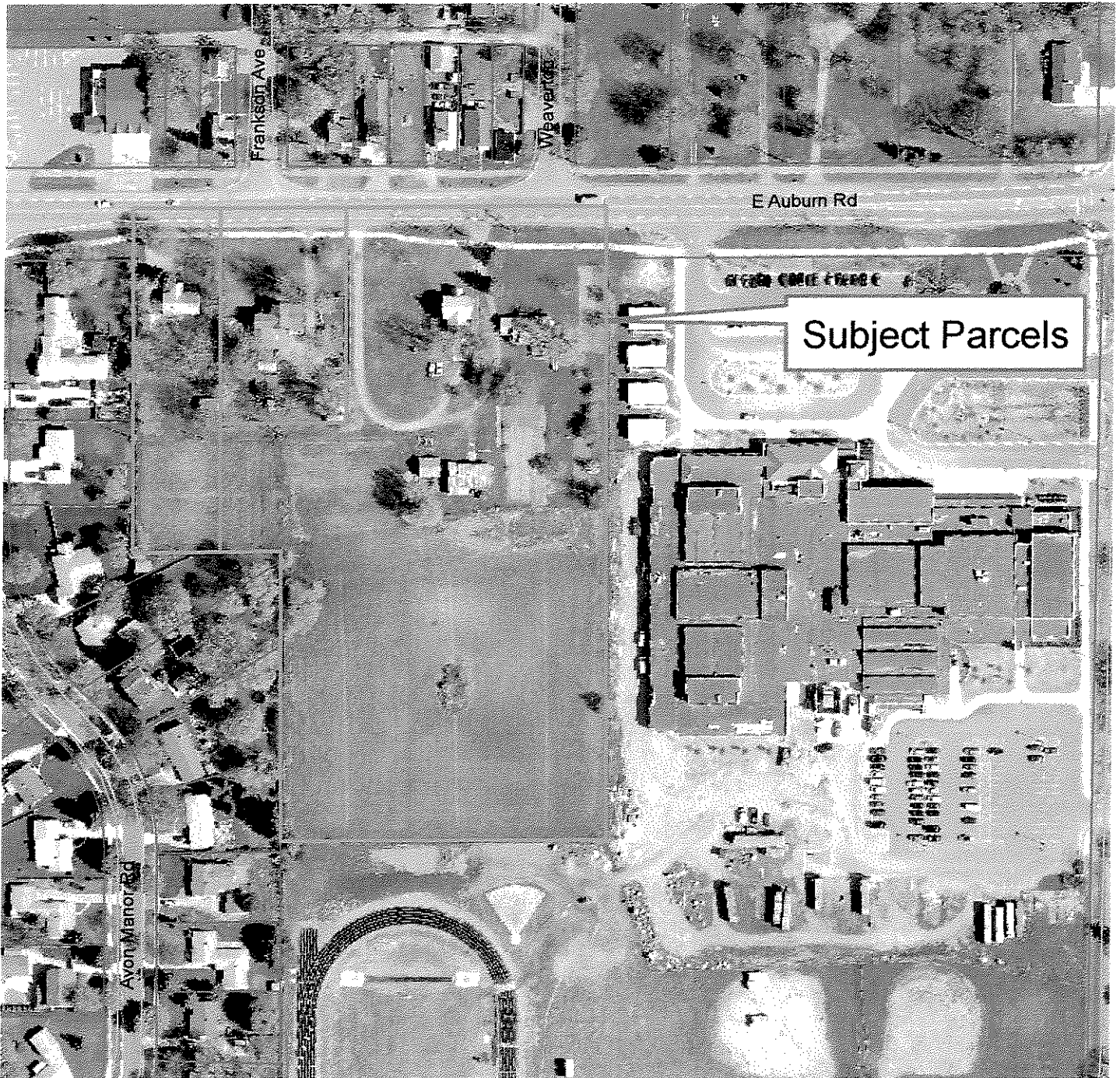


Photo 11. Avon Manor Estates subdivision, corner of John R. and East Auburn roads, looking southeast.

All photographs taken by Jane Busch, September 6, 2007.



# Proposed Frank Farm Historic District



Subject Parcels

## Legend

-  TaxParcel
-  RoadEdge



10-16-08

1 inch equals 173 feet

Aerial photographs as of April 2008.  
Parcel lines were obtained on 07-21-08 from Dakota County.  
Although the information provided by this map is believed to  
be reliable, its accuracy is not warranted in any way. The City  
of Rochester Hall assumes no liability for any claims arising  
from the use of this map.

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office**  
**Intensive Level Survey**  
**Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1304 E Auburn Rd.  
 City: Rochester Hills County : Oakland ZIP: 48307  
 Current Name:  
 Historic Name: Frank, Lucius House



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
 NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
 Contributing: Contributing Site  
 SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1304 E Auburn SE.jpg  
 Roll: Frame:  
 View: Southeast  
 Credit: Burke Jenkins  
 Caption: Lucius Frank House, 1304 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: D/single dwelling  
 Current Use: D/single dwelling  
 Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>
1. Stone	1. Asphalt
2. Concrete	2.
3.	3.
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>
1. Wood: Weatherboard	1. Brick
2. Asbestos	2. Concrete
3.	3.

**Period of Significance:**

**Area of Significance:**

- 1 Architecture
- 2 Agriculture
- 3

**Arch/Builder:**

**Date Built:** ca. 1865

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:**

Two story L-plan gable roof house. One story wing on east, original or early addition. Enclosed front and back porches on wing have concrete block foundations and asbestos siding. One story ell in rear with older brick chimney. Concrete block chimney on west side. 2/2 windows in gable front section, 1/1 windows elsewhere.

**Other Buildings/Features:** Small house in rear.

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:**

John Frank purchased the east half of the northwest quarter of section 36 sometime between 1855 and 1860, adding it to his earlier holdings. In 1872 John Frank owned 128 acres in section 36, the entire northwest quarter, in addition to 94 acres in section 26. In 1947 Loren Frank still owned most of the northwest quarter of section 36; a small parcel was owned by a cousin named Holtz. Lucius Frank and his father John probably built this house when Lucius returned to Avon Township after serving in the army during the Civil War. A photo of the house ca. 1917 shows that it retains its historic appearance to a large degree. Loren Frank was born in this house.

**References:**

Michigan Rural Property Inventory, Avon Township, 36A; Seeley, History of Oakland County, V. II, 837-38; 1304 and 1356 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester/Rochester Hills Historical Homes/Sites, Box 1, Rochester Hills Museum Archives; Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002.

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office  
Intensive Level Survey  
Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1304 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name:



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Non-Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1304a E Auburn.jpg  
Roll: Frame:  
View: Southwest  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: 1304 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: AS/animal facility  
Current Use: D/single dwelling  
Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>	<b>Period of Significance:</b>
1.	1. Asphalt	
2.	2.	<b>Area of Significance:</b>
3.	3.	1
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>	2
1. Asbestos	1.	3
2.	2.	<b>Arch/Builder:</b>
3.	3.	<b>Date Built:</b>

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** One story side-gabled house. Sliding windows.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** Originally a hog house. Ray Frank's cousin George Holtz remodeled it into an apartment.

**References:** Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:** Integrity lost.

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office**  
**Intensive Level Survey**  
**Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1344 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name: Frank, Loren House



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: D/single dwelling  
Current Use: D/single dwelling  
Owner Type: Private

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1344 E Auburn.JPG  
Roll: Frame:  
View: Southwest  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: Loren Frank House, 1344 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b> 1. Concrete 2. 3.	<b>Roof:</b> 1. Asphalt 2. 3.	<b>Period of Significance:</b>
<b>Wall:</b> 1. Metal: Aluminum 2. 3.	<b>Other:</b> 1. Brick 2. 3.	<b>Area of Significance:</b> 1 Agriculture 2 3
<b>Architectural Classification:</b>		<b>Arch/Builder:</b>
<b>Material Notes:</b>		<b>Date Built:</b>

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** Two story T-plan side-gabled frame house. Large entrance porch with steeply pitched gable roof and square wood columns. Brick chimney west side. One story rear ell with enclosed mud porch on east side. Wolmanized wood deck with pergola roof on west side toward rear.

**Other Buildings/Features:** Garage, former milk house, and small metal storage shed in rear. Pole barn and former tool shed further back on property. 1356 house and former well house to east.

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** The Franks moved the house to this location, over the fields from Dequindre, in 1916 or 1917, when Loren Frank (Ray's father) was married. Ray Frank was born in this house. The Franks remodeled the house ca. 1941, finishing up when the war started. They cut the house in half, turned half around, raised part to two stories, added the front porch. Ray did the drawings. He has a photo of the house before the remodeling. John Frank purchased the east half of the northwest quarter of section 36 sometime between 1855 and 1860, adding it to his earlier holdings. In 1872 John Frank owned 128 acres in section 36, the entire northwest quarter, in addition to 94 acres in section 26. In 1947 Loren Frank still owned most of the northwest quarter of section 36; a small parcel was owned by a cousin named Holtz.

**References:** Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office  
Intensive Level Survey  
Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1344 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name:



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Non-Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1344b E Auburn 1.JPG  
Roll: Frame:  
View: Southwest  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: 1344 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use:  
Current Use: AS/agricultural outbuilding  
Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>	<b>Period of Significance:</b>
1.	1. Metal	
2.	2. Synthetics: Fiberglass	<b>Area of Significance:</b>
3.	3.	1
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>	2
1. Metal	1.	3
2. Wood	2.	<b>Arch/Builder:</b>
3.	3.	<b>Date Built:</b> ca. 1979

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** Side gabled pole barn with metal siding. Shed roof rear extension with plywood siding. Sliding doors in front. Corrugated metal roof with some fiberglass panels. Cupola.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** Ray Frank built this pole barn after the old barn--more than 100 years old--burned in August 1979.

**References:** Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office**  
**Intensive Level Survey**  
**Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1344 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County : Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name:



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPHOTOS\Auburn\E Auburn\1344a E Auburn.JPG  
Roll: Frame:  
View: Southeast  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: 1344 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: AS/agricultural outbuilding  
Current Use: AS/agricultural outbuilding  
Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>
1.	1. Metal
2.	2.
3.	3.
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>
1. Wood	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

**Period of Significance:**

**Area of Significance:**

- 1 Agriculture
- 2
- 3

**Arch/Builder:**

**Date Built:**

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** Side gabled frame outbuilding. Wood siding part vertical boards and part plywood. Corrugated metal roof.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** This used to be a tool shed, located further west on the farm. The Franks moved it to this location. Now used for storage.

**References:** Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office**  
**Intensive Level Survey**  
**Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1344 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County : Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name:



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: D/secondary structure  
Current Use: D/secondary structure  
Owner Type: Private

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1344e E Auburn.JPG  
Roll: Frame:  
View: Northeast  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: 1344 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>
1.	1. Asphalt
2.	2.
3.	3.
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>
1. Wood: Weatherboard	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

**Period of Significance:**

**Area of Significance:**

- 1 Agriculture
- 2 Architecture
- 3

**Arch/Builder:**

**Date Built:** ca. 1940

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** 1 1/2 story front gabled frame garage. Sliding doors.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** The Franks tore down the old garage and built this one ca. 1940.

**References:** Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office  
Intensive Level Survey  
Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1344 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name:



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1344c E Auburn.JPG  
Roll: Frame:  
View: Southwest  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: 1344 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: AS/processing  
Current Use: D/secondary structure  
Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>
1.	1. Metal
2.	2.
3.	3.
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>
1. Wood	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

**Period of Significance:**

**Area of Significance:**

- 1 Agriculture
- 2
- 3

**Arch/Builder:**

**Date Built:** 1930s

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** Small frame building with standing seam metal shed roof. Shiplap siding. Two swing up wood panels on west side. One fixed window on each end and door on north end. Exposed rafter tails.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** Harold Weaver built this building across Auburn Road during the Depression and used it to sell cherry pop. The Franks moved it across the road and used it as a milk house. Now used for storage.

**References:**

Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:**



**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office  
Intensive Level Survey  
Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1356 E Auburn Rd.  
 City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP: 48307  
 Current Name:  
 Historic Name: Frank, Ray House



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
 NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
 Contributing: Contributing Site  
 SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPHOTOS\Auburn\E Auburn\1356 E Auburn.JPG  
 Roll: Frame:  
 View: South  
 Credit: Burke Jenkins  
 Caption: Ray Frank House, 1356 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: D/single dwelling  
 Current Use: D/single dwelling  
 Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>	<b>Period of Significance:</b>
1. Concrete	1. Asphalt	
2.	2.	<b>Area of Significance:</b>
3.	3.	1 Agriculture
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>	2
1. Brick	1. Brick	3
2. Metal: Aluminum	2.	<b>Arch/Builder:</b>
3.	3.	<b>Date Built:</b> ca. 1948

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** One story side gabled frame house with cross gable on the east end of the front façade. Brick veneer, with aluminum siding on some of the upper walls. One story west wing addition. Newer rear deck. Brick chimney.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** Ray Frank had this house built shortly after he was married in 1945. They finished the interior construction themselves. The 1956 atlas map shows this parcel still part of the Loren B. Frank Farm.

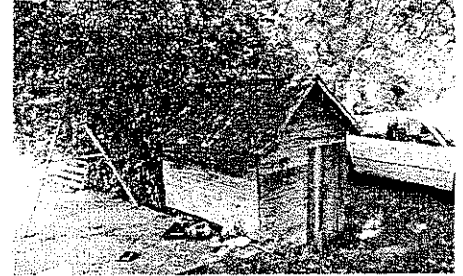
**References:** Ray Frank, personal communication, 15 April and 14 June 2002; Atlas map, 1956.

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office**  
**Intensive Level Survey**  
**Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: 1356 E Auburn Rd.  
City: Rochester Hills County : Oakland ZIP: 48307  
Current Name:  
Historic Name:



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
NR Eligible: Not NR Eligible  
Contributing: Contributing Site  
SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Auburn\E Auburn\1356b E Auburn.JPG  
Roll: Frame:  
View: North  
Credit: Burke Jenkins  
Caption: 1356 E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: AS/processing  
Current Use: VACANT/NOT IN USE  
Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>
1. Metal	1. Wood: Shingle
2. Brick	2.
3.	3.
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>
1. Wood	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

**Period of Significance:**

**Area of Significance:**

- 1 Agriculture
- 2 Architecture
- 3

**Arch/Builder:**

**Date Built:**

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** Small gable roof outbuilding. Horizontal plank siding. Sheet metal and brick foundation.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** This was originally a smoke house, located behind the Lucius Frank House. Ray Frank moved it and made it into a well house. The well didn't draw adequately so he moved the well. Now vacant.

**References:**

Ray Frank, personal communication, 14 June 2002

**Surveyor's Comments:**

**State of Michigan Historic Preservation Office**  
**Intensive Level Survey**  
**Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey**

**Address**

Street: E Auburn Rd.  
 City: Rochester Hills County: Oakland ZIP: 48307  
 Current Name:  
 Historic Name: Frank Farm



**Evaluations**

Contributes to: Frank Farm Historic District  
 NR Eligible: NR Eligible  
 Contributing: Contributing Site  
 SHPO Evaluation:

**Photo**

Filename: RHPhotos\Frank Farm Historic District photos\Frank  
 Roll: Frame:  
 View: Southeast  
 Credit: Burke Jenkins  
 Caption: Frank Farm, E. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills, MI

**Resources on Property/Status**

Historic Use: AGRICULTURE AND SUBSISTENCE (AS)  
 Current Use: DOMESTIC (D)  
 Owner Type: Private

**Main Building**

<b>Foundation:</b>	<b>Roof:</b>	<b>Period of Significance:</b>
1.	1.	ca. 1860-1952
2.	2.	<b>Area of Significance:</b>
3.	3.	1 Agriculture
<b>Wall:</b>	<b>Other:</b>	2 Architecture
1.	1.	3
2.	2.	<b>Arch/Builder:</b>
3.	3.	<b>Date Built:</b>

**Architectural Classification:**

**Material Notes:**

**Description:** Frank Farm Historic District, consisting of three houses and associated outbuildings, now on two parcels of land.

**Other Buildings/Features:**

**Significant Persons:**

**Statement of Significance:** The Frank Farm Historic District represents four generations of the Frank family who have been farming in Avon Township since John Frank arrived from Vermont in 1823. John Frank purchased the east half of the northwest quarter of section 36 sometime between 1855 and 1860, adding it to his earlier holdings. In 1872 John Frank owned 128 acres in section 36, the entire northwest quarter, in addition to 94 acres in section 26. In 1947 Loren Frank still owned most of the northwest quarter of section 36; a small parcel was owned by a cousin named Holtz. The parcels contained in this historic district include three houses built or in one case moved to the farm by John, Lucius, Loren, and Ray Frank. Ray Frank still lives in the house he built at 1356 Auburn Road and farms on a small scale.

**References:**

Michigan Rural Property Inventory, Avon Township, 36A; Seeley, History of Oakland County, V. II, 837-38; Durant, History of Oakland County, 132; Atlas maps 1872, 1896, 1908, 1947, 1956; Avon Township Assessment Roll, 1855 and 1860.

**Surveyor's Comments:**



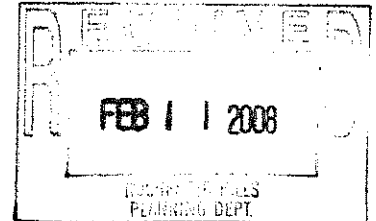
JENNIFER GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARTS AND LIBRARIES  
LANSING

DR. WILLIAM ANDERSON  
DIRECTOR

January 29, 2008

Mr. Derek Delacourt  
City of Rochester Hills  
1000 Rochester Hills  
Rochester Hills, MI 48309



Dear Mr. Delacourt:

Staff members of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) have reviewed the preliminary historic district study committee reports for the Stiles School Historic District and the Frank Farm Historic District. A copy of our comments is enclosed. We offer these comments in order to assist communities to prepare final study committee reports that meet the requirements of Michigan's *Local Historic Districts Act* and that provide a strong legal basis for protecting historically significant resources.

The report was presented to the Michigan Historical Commission and the State Historic Preservation Review Board. The State Historic Preservation Review Board did not concur with the SHPO that the Stiles School was ineligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They stated that the majority of building's historic material was still in place and that while the windows had been altered, the openings themselves were still in tact. They also felt the massing of the original school building had not been lost when the inappropriate additions were constructed. The historic building can still be discerned and is distinct from the additions. They believed the school building itself would be eligible as long as the report indicates that the additions are non-contributing resources.

We look forward to working with the city of Rochester Hills in the protection of its historic resources. If we can assist you further, please contact Amy Arnold at 517-355-2729 or [ArnoldA@michigan.gov](mailto:ArnoldA@michigan.gov).

Sincerely,

Brian D. Conway  
State Historic Preservation Officer

BDC:ALA

Enclosure

**State Historic Preservation Office  
Michigan Historical Center**

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**Staff Comments, December 19, 2007  
Frank Farm Historic District, Rochester Hills**

Excellent report that meets the requirements set forth in Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended.



# Rochester Hills Minutes

1000 Rochester Hills Dr.  
Rochester Hills, MI 48309  
(248) 656-4600  
Home Page:  
[www.rochesterhills.org](http://www.rochesterhills.org)

## Historic Districts Study Committee

Chairperson Jason Thompson, Vice Chairperson Dr. Richard Stamps  
Members: John Dziurman, David Kibby, Dennis Mueller,  
Peggy Schodowski, LaVere Webster

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Wednesday, April 30, 2008

6:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

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MINUTES of a ROCHESTER HILLS REGULAR HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE meeting held at the City Municipal Offices, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive, Rochester Hills. Oakland County, Michigan.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Thompson called meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

### 2. ROLL CALL

Present 4 - Richard Stamps, Jason Thompson, LaVere Webster and Peggy Schodowski

Absent 3 - John Dziurman, David Kibby and Dennis Mueller

Others Present: Derek Delacourt, Deputy Director, Planning Department  
Judy Bialk, Recording Secretary

### 3. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chairperson Thompson stated for the record that a quorum was present.

### 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Chairperson Thompson asked if there were any announcements or communications.  
No announcements or communications were provided.

### 5. PUBLIC COMMENT (Non-Agenda Items)

No public comments were received on any non-Agenda items.

### 6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Chairperson Thompson announced that the Study Committee would hold a Public Hearing regarding the following property and for the following purpose:

6A. 2005-0537

**PUBLIC HEARING - FILE NO. HDSC 05-002**

Location: 3976 S. Livernois Road, located on the northwest corner of Livernois

Road and South Boulevard, and further identified as Parcel Number 15-33-476-027 and the southern 90-feet (approximately) of Parcel Number 15-33-476-014, zoned R-4 (One Family Residential).

**Purpose:** To receive public comment regarding a proposal to establish the subject property as a Historic District within the City of Rochester Hills, in accordance with Public Act 267 of 1976 (MCL 15.261 et seq., MSA 5.3407(3) et seq.) and the Rochester Hills Historical Preservation Ordinance, Section 118-131.

Chairperson Thompson explained the information received at this Public Hearing would be included in the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) Final Report for the property commonly identified as 3976 S. Livernois Road.

Chairperson Thompson stated that 3976 S. Livernois had been studied by the Historic Districts Study Committee in accordance with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and a Preliminary Report had been prepared. He explained the Minutes from this Public Hearing would be included in the Final Report, along with all other relevant material. He noted that once the Final Report is completed, it would be forwarded to City Council for action.

Chairperson Thompson summarized the procedure used to establish a district. He explained the duties of the Study Committee outlined in Section 118-130 of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances included conducting a photographic inventory of the resource; conducting basic research regarding the proposed historic district; determining the number of historical and non-historical resources within the proposed district; preparing the Preliminary Report, which included the charge of the Committee, the composition of the Committee, the boundaries of the proposed historic district, the history of the proposed historic district, the significance of the proposed district, and the Committee's recommendation to establish, modify or eliminate.

(Arrive David Kibby 6:34 PM)

**Present** 5 - Richard Stamps, Jason Thompson, LaVere Webster, Peggy Schodowski and David Kibby

**Absent** 2 - John Dziurman and Dennis Mueller

2005-0537

Chairperson Thompson stated the Study Committee transmitted a copy of the Preliminary Report for review and recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Office on November 30, 2007. He noted a Staff Report and Comments were received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State Review Board on January 29, 2008.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-131 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Public Hearing is to be held sixty (60) days after the transmittal of the Preliminary Report to the SHPO. The Public Hearing is held in accordance with Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended (the Open Meetings Act), which includes notice to the property owner of any proposed district no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the Public Hearing. He noted written notice was provided to the property owner of record on April 11, 2008.

Chairperson Thompson stated that notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Rochester Eccentric on April 13, 2008, as required by Ordinance to be published one time only at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of hearing.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-132 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Study Committee would prepare a Final Report with a recommendation, along with any recommendation received from the Planning Commission, to be submitted within one (1) year after holding the Public Hearing to the Mayor and City Council. He noted if the Study Committee's recommendation was to establish a district, the Final Report would include a draft Ordinance Amendment.

Chairperson Thompson noted for the record that if the Study Committee's recommendation was to establish a district, any final action on this matter would be taken by City Council.

Chairperson Thompson stated the intent of the Public Hearing was not to conduct a debate or dialog between the members of the HDSC and the public, but rather to allow the public to place any comments or concerns they may have on public record to be provided to City Council. He noted the HDSC Members would be available for questions at the conclusion of the Public Hearing.

Chairperson Thompson opened the Public Hearing at 6:37 PM.

**Mark Gavulic, 520 Nichols Drive, Auburn Hills**, stated he was present representing the Oakland-Steiner School. He explained the school's Administrator had intended to be at the meeting but was out of the country.

Mr. Gavulic stated that the Oakland-Steiner School was the current owner of the Stiles School Building. He indicated he had been a parent at the school since 1990, and noted the school was founded in 1989 so he was considered one of the founding parents of the school. He commented his three-year old son would attend the school, and by the time his son completed his education at the school, he, himself, would be associated with the school for over thirty years.

Mr. Gavulic stated he was credited with bringing the Stiles School to the attention of the Oakland-Steiner location committee as they had outgrown their Bloomfield



Hills location. He noted he was attracted to the building because of its architecture, and knew it was a wonderful match for a Waldorf School. He indicated his sister was a chairperson of a historical committee in Genesee County in the 1970s, and his brother is a historical preservation architect in Clarkston. He stated he had a deep appreciation for the building and its significance.

Mr. Gavulic stated he was the chairperson of the school's master plan committee, and now that the school owned the building and the site, they had to begin the process of figuring out how to make it their own, which he did not take lightly. He applauded what the Study Committee was doing, and noted he had an opportunity to read the Preliminary Report and it was excellent, thorough work. He was impressed with the resources the Committee used to prepare the Report.

Mr. Gavulic stated that Waldorf Schools were very sensitive to materials. He explained Rudolph Steiner spoke of the "touch sense" which was very different than the sense of touch. He stated it was fundamental in their education process, and natural materials such as wood and stone were universally important to them. He commented they sometimes had trouble with the regulators who came in to the school and wanted to know where the plastic toys were, and the school continually has to explain they will not cover a wood floor with carpet.

Mr. Gavulic felt that the school and the Study Committee had the same goal, which was to protect the building as the touchstone it was and the Community gem it was in the past in terms of being a community center. He stated the Oakland-Steiner School wanted to use the building as it was and restore the Community access. He commented they wanted their neighbors to be glad they were there, and wanted everyone to be proud of their beautiful building.

Mr. Gavulic stated that as the proposed designation stood, the Oakland-Steiner School could not support it, for the following reasons:

First, they appreciated they were only stewards of this property and the decision that will be made will affect generations. He noted the proposed district included the 50-year old wings that the State Historic Preservation Office called "inappropriate additions" and "non-contributing resources". The Oakland-Steiner School did not believe they should have to preserve those errors in perpetuity, especially because those additions themselves were ruined in the 1970s when EIFS was added to them. He stated the school would like the right to raze those wings and construct something more complementary to the original school building that adhered to the Department of the Interior Standards and guidelines. He noted he had been told that similar projects were done in both Clarkston and Birmingham. He stated the Birmingham project was a 1920s school that added an addition that did not attempt to duplicate what was

there, but created a beautiful building that complemented the original. He was told there was a similar situation in Clarkston with a 1920s collegiate gothic building with a 1950s single-story, rectangular addition. The addition was razed, and a new addition added on to the original 1920s building in a very tasteful way.

Secondly, the designation would cost the school immediately. He stated it would be an immediate financial penalty for the school, and there were no tax advantages to offset that since the school was a tax-exempt entity. He noted that about a year ago there was a lightening event that caused some damage to one of the additions on the school. He stated they were still in the process of recovering from that event, and the entire process was still going on and had not been settled at this point. He indicated that the school's insurance agent, who was in constant contact with the school, was told about the proposed designation, and advised the school they absolutely should not go along with it and should fight it because the insurance agent felt their insurance rates would quadruple. He noted that at this point the school had not been able to ascertain whether that was factual information or whether there were alternatives. He stated the school had not yet received their new insurance rates based on the restoration of the building, so they did not know what that cost might be. With the current economic times, that affected their enrollment and their programs. He explained if they became a historic district and had to pay the insurance rates, it would come at a direct expense to their programs.

Thirdly, the proposed district includes land that is significantly removed from the original Stiles School building, and the Oakland-Steiner School is worried that local Ordinances, such as setbacks from the proposed historic district, would inadvertently limit what they could construct on the property, including structures that would be removed from the original building and would not affect that building.

If the proposed historic district could be reduced within a reasonable interpretation of the enabling legislation to include only the property that the 1929 building occupied and the 1929 building itself, then the Oakland-Steiner School would reconsider their position. He noted that the inappropriate non-contributing 1957 and 1963 additions are functionally free-standing. He commented when the Oakland-Steiner School moved in, they did not use the Stiles Building proper for two years and it was shut down and not heated. The additions and the heating plant, which is part of the additions, are functionally independent, and the 1929 building functions as an annex to the newer construction. He believed it was within the Committee's reasonable discretion to declare the additions are two attached buildings and, therefore, under the Department of Interior rules, the Committee could shrink the proposed district.

Chairperson Thompson asked if anyone else wished to speak on this matter. Upon hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 6:50 PM.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee was pleased to receive the input and thanked the representatives from the school for attending the Hearing.

This matter was Discussed

6B. 2006-0425

**PUBLIC HEARING - FILE NO. HDSC 04-005**

Location: 1290 E. Auburn Road; 1304 E. Auburn Road; 1344 E. Auburn and 1356 E. Auburn Road, located on the south side of Auburn Road, east of John R Road and west of Dequindre Road, and further identified as Parcel Numbers 15-36-126-004 (1290 E. Auburn); 15-36-126-005 (1304 W. Auburn), and 15-36-126-029 (1344 and 1356 E. Auburn), zoned R-3 (One Family Residential).

Purpose: To receive public comment regarding a proposal to establish the subject property as a Historic District within the City of Rochester Hills, in accordance with Public Act 267 of 1976 (MCL 15.261 et seq., MSA 5.3407(3) et seq.) and the Rochester Hills Historical Preservation Ordinance, Section 118-131.

Chairperson Thompson explained the information received at this Public Hearing would be included in the Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC) Final Report for the properties commonly identified as 1290 E. Auburn Road, 1304 E. Auburn Road, 1344 E. Auburn Road and 1356 E. Auburn Road.

Chairperson Thompson stated that 1290 E. Auburn Road, 1304 E. Auburn Road, 1344 E. Auburn Road and 1356 E. Auburn Road had been studied by the Historic Districts Study Committee in accordance with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and a Preliminary Report had been prepared. He explained the Minutes from this Public Hearing would be included in the Final Report, along with all other relevant material. He noted that once the Final Report is completed, it would be forwarded to City Council for action.

Chairperson Thompson summarized the procedure used to establish a district. He explained the duties of the Study Committee outlined in Section 118-130 of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances included conducting a photographic inventory of the resource; conducting basic research regarding the proposed historic district; determining the number of historical and non-historical resources within the proposed district; preparing the Preliminary Report, which included the charge of the Committee, the composition of the Committee, the boundaries of the proposed

historic district, the history of the proposed historic district, the significance of the proposed district, and the Committee's recommendation to establish, modify or eliminate.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Study Committee transmitted a copy of the Preliminary Report for review and recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Office on November 30, 2007. He noted a Staff Report and Comments were received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State Review Board on January 29, 2008.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-131 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Public Hearing is to be held sixty (60) days after the transmittal of the Preliminary Report to the SHPO. The Public Hearing is held in accordance with Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended (the Open Meetings Act), which includes notice to the property owner of any proposed district no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the Public Hearing. He noted written notice was provided to all property owners of record on April 11, 2008.

Chairperson Thompson stated that notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Rochester Eccentric on April 13, 2008, as required by Ordinance to be published one time only at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of hearing.

Chairperson Thompson stated that in accordance with Section 118-132 of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Study Committee would prepare a Final Report with a recommendation, along with any recommendation received from the Planning Commission, to be submitted within one (1) year after holding the Public Hearing to the Mayor and City Council. He noted if the Study Committee's recommendation was to establish a district, the Final Report would include a draft Ordinance Amendment.

Chairperson Thompson noted for the record that if the Study Committee's recommendation was to establish a district, any final action on this matter would be taken by City Council.

Chairperson Thompson stated the intent of the Public Hearing was not to conduct a debate or dialog between the members of the HDSC and the public, but rather to allow the public to place any comments or concerns they may have on public record to be provided to City Council. He noted the HDSC Members would be available for questions at the conclusion of the Public Hearing.

Dr. Stamps asked if all the property owners were notified about the Public Hearing. Mr. Delacourt stated that copies of the Preliminary Report and Notice of the Public Hearing were sent to each of the affected addresses and to all addresses associated

with the tax rolls for the parcels. He stated the Planning & Development Department did not receive any comment back from any of the property owners, and those notices were mailed to the same address used for water and tax bills.

Chairperson Thompson opened the Public Hearing at 6:55 PM.

**Anita Holtz, 1290 E. Auburn Road**, expressed her concern about the 1304 E. Auburn Road property and whether that property owner actually received notice of the Public Hearing.

Mr. Delacourt noted that property was a rental property and stated that notice had been sent to the property owner of record, as reflected on the City's tax rolls, along with a second address recently added to the tax roll information. He commented no response had been received from that property owner. He noted the City had attempted to make contact with that property owner on several occasions and had not received any response.

Ms. Holtz stated she was part of the bloodline of the Frank family that was born and raised on the property, noting her mother still resided at 1290 E. Auburn, as does her cousin, Ray Frank, who resides at 1356 E. Auburn Road. She commented that the third house, 1344 E. Auburn Road was still within the Frank family. She noted the rental property, 1304 E. Auburn Road, is no longer in the family.

Ms. Holtz stated the family members had concerns that there were elderly family residents residing at 1356 E. Auburn and 1290 E. Auburn, and eventually the next generation would inherit those properties. The next generation's concern about becoming a designated historical property is that the houses were built in the late 1940s, modified in the 1950s, and the structures themselves did not really have any historical significance. She agreed the property had been in the Frank family since the early 1800s, but if it became a historic district, it would be difficult to sell the property. She noted the children of the current residents would not be living on the property, and that was one of their biggest concerns. She commented that had the designation happened twenty years ago and there was something of great building significance left, she would be One Hundred Percent for the designation and would have pitched in to help it along. However, unfortunately now it would become a white elephant if it became a historic district. She did not know how they could sell the properties or market them when people were looking for new modern, updated items, and these were just older, single-story family homes. She stated it would be very difficult to entice buyers, other than the fact they sat on a lot of property. If the property is designated historic, then the existing homes could not be razed and new homes built.

Ms. Holtz stated that was their dilemma. They loved the property; they were born and raised there, and it was their roots and their earth. She noted her mother was in

her mid-80's, and her cousin was in his 90's, and the next generation was concerned about what they would do with the property after the older generation is gone.

Ms. Holtz referred to the house located at 1304 E. Auburn Road, and stated she would love for someone to embrace that home and to restore it to what it was, and she would be willing to help them do that. She did not think there was enough money to restore it, and the gentleman who owned it right now would not even have a hint of interest in restoring the home, unless he could be enticed with a large paycheck to take the house off his hands. She noted the home was only a rental to the current owner, and he did not have any attraction to the home.

Ms. Holtz stated she was not aware of the process, but asked if that house was deemed historical, whether the City could purchase the home and restore it to what it was, although she understood that was not the purpose of the Study Committee. She commented even the 1304 E. Auburn Road house had expired; it was past its time; it was over 143 years old; and although it was a grand structure, it was falling apart. She stated that was unfortunate, but true. She commented she had read the building materials on that house, and it was listed as asbestos, that some of the walls were made of asbestos, which was not a real positive thing to have in trying to restore a house. She stated she did not believe the current owner would do any restoration to the home, and commented that perhaps it would be struck by lightning and the house go out in a blaze of glory. Otherwise, the house will just fall down. She noted that if designated, the home would be considered demolition by neglect.

Ms. Holtz stated that as much as the family would love for the properties to be historical properties, or as had been mentioned by Dr. Stamps, become a part of the community and become an active working farm for the education system, she felt the buildings that would have been important for that to happen are already gone. She stated if the properties were to become historical, they would become albatrosses for the family.

Ms. Holtz stated that was how the family felt at this time, and stated they appreciated the Study Committee's time and efforts. She requested to be advised of the next step in the process.

Chairperson Thompson called for any other public comments. Upon hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 7:01 PM.

Chairperson Thompson thanked Ms. Holtz for her comments and stated the Committee appreciated the input.

**This matter was Discussed**

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairperson Thompson called for any other business.

Chairperson Thompson asked the Committee how they wanted to proceed. He asked if the Committee wanted to discuss the two properties at the next regular meeting with respect to finalizing the Report.

Dr. Stamps suggested the Committee take the Public Hearing input and discuss the properties, noting there were some serious concerns stated regarding both properties.

Ms. Schodowski commented the Oakland-Steiner School had some serious concern about the insurance for the building, and did not know how things stood after the fire. She wanted to keep the dialog open between the school and the City so that everyone was on the same page. She noted the comment about reducing the size of the proposed district, and would like to explore that option further.

Chairperson Thompson stated that both properties would be discussed at a future Study Committee meeting.

Chairperson Thompson stated he appreciated the input from the Oakland-Steiner School, and would like to invite the school to attend a Study Committee meeting to discuss the matter and work with the school. He suggested the school contact Mr. Delacourt and arrange a mutually agreeable time to meet with the Committee.

Mr. Delacourt stated he would advise both property owners when the properties were scheduled for a Study Committee Agenda, and invite them to attend the meeting to discuss the matter or provide further input.

Mr. Kibby asked the representatives from the Oakland-Steiner School if they had any idea when they would get numbers from the insurance company. Mr. Gavulic responded he did not have any idea.

Chairperson Thompson reminded the Study Committee they had a year from the date of the Public Hearing to finalize the Reports, and the properties would be discussed at a future meeting.

Dr. Stamps suggested the Oakland-Steiner School contact their insurance agent and ask for more specific information about the insurance rates if the property is designated. He noted the Committee had held back on moving forward with the report because they had not received any feedback from the school, then the fire happened, and the Committee wanted to give the school some time to sort through those issues.

Mr. Gavulic stated that the most significant factor was whether the entire current building would fall under the designation, or whether it would just be the 1929

building. He noted the school would be dealing with replacement costs. He stated the school's master planning architect, and the person who got them through the fire restoration, was adamant that the school would have to manufacture the tools to make the trim, to make the windows, to put them back to their 1929 original state, which scared them. He noted the school had enough problems with the State of Michigan regulations because they wanted the school to use carpet squares. The school also discussed whether tempered glass could be used because that was not original or available in 1929. He stated those types of questions had come up, although he had been told by his brother that that was not the case.

Mr. Delacourt stated that whomever the school was speaking to had a slight misunderstanding of what it meant to be part of a designated district. He offered to sit down with representatives of the school, noting he had recently met with Ms. Katherine Thivierge, the school's administrator. He thought there was some misunderstanding about what a non-contributing resource in a district was required to do, as well as what was involved in replacement or updating of damaged materials, even on a contributing resource. He explained that was something that was separate from the Study Committee, and was the responsibility of the City's Historic District Commission if the property is designated. He stated that a non-contributing portion of a building on a designated district did not prevent that addition from being razed or removed, which had happened in the City. He noted approval for that removal had to come from the Historic Districts Commission, but it did not automatically prevent that from happening, and it did not mean identical pieces had to be used to replace items.

Mr. Delacourt commented that the person advising the school may have had a different experience somewhere else; however, he would be glad to sit down and talk to them, and any representatives from the school. He suggested that time could be arranged for the school to meet with the Historic Districts Commission to review what was being proposed with the school's master plan, and what the Historic Districts Commission thought would be approvable or not.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee really wanted to work with the school regarding this matter.

Mr. Gavulic stated the school wanted to work with the Committee as well. He noted the building was an integral part of the school and its architecture was very much appreciated by the school. He stated they put the oldest children in that wing because they have a mature enough sense of art and form to appreciate that architecture.

Chairperson Thompson stated the Committee would love to hear more from the school, and hoped arrangements could be made for a meeting between the school and the Committee.



Ms. Schodowski stated she had learned that the architect of the school was Frederick Madison from Royal Oak, Michigan. Mr. Madison also built some schools in Royal Oak; however, those schools had been demolished. She commented on the magnitude of the potential resource, noting Mr. Madison did quite a bit of excellent work. She knew the school would take care of the building no matter what, but wanted the school to know the building was one of the few pieces still left from Mr. Madison's work.

Chairperson Thompson asked for any other comments. No other comments were provided.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 7:15 PM.

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Jason Thompson, Chairperson  
City of Rochester Hills  
Historic Districts Study Committee

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Judy A. Bialk, Recording Secretary

Approved as presented at the June 12, 2008 Regular Historic Districts Study Committee Meeting