



Rochester Hills

Minutes

Historic Districts Study Committee

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

Chairperson Jason Thompson, Vice Chairperson Dr. Richard Stamps
Members: John Dziurman, James Hannick, Peggy Schodowski, Sue Thomasson, LaVere Webster

Thursday, April 8, 2010

5:30 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice Chair, Mr. Derek Delacourt, Deputy Director of Planning and Economic Development, called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present 4 - John Dziurman, LaVere Webster, James Hannick and Sue Thomasson

Absent 2 - Richard Stamps and Jason Thompson

Ms. DiSipio stated for the record that a quorum was present.

Others Present: Derek Delacourt, Deputy Director, Planning
Sandi DiSipio, Recording Secretary

Mr. Delacourt turned the meeting over to Mr. Dziurman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2010-0161 March 11, 2010 Regular Meeting

Motion by Hannick, second by Webster, that the Minutes dated March 11, 2010 were approved as presented.

Aye 4 - Dziurman, Webster, Hannick and Thomasson

Absent 2 - Stamps and Thompson

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no announcements or communications brought forward.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one came forward to give public comments. Mr. Dzuirman noted the brief comments from the State Historic Preservation Office, which he stated were relatively inconclusive, and he said he would read that correspondence during the subject discussions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2009-0411 1585 S. Rochester Road (HDC File #03-003)

Discuss Delisting/State's Comments

Mr. Dzuirman read the following comments, dated December 22, 2009, from the State Historic Preservation Office regarding 1585 S. Rochester Road: "Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended, requires a description of the boundaries in writing and on maps. No maps are included in this report. Since the house underwent a major remodeling in the Neoclassical style around the time the Eddy's purchased the property in 1936, the report should concentrate on what occurred to the property from that time forward. According to Standard #4 of the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved. The Report should contain more information about Mr. Wayne Eddy. What was his connection to Michigan's early automotive history? Was there a link between his work and the automobile industry and the Allen Cooler and Ventilating Company that he founded? He was able to purchase and remodel this property in the midst of the Great Depression, so he must have been fairly successful. Also, what was occurring in Rochester Hills during the time period? Was he involved in the community's development? Was it common for people to purchase and redo old farmhouses in this matter or was this unique? The Report states that the house is not a good example of Neoclassical style because the front porch columns are not typical of columns used in the style in that they are thin, square columns with trim pieces added. However, the description of the Neoclassical style found on page 344 of Virginia and Lee McAlester's Field Guide to American House states, "After about 1925, very slender, unfluted (often square) columns began to be used, primary on houses with full façade porches. This house appears to be a local, vernacular adaptation of the Neoclassical style that is in keeping with trends common to the period when the work was undertaken. Is there any information on the reasons the house was designated in the first place? If so, it should be included in the report."

Mr. Dzuirman next read the letter from Brian Conway, State Historic Preservation Officer, dated March 23, 2010: "Dear Mr. Delacourt, Staff members of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) have reviewed

the preliminary historic district committee report for the district at 1585 S. Rochester Road. Our comments on the report are 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. These comments and recommendations are based on our experiences working with local historic districts. The SHPO lacks authority to give legal advice to any person or agency, public or private. The report was presented to the State Historic Preservation Review Board at their meeting on January 15, 2010. They had no further comment on the Report. The Report will be presented to the Michigan Historical Commission at its next scheduled meeting on April 22. Should they have any comments they will be forwarded to you. We appreciate the efforts by the City of Rochester Hills to protect its historic resources. If we can assist you further, please contact Amy Arnold at 517-335-2729.

Mr. Dzuirman allowed comments pertaining to this agenda item.

Melinda Hill, 1481 Mill Race, Rochester Hills, MI *Ms. Hill stated that after briefly going over the information presented regarding the request for delisting 1585 S. Rochester Rd. and 2371 S. Livernois, the latter of which had not had a preliminary report prepared or a public hearing held, she noted that the comments from the State supported her comments made at the public hearing at the last meeting. She expressed that more time and research was needed for the property and for 2371 S. Livernois. She was glad to see the report, and she noted that the matter would be on Council's agenda for Monday, April 12. It helped substantiate the request for time, given that the Michigan Historical Commission would not be reviewing it until April 22. She noticed that Mr. Anzek had indicated that it would probably be appropriate for the HDSC to state some type of a time frame for when they felt that the final report should go before Council. She wished the HDSC to think about taking another three months - May, June and July - to do the appropriate research. She was not sure whether a consultant would be utilized again, but then the matter could go before Council in September. She reminded that Council was very heavily involved with the City's budget in August. In September, residents would be back from vacations and the budget would be done, and that would allow the appropriate time for research, which she strongly felt was necessary for both properties.*

Scot Beaton, 655 Bolinger St., Rochester Hills, MI *Mr. Beaton stated that he continued to support the wisdom of the Historic Districts Study*

Committee, and he looked forward to seeing them progress with the decision, whether to delist the subject historic resource or not. If the Committee decided to delist the property, which he felt was tied into an original discussion in 2004 whereby a PUD was created, if the historic house could not be incorporated into a retail or office use, he would strongly urge the Planning Department to proceed with trying to revert the property back to single-family residential. He opined that Mr. Earl Borden had a vision for the City, which he said was unlike that of the Planning Director, in which the retail and office in this City would only be developed at the corners. Rochester Hills would never create any continuous strips of office or commercial use on any mile road. Mr. Beaton said he read recently in the Oakland Press that the City's Planning Director, "with his lack of wisdom," said that single-family residential could not be built on Rochester Road. He found that quite insulting to the residents of Rochester Hills who already owned property there, and he firmly asked that the Planning Director of the City apologize for those comments.

Mr. Dzuirman asked if SHPO had forwarded correspondence for all the properties shown on the agenda. Mr. Delacourt said that they only forwarded 1585 S. Rochester, 2040 S. Livernois, and Stiles School (3976 S. Livernois) to SHPO, and they received comments back for all three. The only significant comments were related to 1585 S. Rochester. The other comments only referred to maps and boundary descriptions, and boundary descriptions were not included until the final report.

Mr. Dzuirman called for discussion on 1585 S. Rochester Road. Mr. Delacourt advised that he forwarded the State's comments to the consultant and after reviewing the comments, she further researched and did not find any other information. If the Committee decided to do additional research, it would be helpful to have direction as to where additional information might exist. This was the first instance he could recall that the State's assumption was that there was not enough research conducted.

Mr. Dzuirman asked if there was a recent meeting related to the property and the PUD. Mr. Delacourt agreed that there had been a discussion at City Council over a month ago related to a revised PUD and the delisting request. There was also a meeting at City Hall at which the property owner invited residents to discuss the property. Mr. Dzuirman asked if there were Minutes taken, and Mr. Delacourt advised that they were not, as it was not a City meeting. Mr. Dzuirman said he did not get an invitation, and Mr. Delacourt further advised that Staff had nothing to do with sending invitations.

Mr. Dzuirman stated that the study originally done for the properties was not done in error. He had a copy of the final report dated June 15, 1978 from the Avon Township Historic Districts Study Committee, and he read the first two pages of a letter sent to the Avon Township Board, the Avon Township Planning Commission, the Michigan Historical Commission and the Michigan State Historical Advisory Council:

“Pursuant to Township Board action of October 5, 1977, the Historic Districts Study Committee herewith submits its final report for your review and consideration. As charged by the Board and pursuant to Section 3 of Act 169 of 1970, the Committee’s responsibilities were to conduct studies in research to make a report on the historical significance of the building, structure, features, sites, objects and surroundings in Avon Township, and to recommend areas to be included in the proposed historic district or districts. In compliance with the Act, the Study Committee’s preliminary report was transmitted to the Avon Township Planning Commission for review and recommendations at their regular meeting on January 24, 1978. At the same time, copies of the report were filed with the Michigan Historical Commission and with the Michigan State Historical Advisory Council. On April 11, 1978, following due notice to all property owners in the proposed district, a public hearing was held at Avon Township Hall, chaired by the Study Committee and monitored by Lawrence Ternan, Avon Township Attorney. Input from these several sources, along with that from the Avon Township Building Department have been carefully considered by the Study Committee in preparing this final report. The attached, proposed ordinance, as revised, has the unanimous approval of the Study Committee. In presenting this final report, the Committee wishes to thank Earl Borden, Avon Township Supervisor, and his staff for their excellent cooperation, and to Lawrence Ternan, Avon Township Attorney, for his counsel. With this report, the Avon Township Historic District is completed.” It was signed by Richard Eberline, Chairperson and Natalie Stephenson, Secretary.

Mr. Dzuirman next read the preface to the report: “Act 169, as enacted by the Michigan Legislature in 1970, states in Section 2: The purpose of the ordinance is to a) safeguard the heritage of the local unit by preserving a district in the local government, which reflects elements of its culture, social, economic, political or architectural history; b) stabilize and improve property values in such district; c) foster civic beauty; d) strengthen the local economy; and e) promote the use of the historic districts for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the local unit and of the State. To implement these objectives, the Act spells out in

detail the means of achieving an historic districts status namely, first, by gathering facts to a Study Committee and secondly, by activating a permanent administrative body called the Historic Districts Commission. This study covers only the first phase of the process. In approaching this study, the Committee was fortunate to be able to call on other communities for guidance, such as Franklin Village, Romeo, Warren, Troy, Waterford, Detroit, Ann Arbor and others who have obtained historic district status. Assistance was also obtained from Robert E. Miller, Historic Preservation Coordinator, State of Michigan, State History Division, Lansing.

Mr. Dzuirman emphasized that he could not imagine how someone could say the initial report was done in error with all that background. He objected to those comments, and said that he knew that most of the people on the Committee were on the Commission in the 1980's and they knew the community better than anyone present. He did not know if it was a mistake when Dr. Bush did the last study. She stated that it was architecturally significant, and he was not sure that was it in its entirety. He reiterated that the reports were not performed in error, and that proper judgments were made along the way.

Ms. Thomasson wondered how it would affect what the Committee did - as the report moved forward to the Michigan Historical Commission (MHC). She questioned what might come out of that meeting.

Mr. Delacourt said that it was very rare for the MHC to disagree with comments from SHPO. If they had anything in addition to SHPO's comments, they would be sent to the Study Committee. The local district made the decision, but the comments would be important to help guide the Study Committee in making its recommendations to City Council.

Mr. Dzuirman said that his comments were really directed at the consultant and the conclusions she reached. He did not think she knew the background, and he did not think she should have made her statement.

Ms. Thomasson said she had the utmost respect for the people she knew on the Committee, but her concern with making a delisting decision at the meeting was that compared to the other SHPO reports, the one for 1585 brought up some questions for which someone had knowledge. She wanted to know if there was further information out there, and she was not comfortable in making a delisting decision without a little more information or information from the Historical Commission.

Mr. Dzuirman noted that there was some correspondence in the packet from Mr. Anzek about a request for an extension. Mr. Delacourt explained that he had included an Agenda Summary (similar to a staff report) signed by Mr. Anzek that was going to Council on April 12.

Mr. Hannick asked if there was some historical background on the people who lived in the home. Mr. Dzuirman said that the designation was based on the person who lived there at the time, but there could have been others that followed, and they did not have the whole history. Mr. Hannick agreed they needed to find out a little more about the people who lived there and if they had any historical significance. Mr. Dzuirman said there was no question that they should ask for an extension in order to make sure they had everything covered and for more research to take place that was brought up by the SHPO office. Mr. Wayne Eddy might have been one of the primary reasons it was designated, not the house itself, and many homes over time changed. Mr. Hannick asked if any of the people on the original Committee were still alive. Mr. Dzuirman said that Larry Terman was still around, and perhaps Mr. Terry Givens and Ms. Elizabeth Black. Mr. Hannick said it would be nice to talk with them and hear their train of thought. He recalled driving by the house when he was young and observing that the house stood out. It was unique, and he felt that every community should have something unique.

Mr. Delacourt read an email he had received from Ms. Kidorf, the consultant: "In researching 1585 Rochester, I searched the following locations for information on Mr. Eddy and the Allen Ventilator and Cooler Business: The Birth and Historical Collection, the Detroit Public Library, the internet, the Rochester Library, Oakland County's archives, Rochester Library's Local History Museum, the Rochester Hills Museum and any information the City had on Mr. Eddy or the business, and it did not lead to anything other than what was already given."

Mr. Delacourt said that if anyone wished to branch out and do additional research in other places or knew of somewhere else to direct Ms. Kidorf - he would gladly accept that information.

Mr. Dzuirman asked the time limit for the other two agenda items (2040 S. Livernois and 3976 S. Livernois). Mr. Delacourt said that public hearings were held on February 11, 2010 for 2040 and 3976, which had one-year time frames to report back to City Council. Mr. Dzuirman thought that the Committee should ask Council for an extension until September for 1585 S. Rochester and 2371 S. Livernois, and that they should table 2040 S.

Livernois and 3976 S. Livernois until all the members were present. He did not like doing things of this nature without a majority. He suggested making a motion asking Council for extra time, and Mr. Hannick moved the following:

MOTION by Hannick, seconded by Thomasson, that the Historic Districts Study Committee requests that City Council extend the time for reviewing the request for delisting 1585 S. Rochester Road and 2371 S. Livernois until the available September 2010 City Council meeting.

A motion was made by Hannick, seconded by Thomasson, that this matter be Accepted. The motion CARRIED by the following vote:

Aye 4 - Dziurman, Webster, Hannick and Thomasson

Absent 2 - Stamps and Thompson

Mr. Dziurman said that he would like to hear from SHPO regarding 2040 S. Livernois and 3976 S. Livernois. It was the first time that Council appeared to be interested in declaring Stiles School (3976) part of a historic site with only the area around the original school designated. That did not follow the standards, and it did not follow what he would consider the SHPO standards he was used to. The State talked about it in their reply, and he had brought it up about a month ago when he had a meeting at SHPO on some other issues. It seemed that it was a departure from the way they looked at things, and the people he talked with were surprised about it. He reiterated that he thought they should postpone the last two agenda items until the full Committee was present.

2009-0437

2371 S. Livernois Road (HDSC File #04-006)

Discuss Delisting - Next Steps

Mr. Dziurman asked Ms. Hill if she would like to speak about 2371 N. Livernois.

Melinda Hill, 1481 Mill Race, Rochester Hills, MI *Ms. Hill noted the request for additional time. At the last meeting, there was discussion about altering the preliminary report and eliminating the indicated conclusion, and she wondered where the Committee stood. She did not see anything in the packet about it. There were some action steps she recalled reading, and it said that the Study Committee would need to revise or accept the preliminary report (see suggestions in Kidorf letter). She wondered if there was a new letter from Ms. Kidorf indicating possible revisions to the report. She would not like to see a conclusion in the preliminary report sent to SHPO; she would rather see a statement that*

says a determination of insignificance still needed to be made.

Mr. Dzuirman agreed for the most part, and said that was why they needed the extra time to react to it - pro or con.

Mr. Delacourt said that the Study Committee believed that the original Study Committee report was in good standing, and that nothing provided to date had changed the original recommendation. If the Study Committee felt that it was a valid conclusion, he did not know how much more studying needed to be done. If they felt that the information gathered did not change the recommendation in the original study, the Committee could change the report to say that. The ordinance was very clear that all they had to show was that it was either or either not different than originally thought by the original designation. Ms. Kidorf's recommendation was just based on her experience. Ultimately, it was a decision to be made by the Study Committee. They could change the recommendation to say that the information as presented in the preliminary report did not change the original thought of the Study Committee.

Mr. Dzuirman stated that he did not believe the research was complete. He felt an obligation to present something that supported his feelings, but he had a question mark. He could not see how the original Committee faltered. Mr. Delacourt said the report could say that. Mr. Dzuirman said that maybe it would, but he still wanted to be able to try and talk with some of those people.

Mr. Delacourt advised that the Chair was on vacation and would not be back in town when the matter went before Council on April 12. He asked if there was anyone from the Study Committee that wanted the opportunity to speak directly to Council.

Mr. Dzuirman said he would have gone, but he will also be out of town. Mr. Dzuirman suggested that he could write a letter.

This matter was Discussed

2007-0313

2040 S. Livernois Rd. (HDSC File #98-012)

Discuss Designation/State's Comments

This matter was postponed.

2005-0537 **3976 S. Livernois Road (HDSC File #05-002)**
Discuss Designation/State's Comments

This matter was postponed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business brought before the Historic Districts Study Committee.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The Chair reminded the Study Committee that the next regular meeting was scheduled for May 13, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Study Committee, and upon motion by Webster, second by Hannick, the Chair adjourned the Regular Meeting at 6:24 p.m.

*John Dzuirman, Member
Historic Districts Study Committee*

*Transcribed by Maureen Gentry
Planning and Economic Development*