



Rochester Hills

Minutes

Historic Districts Commission

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Chairperson Jason Thompson, Vice Chairperson Julie Granthen
Members: Yousif Elias, Bryan Lemanski, Kelly Lyons, Michael McGunn, Carol Morlan, Dr.
Richard Stamps and Charles Tischer
Youth Representative: Sasha Joshi

Thursday, June 11, 2026

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

- Present** 5 - Julie Granthen, Kelly Lyons, Richard Stamps, Jason Thompson and Bryan Lemanski
Excused 4 - Yousif Elias, Charles Tischer, Michael McGunn and Carol Morlan

OTHERS PRESENT

Chris McLeod, Planning Manager
Jennifer MacDonald, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2026-0275](#) May 14, 2026 Draft Historic Districts Commission Minutes

A motion was made by Stamps, seconded by Lyons, that this matter be Approved.
The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye** 5 - Granthen, Lyons, Stamps, Thompson and Lemanski
Excused 4 - Elias, Tischer, McGunn and Morlan

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

[2026-0219](#) Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness - File No. PHDC2026-0002 - to construct a new multi-family development on the east portion of the lot and new parking, drives, and landscaping on the entire site, including repairs and new windows for the existing stone house. The property is a noncontiguous historic

district located at 3861 S. Adams and 3880 South Blvd. W., on the east side of Adams and north of South Blvd., Parcel No. 15-31-301-011, zoned R-4 One Family Residential with the FB Flex Business Overlay; Tony Perez, O'Brien Construction, Applicant

(Staff report dated 6/3/26, Site Plans Pt. 1 & 2, Updated Rendering, Cistern Images and Concepts dated 6/4/26, Tree Inventory dated 5-19-26, HDC Application, Staff Report dated 5/14/26, Site Plans dated 5/14/26, Floor Plans & Elevations from 5/14/26 meeting, Applicant's Presentation from 5/14/26 meeting, and supplemental Materials Information from 5/14/26 meeting had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record hereof.)

Present for the applicant was Tony Perez, O'Brien Construction.

Chairperson Thompson introduced the unfinished business regarding the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness, file number PHDC2026-002, to construct a new multifamily development on the east portion of the lot, including new parking lot drives and landscaping. He invited the applicants to the table and asked staff for any additions or comments.

Ms. Kidorf stated that photos of the cistern and a revised rendering showing a dry pond instead of a wet pond were provided to the Commission in their packets on the website. She noted that these materials were submitted after she wrote her staff report and are therefore not reflected in the report.

Mr. McLeod added that the applicants had appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeals the previous night. He explained that within the FB (Flex Business) Overlay District, the zoning ordinance requires multiple-family buildings to be built closer to South Adams and South Boulevard than what the plans showed. He noted that because the applicant was following staff's direction to push the buildings back, they were forced to seek a variance. Mr. McLeod confirmed that the Zoning Board of Appeals granted the variance from both South Adams and South Boulevard.

Chairperson Thompson asked if the applicant had anything to add at this time.

Tony Perez of O'Brien Construction introduced himself and stated he had nothing to add.

Chairperson Thompson opened the floor for questions and comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Lyons asked Mr. Perez to briefly walk the Commission through the key updates made to the plans.

Mr. Perez stated that the drawings were updated with cross-sections to address concerns regarding the pond and to depict the dry pond illustration. He noted that the development team focused on the cistern area to make it a focal point that people can see and walk around. Additionally, Mr. Perez explained that they provided new site renderings and attempted to clean up the tree information to make it easier to read. He concluded by noting that they had explained their

overall approach to the Zoning Board of Appeals the previous night, reiterating that moving the access drive down was done to preserve as much of the area around the historic house and the pond as possible.

Mr. McLeod added an update regarding tree preservation, noting that he had asked Forestry staff to double-check the plans during their concurrent site plan review process. He stated that Matt Einheuser from Forestry reviewed the plans and felt solid about them. Mr. McLeod explained that he specifically asked Forestry to evaluate the chestnut trees. He noted that after visiting the site, the foresters determined the trees were likely a hybrid species rather than American chestnuts. Regarding the chestnut trees located near the house and within the pond area, Mr. McLeod stated that the foresters felt the one-to-two-foot grade change was too significant, and the trees would not survive without a major rework of the plans. However, he acknowledged the request to allow for chestnut trees to be planted, suggesting they could potentially be incorporated into the landscaping where appropriate as the site planning process continues.

Chairperson Thompson thanked Mr. McLeod, and Mr. Perez expressed his agreement.

Chairperson Thompson asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Commissioners and called on Dr. Stamps.

Dr. Stamps commented on the cistern, noting that the proposed image showing a gravel walk, flowers, and a bench around the feature looked like a nice focal point for the property. He then inquired about how high off the ground the structure originally sat.

Mr. Perez responded that he recalled it being approximately two feet high.

Dr. Stamps questioned the mechanics of the cistern, explaining that while a well draws from the water table, a cistern relies on capturing rainwater from a roof. He pointed out that the cap on the structure makes it unclear how water would have entered it, suggesting that more research might be needed. He speculated that the cistern could have originally been enclosed within one of the house's later additions to provide convenient indoor access to water for cooking. Dr. Stamps concluded by expressing his appreciation for the effort to capture the property's history, supporting the inclusion of educational signage about early water systems, and stating that his previous concerns had been addressed.

Chairperson Thompson thanked the applicant for taking the time over the past month to address the Commission's comments and concerns.

Commissioner Lyons stated that she felt all issues had been addressed, but expressed an ongoing concern regarding the proposed grade change occurring within two feet of the historic house's foundation. She referenced past issues with construction vibrations during the Yates Cider Mill project and urged the applicant to be mindful of the structure's proximity.

Mr. Perez agreed and stated that he had already discussed the matter with his

construction team. He explained that they plan to fence off the area during the construction period to prevent accidents and ensure the historic structure remains protected, noting that his team fully recognizes the building's importance.

Commissioner Lyons also thanked City staff for their effective communication and handling of the tree preservation details. Mr. McLeod replied that staff actively listens and wants to ensure all of the Commission's concerns are properly addressed.

Dr. Stamps suggested that Mr. Perez explicitly inform his construction crew that the building is the only stone Greek Revival structure in the entire City. He encouraged the team to take pride in their work, highlighting that they are helping to save a unique piece of local history that they can share with future generations. Mr. Perez agreed and thanked the Commission.

Chairperson Thompson asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Commissioners and called for a motion.

A motion was made by Ms. Granthen and seconded by Chairperson Thompson.

Prior to the vote, Commissioner Lyons requested a point of clarification regarding Finding A of the motion. She proposed a friendly amendment to explicitly specify that the final materials for the box eaves and rakes could be approved administratively by City staff, rather than requiring the applicant to return to the Commission for approval.

Ms. Granthen accepted the friendly amendment, and Chairperson Thompson agreed to the modification as the seconder.

Chairperson Thompson asked if there were any additional comments, questions, or corrections on the amended motion.

Dr. Stamps reiterated the importance of finding a viable adaptive use for the historic stone building to ensure its long-term survival and to justify the owner's ongoing maintenance expenses. He suggested several potential uses, including utilizing the structure as an extension of the development's proposed clubhouse for meetings, playing cards, and other resident functions. Additionally, Dr. Stamps proposed community-focused uses, such as a space for school tutoring, reading programs connecting senior citizens with local children, or a venue for small events like weddings. He offered to continue brainstorming and pass along any further ideas to the development team.

Mr. Perez welcomed the Commission's suggestions. He noted that once the site is cleaned up and the new landscaping matures, he envisions the exterior grounds serving as a beautiful gathering space for the community to take photographs, eat lunch, and socialize. He then thanked the Commission for their time and feedback.

A motion was made by Granthen, seconded by Thompson, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Granthen, Lyons, Stamps, Thompson and Lemanski

Excused 4 - Elias, Tischer, McGunn and Morlan

Resolved, in the matter of File No. PHDC 2026-002, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following: stabilize the existing house by repairing the box eaves and rake boards, installing new windows, and tuckpointing the stone walls; eliminate the existing driveway; construct a gravel path from Adams Road to a new roadway; construct a new asphalt road along the south edge of the property from Adams Road; construct four 1-story cottage buildings; four 2-story townhouse buildings; two 3-story apartment buildings; a 1-story clubhouse; two detention ponds; and associated parking lots, drives, and landscaping as proposed for the single-resource historic district located at 3861 South Adams Road, Parcel Identification Number 15-31-301-011, with the following Findings and Conditions:

Findings:

1. The property is a single resource historic district, and the following work is proposed: stabilize the existing house by repairing the box eaves and rake boards, installing new windows, and tuckpointing the stone walls; eliminate the existing driveway; construct a gravel path from Adams Road to a new roadway; construct a new asphalt road along the south edge of the property from Adams Road; construct four 1-story cottage buildings; four 2-story townhouse buildings; two 3-story apartment buildings; a 1-story clubhouse; two detention ponds; and associated parking lots, drives, and landscaping does not destroy any character defining features of the property provided the following conditions are met:

A. The final plans for repair, maintenance, and interpretation of the cistern and the final materials being used for the box eaves and rakes must be submitted for approval by staff;
B. The detention pond north of the house remains primarily a dry pond, containing water only when needed for runoff as proposed in the drawings;

2. The proposed stabilization of the existing house by repairing the box eaves and rake boards with materials to match the existing; installing new windows that were previously approved and are stored on site as proposed; tuckpointing the stone walls as proposed; eliminating the existing driveway; constructing a crushed stone path from Adams Road to a new roadway and to the cistern; constructing a new asphalt road along the south edge of the property from Adams Road; constructing four 1-story cottage buildings; four 2-story townhouse buildings; two 3-story apartment buildings; a 1-story clubhouse; two detention ponds; and associated parking lots, drives, and landscaping as proposed is in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation and Guidelines, in particular, standards 2, 9 and 10 as follows:

2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Thompson asked if there was any other business and inquired about potential items for the next month's agenda.

Mr. McLeod reported a strong possibility that the Commission would review an application for a new single-family house in the Winkler District, noting that Ms. Kidorf had already completed a preliminary review with relatively clean initial comments. Additionally, Mr. McLeod informed the Commission that staff had recently met with a potential developer regarding a seven-acre property located at 1700 Washington. He explained that the developer expressed interest in installing a small road and taking additional splits on the property. While it remains uncertain if the 1700 Washington proposal will materialize into a formal application, Mr. McLeod confirmed that the Winkler District application is highly likely for the July meeting and stated that staff would keep the Commission posted.

Ms. Granthen provided an update regarding the Earl Borden Awards. She reported that she and Dr. Stamps attended the Rochester Hills City Council meeting the previous Monday to present the awards to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for their exhibit, the Rochester Hills Museum, and the local library.

Ms. Granthen noted that the recognition was very well received by the honorees, including Museum Director Pat McKay and library representatives. She shared that the Museum intends to hang the award in the new calf barn, while the library is still selecting a display location. Additionally, she mentioned that a proclamation celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States was also presented during the Council meeting. She concluded by expressing hope that next year's honorees would be just as deserving.

Mr. McLeod added a comment expressing hope that the historic stone house project discussed earlier in the meeting might become a candidate for the award in the coming years.

Dr. Stamps provided a reminder regarding the upcoming 250th-anniversary celebration at the History Center and the Wisner Home in Pontiac, scheduled for the last weekend in July. He noted that the event will feature their traditional ice cream social, which has been expanded this year to include various invited museums and historical societies, food trucks, strolling minstrels, lectures, and musical groups.

NEXT MEETING DATE

July 9, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Lyons, seconded by Lemanski, to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Minutes were prepared by Jennifer MacDonald

*Minutes were approved as presented/amended at the _____
Regular Historic Districts Commission Meeting.*

Jason Thompson, Chairperson