



Department of Planning and Development

Staff Report to the Historic Districts Commission

June 22, 2026

Winkler Mill – New House	
REQUEST	A Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new house on vacant land
APPLICANT	Ryan Smith, Patrick Thompson Design for Linda Johnson
FILE NO.	PHDC2026-0014
PARCEL NO.	70-15-01-201-021
ZONING	RE
HISTORIC DISTRICT	Winkler Mill Pond Historic District
STAFF	Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting

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Request

This is a request for a certificate of appropriateness to construct a new house on a lot split off from an adjacent property in the 1990s. The parcel is located on the west side of Winkler Mill Road between 6250 and 6300 Winkler Mill Road, both non-contributing properties within the district. The subject parcel is currently vacant land.

Historical Information

The subject property is located in the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District. The 2002 *Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey* and subsequent survey report completed in 2023 describes the district as generally surrounding Winkler Mill Pond from the north edge of the Stoney Creek Historic District along both Winkler Mill Road and Washington Road. The district is almost wholly residential in character, with houses dating from the 1830s to the 1990s. A few of the houses retain agricultural outbuildings. The foundation of Winkler Mill is visible and two of the mill dams are functioning. The district has sloping terrain and is heavily treed.

The district was developed around the Winkler Mill (a gristmill that burned in 1985) and a wool carding mill owned by Levi Cole who also owned the majority of the property in the nineteenth century. In the 1920s the first suburban and summer homes appeared in the area. Most of the residential development around the mill pond took place after World War II, particularly beginning in the 1970s. The district has sixteen contributing

resources and forty-three non-contributing resources, and two that require more research to determine their status. Some of the most significant properties in the district include the Greek Revival Levi Cole house; the house at 1740 Washington Road; the Colonial Revival Von Isser House built c. 1918; the mill house on Winkler Mill Road; the mill dams and the mill pond.

Review Considerations

The applicant proposes to construct a new two-story house with a footprint that is roughly 40' wide by 50' deep. The house has a traditional salt box design with a steep side-gable roof that is lower in the rear than the front. A 1 ½ story ell with a gable roof extends from the rear. The house is proposed to be clad in smooth James Hardie cement board clapboard siding with a red brick foundation and chimney, and a white cedar shake roof. The house is set near the west edge of the lot and will face south. A long, curved, gravel or paved driveway is proposed to run from Winkler Mill Road to the house. Two circular turn-around areas are proposed, one southwest of the house (paved), the other to the east of the house (gravel). A septic field is proposed south of the gravel drive.

The façade is proposed to have a wood plank central entrance door with two 9-over-9 double hung windows on both sides at the first floor. A stoop with no roof is proposed at the door. At the second floor five 6-over-6 windows are proposed, one above each first floor opening. The peak of the roof will be 30'6" above ground level. Both sides of the salt box portion of the house have multi-pane double hung windows at the first and second floors, plus a single window in the peak of the gable. A brick chimney will extend through the rear roof slope.

Both sides of the rear ell have a shed roof porch that wraps around the rear elevation. The roof is proposed to be supported by posts of an unknown material. Double-hung windows are proposed at the first floor of the sides and rear of the ell. Doors are proposed for the east and rear elevations. A shed roof wall dormer is proposed to extend from both sides of the gable roof on the east and west elevations.

The applicant states that the following materials will be used for the project:

1. Brick for the foundation, James Hardie smooth clapboard siding for the walls, and white cedar shake for the roof. Wood plank front door and aluminum windows. Gravel or pavement for the driveway and turn arounds. The siding and trim is proposed to be painted Tricorn Black.

Summary

1. The parcel is currently vacant land between two non-contributing houses in the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District. This land is not a contributing feature of the district.
2. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new house
3. The staff has the following comments on the application. As the house is proposed for vacant land, the project is being reviewed for compatibility with the surrounding district as a whole. The proposed house is set far back from the street and has a footprint, size, and massing that is similar to the other houses in this part of the district. The proposed clapboard siding, white cedar shake roof, and brick foundation and chimney are compatible materials with the district. The paved or gravel driveway matches other driveways in the district. The house and driveway as proposed are compatible with the district and meet The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

4. Any work performed in connection with this project will be required to meet all zoning and building codes, rules, and regulations.

Potential Motion

(Subject to adjustment based on Commission discussion)

MOTION, in the matter of File No. PHDC2026-0014, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES/DENIES/POSTPONES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for constructing a new house on a vacant parcel on the west side of Winkler Mill Road, Parcel Identification Number 70-15-01-201-021, with the following Findings and Conditions:

- 1) The existing parcel is vacant land and **is/is not** a contributing property to the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District; and
- 2) The proposed new house and drive **is/is not** compatible in massing, size, scale, and materials with the remainder of the Winkler Mill Pond Historic District; and
- 3) The proposed new house and drive as proposed **is/is not** in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines, in particular standard numbers 9 and 10 as follows:

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

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