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Derek Delacourt
Deputy Director
Planning & Economic Development
City of Rochester Hills
1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills, Michigan 48309

RE: Draft Preliminary Study Committee Reports, 1585 South Rochester Road and 2371 Livernois Road

Dear Derek,

In response to Ms. Hill's comments at the January 14th Historic Districts Study Committee meeting I offer the following comments to the study committee.

I apologize for incorrectly using the language "originally thought" in both reports. That was an error on my part, I incorrectly remembered the state and local ordinance language. I recommend the committee change the language in the report to "previously defined." However, the language used in stating the "committee's findings" is the standard language used when writing draft reports for the committee, regardless of the recommendation. The committee is free to change these recommendations or language as they see necessary.

I have confirmed with the State Historic Preservation Office that when reviewing de-designation requests the committee should use today's standards, not the standards from when the district was designated.

I spent a great deal of time and thought in developing my draft reports with recommendations for the committee. Both requests for de-designation were difficult because I was unable to find much historical information and the records from the study committee's original work are not as detailed as reports and records that are generated today. Ms. Hill is correct, we do not know their original thoughts, and we can only go with the written records of their work. Additionally, in both cases, new information about the history of the houses was discovered that does not appear to have been available in 1978 or in 2002. At times architecture can be deceiving about when it was constructed, which is why "windshield surveys" are followed with intensive level surveys to document the architecture and history of a property before designation is considered. In both cases the new information formed my opinion that neither property was significant in the way previously defined which was for their architecture.

1585 S. Rochester

The designation information consists of two survey sheets, both calling the main house and second house (demolished) "Classic Greek Revival" in style, and under historical data stating, "E.C. Kraut farm on 64 acres, known as Fairview Farm, was built about 1902. The farm was purchased by the Eddys in 1934 and following major cleaning and restoration, the family moved in two years later." Under additional remarks it states: "Good exterior condition. Historically significant." The additional research completed by Dr. Busch in 2002 updates and clarifies the history and significance, stating "The 1908 atlas map shows E.C. Krout's Fairview Farm of 64 acres, with a house that could be this one. The rural property inventory gives us an 1891 construction date for the house. The farm was purchased by the Eddy family in 1934. In 1938 Eddy's farm was 106.05 acres. A smaller house and all of the farm buildings were demolished in 1993. The farm is now occupied by the Eddington Farms Subdivision. Despite the loss of the other farm buildings and aluminum siding on the house, it remains a good local example of the Neoclassical style."

Starting with this information my research on the property involved reviewing a circa 1915 photograph of the property (in the report) that showed the house in a different style and form. Based on the cited references it does not appear that the historic photograph was available during the 1978 and 2002 surveys. It is possible that earlier researchers concluded that

the house was in its present form since 1891. A deed search contradicted the information from the earlier survey reports, the Eddy's did not purchase the property until 1936. Research on the Eddy's and Fairview Farm did not answer the question of when the house was remodeled from the Queen Anne shown in the c. 1915 photograph to the current Neo-Classical configuration. The owner granted access to the site for a close inspection of the interior of the building, something that was not done in the 2002 survey as all work was conducted from the public right-of-way. This closer inspection revealed that the Neo-Classical details are not what they appear from the street. The materials and construction appear to be newer, from the 1940s or 50s.

If the following information were found it would be easier to ascertain the historic and architectural importance of the house: definitive information on the date that the house was changed from Queen Anne to Neo-Classical and who made those changes; information on the Eddy's, including information on the Allen Cooler and Ventilator Company and which automotive company Mr. Eddy worked for and his importance to that company; minutes or notes from the work of the original study committee to determine if they considered the farm buildings on the property important to the property's significance and history.

2371 Livernois

The 1978 designation survey sheet for this property reads, "Greed Revival – Plantation Style. The house was built in 1944 on a 4 acre parcel on Rochester Road, Avon Township, Rochester, by Mr. & Mrs. George Berklich. The architect was Mr. Jack Burns, Rochester. The George Berklich family lived in the house until 1969 when the land was sold for development. It was originally on the southeast corner of Auburn and Rochester Roads, where the Pat Moran Car Dealer is located. The current owners Mr. & Mrs. Louis Berklich moved the house from Rochester Road to its present site, 2371 Livernois Road, Rochester, August, 1970. At the time it was moved an addition the length of the back of the house was added—kitchen, dining area, utility room and pantry. Plans for the addition were drawn up by Louis Berklich, Architect. The Louis Berklich family moved in the house in 1976 and are presently living there. Excellent exterior condition. Architecturally significant." The 2002 survey sheet updates the style to Colonial Revival, and the date of construction to 1945. No additional history is given beyond the 1978 survey sheet.

The new information that was discovered for this property included the moving and building permits that show that new front porches were constructed at the time of the move. The site plans only show footprint diagrams, full architectural drawings were not included. Research did not uncover photographs or information on what the house looked like before it was moved, and if the new front porches were a reconstruction of the original porch or something new. No information on the architecture of Jack Burns or Louis Berklich was found. Based on this lack of evidence about the authenticity of the existing architecture it is my opinion that the property is not significant in the way previously defined.

If the following information were found the architectural integrity could be verified: photographs or other documentary evidence of the house's appearance before the move from Rochester Road and additional information on the architectural practice of Jack Burns and/or Louis Berklich.

Please contact me at 313-300-9376 or kristine@kidorfpreservationconsulting.com if you have any questions or if you require additional assistance.

Sincerely,



Kristine M. Kidorf
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