



Department of Planning and Development

Staff Report to the Historic Districts Study Committee

October 2, 2023

Winkler Mill Pond HD – Boundary Change	
REQUEST	Review draft Preliminary Study Committee Report and possibly adopt
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Progress to date

On April 17, 2023, the Rochester Hills City Council directed the Historic Districts Study Committee to study the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District to determine if the boundaries of the district should be reduced as recommended in the 2002 and 2022 surveys of the district.

On August 10, 2023, the HDSC adopted the draft Preliminary Historic District Study Committee Report. It was transmitted by staff to the State Historic Preservation Office and the Rochester Hills Planning Commission for review and comment.

The city notified all property owners within the existing district of the educational session and public hearing.

An education open house was held on September 14, 2023, at the city offices from 5:30 to 6:30. Two property owners attended. One non-contributing property owner was in support of the smaller district. The property owner at 1921 Washington was concerned about being eliminated from the district as she has a historic house. She has since provided staff with historic photographs and information on her property.

On September 29, 2023, staff received the comments on the report from the State Historic Preservation Office which recommended changes to the district boundaries and to the report.

On September 19, 2023, the Rochester Hills City Planning Commission accepted the report as written with no comments.

A draft Final Historic District Study Committee Report has been prepared for consideration by the HDSC after the public hearing at the meeting on October 12, 2023.

Concerns raised at educational session:

Washington Road – currently all of Washington Road is within the existing historic district. This has required that the Road Commission for Oakland County come before the HDC for any changes to the roadway. The proposed boundary change would eliminate all but a small section of Washington Road.

1921 Washington Road – The owner of this property questioned why they were being removed from the district when they have documentation that the house is historic. In the 2002 survey it was noted that the house “retains little, if any, of its appearance prior to World War II.” The original historic survey from when the district was designated notes that a one-story addition was added in 1948. Since 1956 “various interior remodeling projects and installation of some new window sash was accomplished.” Since 1964 “extensive interior remodeling, new roofing and siding, new doors and sash, and a new deck and screened porch were accomplished” by the owners at that time. In comparing the 1970s designation photo to what can be seen of the house today, it appears that the windows were replaced with vinyl or aluminum windows with a similar muntin pattern. Additionally, the 2002 survey notes that a three-car garage was added in 1987. It is presumed this addition was approved by the HDC.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) comments:

That the resource counts be clarified in both the existing and revised district.

Consider removing 1725 Washington Road from the revised district as it isn’t really needed to include 1740 Washington Road.

That the report focus more on what is being eliminated from the district rather than what is being retained.

Next Steps

1. The final study committee report has been revised to incorporate the SHPO comments;
2. The public hearing is being held on October 12, 2023;
3. After the public hearing at the October meeting, the HDSC can review the draft final report and make any additional changes or revisions, including adding or removing properties.
4. At the October meeting if the HDSC is satisfied with the draft final study committee report it can be adopted; OR
5. The HDSC can request additional revisions and review a revised draft at the November meeting;
6. Once the committee is satisfied with the final report it can be adopted and the findings are submitted back to City Council.