

Mr. Kilpatrick said they have had very little time to look at this matter. He feels it will set a precedent for the community and he is very hesitant to write something because if it does become a legal issue, it is very important to properly document their thoughts and findings and he wants to have time to do that. To him, this is a very important issue. He went to the State with it and they prevailed and have prevailed with every issue taken to the State. He wants to make sure they give the applicant every opportunity in the world to come up with a common ground they can all agree upon. They are here also to protect the resources of this community, and they do not have too many of them left. Personally, he feels this is not an appropriate addition to the resource and he would like to find a way to satisfy everyone. This is why he feels they should table this matter.

Ms. Hill thought the appropriate language was to postpone the matter until next month. Mr. Zobair said he was not sure what they would change on the proposal between now and then. He may request a motion to de-list this property. He would like to know who would chair the special committee for that. Mr. Delacourt said there was no official Chairman for that – they would work under the terms of City Council. It is a five-member standing study committee and the request is made through the Planning Department or Mr. Delacourt.

Mr. Kilpatrick asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he called for a motion.

MOTION by Dziurman, seconded by Hill that File #HDC02-004 be postponed until the August 8, 2002 HDC meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Dunphy, Dziurman, Stamps, Szantner, Sieffert, Hill, Dressel
Nays: Kilpatrick
Absent: Cozzolino

MOTION CARRIED

He encouraged the applicant and Commissioners to bring forward any ideas they may have.

6. DISCUSSION ITEM:

Proposed Mixed-Use PUD
East side of Rochester Road, between Avon and Hamlin Roads
Including 1585 S. Rochester Road, a designated historic property

Mr. Anzek introduced himself to the HDC members he has not had a chance to meet. He advised the Commissioners that Mr. Bill Gilbert, of Gilbert & Vennettelli, Inc. has been working with Staff to develop a mixed-use Planned Unit Development for his land holdings along Rochester Road. The City's Master Land Use Plan, prepared in 1999, supports this type of development, which would be comprised of a combination of residential, retail, and office uses on an awkward piece of land. There is a substantial wetland corridor that runs through the site, and Mr. Gilbert has respected that on his site plan. He and his design team, Alexander V. Bogaerts and Associates, Inc., have developed something somewhat unique for the City that is respectful of the direction of the Master Land Use Plan. The applicant is requesting that the Commissioners provide guidance on how to deal with the historic structure that remains on the parcel. Staff has

invited Mr. Gilbert to attend a pre-application workshop on July 30, 2002 with the Planning Commission to present the same concept, and to also get their guidance. A project like this, which must go before multiple boards for influence and input, should be reviewed in the appropriate sequence. He turned the discussion over to Mr. Alex Bogaerts.

Referencing colored renderings of the buildings to front Rochester Road, Mr. Bogaerts stated that their objective was to create a downtown image of residential, office and retail space in a street scene setting. He said they are very excited about the opportunity for this development. The impact of frontage is equal to that of downtown Rochester. They determined the mix should contain very small retail with parking in front of them. There would be eight buildings on Rochester Road housing 2,500 square feet each of retail on the first floor. These would be small, unique shops, such as jewelry and coffee shops. They would be supported by residential units directly above them and residential to the east. At present, the mix is approximately 3% retail, 80% residential and the rest office. There are a variety of building types on the site plan, and all are for sale, not lease. Most units in the front buildings have two car garages. The buildings elsewhere on the development would have two car garages or two parking spots for each unit. The detail of the buildings match the character of the older cities a lot of people seem to enjoy in Michigan. The historic home on site cannot remain in its present place for the development to work as well as it could. He pointed to the historical home and said that through many discussions with Staff they have come to believe their best option for the historic structure is to relocate and restore it on site in an effort to preserve it. They have discussed several uses for the house, including using it as a clubhouse. He pointed to the location they propose to relocate the home, toward the east and back of the property.

Dr. Stamps commented that he looks at that cultural resource as being more than just the one building. He is terribly disturbed at the way the resource has been treated in the last ten years, where little buildings keep disappearing. He recalled something about the open space and that there was more than one building. He did want the Commission to do to this building what had been done with the building across the street. He said that one had the front chopped off and they squished everything around it and totally destroyed the historic nature of it. He thought that was a travesty of justice. He noted that the idea of picking up the building and moving it was interesting. He asked about the south side of the property and Mr. Anzek answered it is Bordine's property. Dr. Stamps clarified that if moved to the applicant's proposed location, the only visual image someone would have of the historic structure from Rochester Road would be from about an eighth of a mile away, and between crowded streets. Mr. Bogaerts said it would be like looking at any building down the end of an avenue. Dr. Stamp's concern is that it will be a little far away to really get the image of it. Anyone driving north on Rochester Road now can see the existing structure. If it is back an eighth of a mile on a sharp right that cannot be seen, someone would only get about six seconds to look down the narrow way and would never be able to see it. It would only be seen if someone is driving around in the complex, which would be nice, but he is disturbed because they are assessing the resource and determining that the only thing that is there is the house. The barn and the outbuildings do not count.

Mr. Gilbert commented that there were no outbuildings. He advised that when they purchased the property, those buildings were collapsed and were in total disrepair. When they came before the HDC 16 years ago with a request, they followed everything properly. The house itself is aluminum sided and they have not changed the exterior.

People look quickly when they drive by and think it is a wonderful, historic house, but it is maybe more of an old landmark than a home of historic significance. It is not one that has been cared for, kept in pristine condition and restored, as those in nice historic districts. He guessed the original siding was clapboard and is in reasonable condition. They have kept tenants in it simply to keep it from being vandalized. He said there was nothing they could do about the barns because they are gone. He feels putting it in the new location, and he added they do not have any concrete plan for the resource's use, but have an option to make it part of the community, would make it more accessible. Now, there is no way to get near it without trespassing. There is no public access to it. They certainly know the charge of this Commission and know what their goals and objectives are, and they think they can do this development, including moving the home, in concert with them. They can look back at the advice from this Commission and from their own experts and restore it to what it would have looked like 100 years ago. They have named the development after the people they bought it from, the Eddy family. Where the home is now would be a tough sale to a residential family. It is a fairly large house and they do not know if there would be a large market for people looking for a five or six bedroom house on Rochester Road, but he doubted it. He believes it would fit in well somewhere else on the parcel for whatever the use ends up being.

Ms. Dressel wondered where the parking would be, if this has retail operations. Mr. Bogaerts responded that there is a limited amount of retail. He explained that the retail shops would be for small users, 500 to 800 square feet. There would be parking in front of the retail shops and the upper floor units have garages at the back of the retail space. He said they could not compete with the large commercial on Rochester Road. There would be special and unique boutiques, jewelry stores or card shops, etc. In total, they proposed 19,200 square feet of retail in eight buildings, which is an extremely limited amount of retail. They wanted to carry off an old urban look to all of the buildings, which is why the retail would be at the front. Ms. Dressel asked if it was essentially a residential community. Mr. Bogaerts said it was residential, office and retail and there is a certain flexibility in the numbers proposed, which will be openly discussed with the community and have high and low limits set. This is an enormous project and will take a long time to develop. They do not really know today if they will have 19,000 square feet of retail and 46,000 square feet of office or no office and more residential.

Ms. Sieffert remarked that it looks to her like they are manufacturing a downtown out of an old cornfield. This looks like they are manufacturing a duplicate of downtown Rochester. Mr. Bogaerts said that is exactly what they are trying to do. That is absolutely their objective. Ms. Sieffert asked what kind of marketing they have done to assess if this type of development would go over well. She knows that the apartments over the stores in downtown Rochester are very much in demand, but she wonders if a brand new community such as this would be appreciated or if people will look at it as living over K-Mart or Target. She remarked that this is not downtown Rochester. It has no history behind it as a downtown main street. That is the appeal behind Rochester's downtown. She said this concept really strikes her because she lives near there. She thought the existing home would have made a great bed and breakfast, because there are no motels or hotels in Rochester Hills, but admitted there is a lot of land.

Mr. Bogaerts said they would get into the marketing specifically as they get further along in the project. This type of development will be enormously successful. In his office they are doing about five of these projects in Michigan. Historically, across the country, these are instantly well received because it is a fabulous lifestyle for someone. There is

no downtown for Rochester Hills and this is a great opportunity. He noted that Bill Gilbert and Gilbert and Vennettelli, Inc. are committed to doing an excellent project at this location. Their corporation can be followed historically through the years. They do a great job. At the same time, the reason they are in front of the Commission is to get their input. He feels, from a design standpoint, that the existing residence does not belong where it is at this time. If they are going to move forward, the building has to move. They believe that historically, it belongs on the site. They would like some direction from the Commission to do this and they have the opportunity to get the building back to its original detail. He felt the detail that was wrong on that building could be corrected so it becomes an accurate historical presentation of Georgian-style architecture.

Mr. Bogaerts advised that the buildings adjacent to the residential would be residential. The retail and office would not face the homes behind the proposed development.

Mr. Delacourt asked Mr. Bogaerts to outline the parcel on which the house now sits in its entirety and also the extent of the other parcel. Mr. Gilbert replied they would connect the two properties with a road. There is about a third of a mile on Rochester Road, which is considerably more than the downtown blocks of Rochester. The parcel goes back almost to the cemetery property. Mr. Delacourt explained that the L-shaped parcel from south of the Detroit Edison corridor and going east is actually the parcel the historic home sits on now.

Mr. Dzurman said that the resource and everything of that parcel is in the Historic District. He continued that the National Register of Criteria reads that as soon as you move a building, it will probably lose its historic context and therefore would not be eligible to be considered historic. He informed them that he was on the Commission when the applicant first came to them about doing this project, and he remembers being promised that the barns would not be removed and they were removed the next day. He has not forgotten that in ten years. He has great hesitation about what the applicant wants to do because of what they promised and what they did the next day. He said that the building and property is an historic resource and all that property is part of the historic resource. When that happened with the barns, the limitation was for within 100 feet of that building. They had no control over the barns, other than a promise. They should acknowledge that all that property is within the Historic District when making a decision, pro or con. He wanted that point clarified, and to give some history and background of that property.

Mr. Gilbert said he was recently made aware of that. He was told a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness would have to come before this Commission. Mr. Kilpatrick asked if he had considered any other options besides moving the structure.

Mr. Gilbert acknowledged he was not aware that moving a house would de-list it. He thought homes in historic districts had been moved prior, even in this City. He asked if that was not true. Mr. Dzurman said homes have been moved, but that lessens their historic context. They are going through a study now with an off-site consultant and had a meeting with the Study Committee about a week ago about a house that was moved off the property and were told it was no longer historic. Mr. Gilbert asked if staying on the historic property when moved would make some difference. Mr. Dzurman advised that the National Register of Criteria is now being used by the State, which was not being used before and the applicant was not privy to that meeting.

Ms. Hill said it has been proven that people like to spend more money when they are visiting historic areas and she wondered if they had thought about showcasing this home. She understands the desire to remove the aluminum siding and feels that can be done. She wondered whether they would be able to utilize this particular building, with another, more compatible one, at the entrance and, with the rest of the buildings, give it the same downtown feel. She felt there would be many adaptive reuses for this structure, without it being a residence. It could be anything from a retail shop to an office. She agrees with Dr. Stamps, and without a real clear definition of what they intend to do, feels it could be showcased more in the front, along with what else is proposed.

Mr. Bogaerts said they spent a great deal of time evaluating the building's current location, and one of the biggest problems is the back of the building at the Eddington Blvd.'s entry. He added there is no real effective way to showcase the front of the building. The whole orientation of the house and its juxtaposition in relation to the other buildings is inappropriate. At first, they thought they could turn it and make it a restaurant, but it would involve changing the location of the buildings onsite. He felt it would be of greater interest to the community to have the urban streetscape continuous and move the building off that location.

Dr. Stamps asked for clarification about the wetland location. He asked if immediately north of the wetland it was buildable. He was told it was. He said if they were going to move the house, which he is still mulling, perhaps if it were moved to that green area north of the wetlands that there would be more visibility from the street and it would have a more attractive access. He suggested it could be a nice restaurant. The area is open because of the wetland.

Dr. Stamps inquired if the front view of the streetscape had four different architectural styles. Mr. Bogaerts replied it was the same building, detailed differently. Dr. Stamps clarified there would be 8 different styles of buildings. He recalled that the oldest brick structure in Oakland County was purchased and torn down so the buyer could build an office building. At the time, he said he was interested in history and built an office building in the Colonial Williamsburg style, which was ridiculous. When deciding what the front of this development should look like, if the applicant wants the support of this group, he feels the buildings should look compatible with southeastern Michigan historical kinds of structures, not Colonial Williamsburg.

Mr. Bogaerts agreed. He mentioned communities in Howell or Chelsea and said those communities have three or four story structures, detail across the fronts, detailed fascia, varying architectural details, varying roof heights, and 20 feet was the predominant dimension and they would like to use 24 feet. He said if they looked at snapshots of different buildings in southeastern Michigan, that detail is represented on these drawings. Southeastern Michigan replication is their direction.

Dr. Stamps asked if there was a time period they would like to represent for the fronts of the buildings. Mr. Bogaerts answered that when he started, his task was to recreate an urban fabric. He said he could not specifically pinpoint the architectural style because they would have to focus in on Italianate. For this setting, he did not feel that 8 buildings of a minor Italianate variation detail could be all visually successful here. They need a little more than that and moved into a changing fabric seen in the streetscapes of buildings all over communities in southeastern Michigan and stylized that for the design.

Dr. Stamps commented that he was reminded of the study being done which showed 28,000 structures in the City of Rochester Hills and that less than 100 of them are listed as being historic, which may expand to 150. Mr. Delacourt explained that there are 28,000 structures and 100 properties are historic, and there are still over 300 structures on those historic properties. Dr. Stamps said it is a shame so much has been destroyed and people are coming back and building another Meijer's Thrifty Acres, with a bunch of false fronts on modern buildings because people have not taken care of the historic resources that are here. He said he liked the look of it, but it is too bad it is Disneyland and not real.

Mr. Bogaerts asked if he saw the fronts of those buildings as different from those in Chelsea and other communities similar. Dr. Stamps said Chelsea has original buildings and his sadness is because there are no original ones left.

Mr. Dunphy referenced moving the current structure. He shares some of the concerns of his fellow Commissioners regarding siting it so far back and he felt trying to view it would be like looking through a pipe. He likes the suggestion about moving it to another location and thinks the applicants could find some alternative areas to put the home. He feels this might be more acceptable to them as a group.

Ms. Hill advised that if this process moves along that they give some thought to what the adaptive reuse of this building will be. She would like a clearer intent for the building and would like to see some type of proposal. Mr. Bogaerts replied that he would like to see it as a residential use. Ms. Hill felt seeing this defined would give the Commission a better sense that it will be a viable use and structure within the development.

Mr. Szantner said he would like to be aware of some of the difficulties they have encountered in planning. Before they would approve relocating the structure, they need drawings to visualize and convince them it would be a good idea. He likes the idea of relocating to the triangular piece, but it would be helpful to them to make a decision if they could see the difficulty encountered in planning issues at the entrance of Eddington. Mr. Bogaerts said they would be happy to come before the Commission and give them that information.

Mr. Kilpatrick asked if the Commission had given them direction. Mr. Bogaerts replied they had, that it was exactly what they were hoping to hear. They wanted the opportunity for this input.

Dr. Stamps gave some suggestions for relocating the home and the retail space so they would end up with the same square footage, building wise. They discussed the area closer to Rochester Road for relocation, and Mr. Bogaerts said they would be happy to come back with alternative locations and different opportunities as discussed.

Mr. Delacourt said the local designation is based on guidelines in the National Register of Criteria. It does not have to meet the exacting standards of the criteria to be locally designated. They do not have the survey results in, but he knows that this property, in the consultant's opinion, did meet the national criteria to be locally designated. Moving it somewhere else on the property may lessen that, just as moving the Peterson house lessened its standing as far as the National Criteria. It still met the guidelines for local designation. The real problem arises when you move something off the site. That does

some damage to the integrity of the resource. There is some gray area between the National Criteria for local designation and the moving of the structure on or off the site and what it does to the integrity.

Mr. Gilbert said that one of the benefits and opportunities that proposed mixed-use zoning, developed as a PUD, would give the Planning Commission and City is an opportunity to get involved in the plans and landscaping of the whole development. Their objective is to do something to enhance the community and which would be a benefit to everyone and they hope they can make this work with an historic home. This should be a great opportunity to get the home back to its original integrity and not fight the integrity, architecturally, of the project they are trying to achieve. They have already addressed the traffic, environmental and engineering, and they are before the HDC early on because the Planning Commission will ask how they propose to handle the existing structure.

Mr. Kilpatrick, on behalf of the Commission, thanked them for coming before them and hopes their exploration will produce a win-win situation. Dr. Stamps asked how much the elevation of the Bordine's property and this property drops down. He was referring to the area where the Bordine's house used to stand. He asked where the peak of the hill is. Mr. Gilbert answered it was further south. Dr. Stamps asked if they could bring in enough fill dirt to keep the resource on Rochester Road, just move it further south, and elevate it so people driving by could view it. Mr. Bogaerts said he liked that idea and would look into it. He said the best presentation is in the front of the house and that might be a perfect place for it. It would also be in tandem with the historical place across the street.

Ms. Hill reiterated that whatever location is used, the adaptive reuse should be taken into consideration. Mr. Gilbert said further studies would be done and they will explore the best options to meet every objective.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Hill asked about an electrical transformer problem at a resource on Harding Street, and requested an update. She believes the problem was handled, but wished to know, for the future, if Detroit Edison plans to move the transformers to another pole.

Mr. Anzek replied that the Planning Staff got a call late in the afternoon last week from a concerned resident, saying that Detroit Edison was digging up a front yard to put in a transformer. Mr. Mark Mattich, the City's Traffic Engineer, was asked to review the site, and found that Detroit Edison had erected a pole six inches from the existing pole, in the right of way. This was an emergency order because the City of Rochester was about to power out, based on heavy use of air conditioning. The order was issued at 1:00 a.m. and was to be completed within 18 hours. They had to put up a stronger pole to hold three transformer cans, versus one on the existing pole. The residents were very upset and called a lot of people; Staff, City Council, Channel 2, etc., and Staff tried to work with them as best as they could. The Detroit Edison foreman on site assured us he had talked with the residents and told them if they did not like this location, Detroit Edison would initiate the work to move this, but that it would take six months to a year because it would not be on an emergency status. The residents agreed to that, and the Regional Manager from Detroit Edison came out that evening and also met with the residents. Mr.