

**CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS STUDY COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
Thursday, January 10, 2008**

**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 5:30 PM.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairperson Jason Thompson; Members John Dziurman, David Kibby, Dr. Richard Stamps, LaVere Webster

Absent: Members Peggy Schodowski, Dennis Mueller

**QUORUM PRESENT**

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

Chairperson Thompson welcomed Mr. Kibby to the Committee. He noted Mr. Mueller had just been appointed at the January 7, 2008 City Council meeting and had a prior conflict. He stated Ms. Schodowski had left prior notice she could not attend this meeting.

**3. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

4A. November 8, 2007 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Thompson asked for any comments or corrections regarding the November 8, 2007 Regular Meeting Minutes. Upon hearing no comments or corrections, Chairperson Thompson called for a motion to approve.

**MOTION** by Webster, seconded by Dziurman, that the Minutes of the November 8, 2007 Regular Historic Districts Study Committee Meeting be approved as presented.

Ayes: All  
Nays: None  
Absent: Schodowski, Mueller

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

Approved as presented/amended at the \_\_\_\_\_, 2007 Regular Historic Districts Study Committee Meeting

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Chairperson Thompson asked if there were any announcements or communications. He thanked Rev. Dr. Whateley for her years of service on the Committee. No other announcements or communications were provided.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**7A. Meeting with State Historic Preservation Office**

Mr. Delacourt explained the Committee had discussed holding a meeting with a representative of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in connection with SHPO's review of the three delisting Preliminary Reports. In their response letter, the SHPO had indicated a meeting with the State's local historic districts coordinator would be scheduled. The Study Committee believed this was a good idea and requested a meeting be scheduled.

Mr. Delacourt stated he had contacted Amy Arnold, the local historic districts coordinator, and she indicated the meeting referenced in the State's review letter would have been scheduled with the City's Historic Districts Commission, and was suggested in error on her part as she mistakenly assumed the City was a Certified Local Government (CLG). She had explained meetings were routinely scheduled with the Historic Districts Commissions of CLG municipalities.

Mr. Delacourt stated that Ms. Arnold had indicated she would be happy to meet with the Study Committee, although she would have to be reimbursed for her travel expenses.

In his discussion with Ms. Arnold, he referred to the review comments, and noted the review comments did not contain any reference to what the Historic Districts Commission (HDC) may or may not have approved appropriately or inappropriately. He pointed out the Study Committee's review was of the structure as it appeared today.

Mr. Delacourt stated he wanted to check to see if the Study Committee was still interested in scheduling a meeting since travel expenses would have to be reimbursed to the SHPO. He noted he found the State's review letter confusing, and that both Dr. Jane Busch and Kristine Kidorf had reviewed the SHPO review letter and did not understand what was going on.

Mr. Dziurman stated he was not sure he was totally in favor of delisting the Rice Property (1470 W. Tienken). He noted the home on Dequindre had been moved, and the State agreed with the delisting of that property (56187 Dequindre).

The Committee discussed the legal requirements when the SHPO did not agree with the Study Committee's Preliminary Report. Mr. Delacourt noted the final decision of whether to designate or delist was made by the local unit of government. The Committee

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discussed the fact that if the SHPO did not agree with a local unit of government's decision, and the local unit of government designated a structure despite SHPO's disagreement with the designation, then the SHPO would not provide tax credits for renovation work performed on that property, which would hurt the property owner.

The Committee discussed whether the SHPO would consider re-issuing their review letter. Mr. Delacourt explained that the State holds cities with a CLG certification to certain standards. In their response letter, the SHPO assumed the City was a CLG and made other assumptions about how the City performed. SHPO had reviewed their comments and believed their comments were still valid. The Committee noted that SHPO did not agree that 920 South Boulevard W. met the criteria for designation; and then disagreed with the delisting of two other properties.

Mr. Dziurman noted the Rice Property (1470 W. Tienken) had some history behind it, despite changes having been made to the exterior of the structure, and was more significant to the history of the Community.

The Committee discussed the fact the three delisting Preliminary Reports presented three different scenarios, and discussed how they should proceed with those reports. It was noted the process was established by Ordinance, and the City's Ordinance mirrored State Law. The Committee commented they had used consultants who were experts in their field, and who had worked for SHPO. All agreed the nature of the SHPO response to the three delisting reports was unprofessional in chastising the City's Historic Districts Commission (HDC), particularly when the Commission was a separate entity and had nothing to do with the Study Committee's work.

The Committee questioned whether there would be some benefit from meeting with Brian Conway, the State Historic Preservation Officer, or whether the HDC should be invited to participate in the meeting. Mr. Dziurman pointed out the State considered the Committee and the Commission two separate boards. He suggested that perhaps representatives of the Committee and the Commission could travel to Lansing to meet with SHPO, or meet at a halfway point. He reminded the Committee that SHPO had participated in the Commission's Open House event held in May, 2007.

The Committee discussed the fact the Committee and the SHPO did not appear to "be on the same page" as SHPO had not agreed with the Committee's recommendations on three of the last four Preliminary Reports. For some reason, the Committee is missing the mark with SHPO.

There was some discussion on how the presentation to the State Review Board was handled, as the Review Board comments seemed to mirror SHPO's comments. It was noted that Brian Conway signs the SHPO response letters, but it appears Amy Arnold does the actual review.

Mr. Dziurman stated he would be willing to meet with the State. The Committee agreed it would be beneficial to find out what is going on. With respect to the initial Preliminary Report prepared for 920 South Boulevard W., the Committee recommended designation. However, based on the fact SHPO did not agree with the proposed designation, the Committee did not make a recommendation to City Council that the property be designated. The matter was left with the proviso that if someone purchased the property and requested

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designation, additional research could be done to determine if there was additional criteria sufficient to warrant designation. Although one of the former owners of the property was involved in agriculture and published some books on the subject, no evidence had been found as to whether any of the research or writing had taken place at the property. That particular former owner also owned property in Florida. Another prior owner had done some illustration work on Star Wars; however, it did not appear that work had been done on the property.

Mr. Delacourt asked how the Committee wanted to proceed with the delisting Reports. Mr. Dziurman stated he was not sure he agreed with delisting the Rice Property (1470 W. Tienken). He pointed out the history of site including farming, and the Community began primarily as a farming community. He agreed the architecture of the home had been changed.

Chairperson Thompson clarified that the Committee felt a meeting with representatives from SHPO would be beneficial. The Committee agreed as there was a lot of concern that SHPO had disagreed with so many of the respected opinions of those on the Committee and the qualified consultants.

Mr. Delacourt stated that the Rice Preliminary Report (1470 W. Tienken) required some additional discussion. As the SHPO disagreed with the Committee's recommendation, perhaps more investigation was required. It was noted that SHPO was not specific about the reasons they disagreed and did not ask for any more information about the approval of any additions to the house or the property. The only reason given by the SHPO was that they felt that property should not be delisted because the HDC inappropriately approved additions. He indicated he had asked for the SHPO comments to be rewritten; however, SHPO did not agree that the integrity had fallen to the point where the property should be delisted.

The Committee agreed a meeting with SHPO should be held, but agreed that the meeting might be done more informally. SHPO could be asked how professional the City and the Committee were, and how they compared to other communities. The Committee would like to gain an understanding of where they are coming from.

Mr. Webster stated he had held a discussion with the SHPO representatives during the Open House about views, orchard views, and the removal of trees on historic properties. He was informed that tax credits would not be available for that type of work.

Chairperson Thompson clarified that there was a consensus among the Committee Members to schedule a meeting with representatives of SHPO. The Committee agreed an informal meeting should be scheduled.

Mr. Delacourt asked if the Committee wanted to proceed with the two delisting Preliminary Reports. The Committee agreed to schedule the Reports for the next meeting, which would give the new Members an opportunity to review the reports, and the Committee an opportunity to meet with SHPO to find out if there were some specific items the Committee should consider before proceeding. The Committee did not want Ms. Kidorf to do any additional work on the properties until they had some clarification from SHPO.

7B. Update – Outstanding Preliminary Reports

Mr. Delacourt stated the Committee had discussed the three delisting Preliminary Reports as part of the prior Agenda item.

Frank Farm Preliminary Report:

The Preliminary Report has been sent to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for review. When the SHPO comments are received, the Public Hearing will be scheduled.

Stiles School (3976 S. Livernois):

The Preliminary Report has been forwarded to the SHPO for review, and a copy was forward to a representative of the Steiner School with an invitation to call to discuss the proposed designation. Mr. Delacourt stated he had not received any response from the School. No review comments had been received from SHPO as of this time.

The Committee discussed the size of the parcel included in the proposed designation, which would include the entire school building - both the original school building and all additions. It was noted the School had been in transition for some time regarding the purchase of the school; the fire at the school, and a lack of an administrator for the School.

Stoney Creek Redistricting:

The consultant had not been requested to begin any work on the redistricting of the Stoney Creek Historic District to date. Ms. Kidorf had indicated that quite a bit of work had been done by Dr. Jane Busch on the District during her 2002 Intensive Level Survey, and estimated the cost for any additional work necessary to prepare the Preliminary Report at about \$3,500.00.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

8A. Election of Officers – 2008

(1) Election of Chairperson:

Chairperson Thompson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chairperson. Mr. Webster nominated Jason Thompson. There being no other nominations, the floor was closed for nominations. Jason Thompson was unanimously elected to the office of Chairperson of the Historic Districts Study Committee for a term ending December 31, 2008.

(2) Election of Vice Chairperson:

Chairperson Thompson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson. Dr. Stamps was nominated. Chairperson Thompson called for any additional nominations. Upon hearing none, he closed the floor for

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nominations, and Dr. Stamps was unanimously elected to the office of Vice Chairperson of the Historic Districts Study Committee, for a term ending December 31, 2008.

(3) Election of Secretary:

Chairperson Thompson explained it was common practice for Boards and Commissions to nominate City Staff for the position of secretary, and the nomination of the Planning & Development Department was so made. Chairperson Thompson called for any additional nominations. Upon hearing none, he closed the floor for nominations and the Planning & Development Department was unanimously elected to the office of Secretary of the Historic Districts Study Committee for the term ending December 31, 2008.

8B. Establish 2008 Meeting Schedule

After a brief discussion, the Committee established the following meeting schedule for 2008:

The meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month at the Rochester Hills Municipal Offices, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive, Rochester Hills, Michigan, and will begin at 5:30 PM Michigan Time.

**2008 Meeting Dates**

**January 10, 2008**  
**February 14, 2008**  
**March 13, 2008**  
**April 10, 2008**  
**May 8, 2008**  
**June 12, 2008**

**July 10, 2008**  
**August 14, 2008**  
**September 11, 2008**  
**October 9, 2008**  
**November 13, 2008**  
**December 11, 2008**

8C. 2040 South Boulevard

Mr. Delacourt explained that this property was on the City's Potential List, and would be impacted by the Livernois and Hamlin intersection work. A Section 6 Study had been done, which indicated the house had historical integrity. Subsequently, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was reached between the Road Commission for Oakland County, the City, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and the State Historic Preservation Office to mitigate any impact concerns. The MOA required the completion of a National Register Nomination for the structure. The research work done for the National Register Nomination will also generate information necessary to complete a Preliminary Report for the site.

Mr. Delacourt explained the impact to the property with the proposed round-about design would be minimal and consisted of about thirteen feet of impact that could be mitigated through landscaping.

Mr. Delacourt stated it was hoped that through economy of scale, the work for the National Register Nomination and the Preliminary Report could be completed at the

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same time through the City's consultant, Kristine Kidorf. He indicated the City's Engineering Department was working with the Road Commission to determine if the City's standards for the bid/selection process qualified for the County's standards for their bid/selection process. If the standards are acceptable, the City would recommend Ms. Kidorf to complete the National Register Nomination as her research on for the National Register Nomination would be essentially the same as what was needed to prepare a Preliminary Report for local designation. No time line for the nomination work has been established to date.

8D. HDC Resident Workshops

Mr. Delacourt advised the Committee that based on the results of surveys the Historic Districts Commission (HDC) had distributed during the Open House event held last May, 2007, the Commission would be scheduling some workshops geared towards the needs of residents who owned historic properties. He indicated a General Maintenance workshop would be held on a Saturday morning at the Dairy Barn at the Van Hoosen Museum in early February or March. The workshop would be presented by the Michigan Historic Preservation Network.

On April 10, 2008, a Tax Credits workshop would be held at the City Municipal Offices. Mr. Delacourt explained a short tax credits presentation was made at the Open House, which was very well received and that a more in-depth presentation had been requested. A representative from the State Historic Preservation Office would give the presentation.

Mr. Delacourt stated that a third workshop focusing on window restoration may be held, but was still under consideration.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Thompson called for any other business. No other business was presented. Chairperson Thompson noted that the next regular meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2008.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 6:25 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

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