



Rochester Hills

Minutes

Historic Districts Commission

1000 Rochester Hills Dr
Rochester Hills, MI
48309
(248) 656-4600
Home Page:
www.rochesterhills.org

Chairperson Jason Thompson, Vice Chairperson Julie Granthen
Members: Katherine Altherr-Rogers, Yousif Elias, Bryan Lemanski, Kelly Lyons, Michael McGunn, Dr. Richard Stamps, Charles Tischer
Youth Representative: Henry Hall

Thursday, August 8, 2024

7:00 PM

Rochester Hills Museum at
Van Hoosen Farm - Calf Barn

In accordance with the provisions of Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION will conduct its Regular Meeting for August 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, Calf Barn, located at 1005 Van Hoosen Rd., Rochester Hills, MI 48306.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Thompson called the Historic Districts Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Michigan time.

ROLL CALL

Present 7 - Katherine Altherr-Rogers, Yousif Elias, Julie Granthen, Kelly Lyons, Richard Stamps, Jason Thompson and Bryan Lemanski

Excused 2 - Charles Tischer and Michael McGunn

Others Present:

Chris McLeod, Planning Manager
Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting
Jennifer MacDonald, Recording Secretary

Mr. McGunn and Mr. Tischer provided prior notice that they would not be in attendance and were excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2024-0375](#) May 2, 2024 HDC Meeting Minutes

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

Aye 7 - Altherr-Rogers, Elias, Granthen, Lyons, Stamps, Thompson and Lemanski

Excused 2 - Tischer and McGunn

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

NEW BUSINESS

2024-0373

Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness - File No. PHDC2024-0009 - to move the existing house and barn further from the road and construct an addition to the house at 947 E. Tienken Rd., located on the north side of Tienken between Sheldon Rd. and Washington Rd., zoned R-1 One Family Residential, Parcel No. 15-02-426-005, Designhaus Architects, Applicant

(Staff Report dated 7-31-24, Plans received 7-26-24, Location Map, Application, Draft HDC minutes of 5-2-24, HDC minutes of 3-14-24 and 1-11-24 had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record.)

Present for the applicant were Ralph and Denise Putman, owners, and Mike Pizzola, Designhaus Architects.

Chairperson Thompson asked if there was anything that staff or the applicants needed to add before opening this item up for discussion.

Ms. Kidorf responded that she had nothing further to add that was not included in the Staff Report.

Dr. Stamps stated that he felt the applicant came, listened and incorporated the commission's comments and has preserved one of the nice pieces in the Historic District and has actually improved upon it and made it a more habitable and desirable structure. He commented that he is excited about it.

Chairperson Thompson stated that he appreciates the efforts and knows that it has been a long process with meetings and suggestions going back and forth. He stated that he appreciates that they are at this point and he is fully in support of the plans and the conditions proposed in the potential motion.

Dr. Stamps stated that he is really excited because the structure has some unique architectural vertical wall pieces. He mentioned the Fish Benedict House on Woodward and the Hunter House at the Birmingham Museum, which have some of the vertical pieces as well and they are exciting. He mentioned that to keep the draft blowing through the spaces between the wood making up the sides of the home, old newspapers were glued into the walls and one can still read the pages on the walls. He suggested that a way be found to frame some of those newspapers so that they can be viewed when people walk in the home. He expressed strong support.

Ms. Lyons offered the motion that was included in the Staff Report for approval. The motion was supported by Dr. Stamps.

After calling for a voice vote, Chairperson Thompson announced that the motion passed unanimously.

After the vote, Mr. Putman stated that he did not believe the garage was adequate for parking, and commented that he does not think he could sell the house without some kind of garage.

Mr. Pizzola commented that they would be coming back with some sort of a garage design to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Putman added that he did not want to interfere with this approval and would work on the garage proposal at a later date.

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

Aye 7 - Altherr-Rogers, Elias, Granthen, Lyons, Stamps, Thompson and Lemanski

Excused 2 - Tischer and McGunn

Resolved, in the matter of File No. PHDC2024-0003, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for moving of the barn and house back from the road and constructing an addition to the house as proposed at 947 E. Tienken Road, Parcel Identification Number 70-15-02-426-005, with the following Findings and Conditions:

1) The house at 947 E. Tienken Road is a contributing property to the Stoney Creek Historic District; and

2) The proposed moving of the barn and house to the north and constructing a 1-story addition with porch and walk-out basement to the house is appropriate if the following conditions are met:

a) The new asphalt shingles for the roof mimic a wood shingle roof color and appearance and the final product selection be approved by staff;

b) The existing wood siding and fascia, soffit, and trim material is repaired rather than replaced in the 1 ½ story portion of the house;

c) The existing stone foundation is re-used to clad the foundation of the 1 ½ story portion of the house;

d) The existing wood windows are repaired and not replaced with vinyl windows in the 1 ½ story portion of the house;

e) Where the door is proposed to be removed the new window be a wood window to match the existing windows

f) That staff review and approve the final permit drawings to ensure compliance with conditions and review final material and product choices.

3) The proposed moving of the barn and house to the north and constructing the addition with the conditions above is 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.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2024-0374

Discussion with Museum Manager and Archivist

Dr. Stamps stated that he was not in favor of moving historic resources and knows that the Department of Interior Guidelines do not promote it. He commented that this has caused him to reflect on the topic. He explained that he researched the Meadow Brook Farm Estate on Oakland University's campus and asked whether buildings there had been moved, and he found out that some had been.

He added that he consulted Mr. McKay and questioned whether buildings in the village had been moved and Mr. McKay confirmed that a number had. He stated that this information relieved some of the anxiety and pressure that he had in coming to vote in favor of something even if there was movement involved. He suggested that after that conversation, he wanted Mr. McKay to come and share some information with the group, along with Museum Archivist Samantha Lawrence.

Mr. McKay stated that tonight he would review some of the resources the Museum has that could be of assistance to the Commission, and their goal is to support the City's Boards, Commissions, and Departments. He explained that Ms. Lawrence will review online resources that can be accessed and mentioned the following resources:

- Newspapers for the Rochester area going back from 1872 to 1972 have been digitized and many are PDF documents that can be searched by keywords and names.*
- Online archives allow searches by address, and every address in the city has information attached to it with historic tidbits added as they are discovered.*
- Valuable artifacts are stored at the City's DPS building on Auburn in a climate-controlled storage area, as there are not many storage spaces in the Museum complex buildings.*
- Historic research helped the City in its grant application process for Innovation Hills, as it was able to provide information to ensure hazardous materials were not buried underneath that site. Kohl's was built on the Ferry Morse Seed Farm, and historical information was used regarding that site as well. The Museum finds itself involved in economic development and provides information as needed.*

Ms. Lawrence stated that they try to share the information they have with the community and have done their best to try to make the archive section of the website as easy to understand as possible as well as provide a way to contact

staff for more information. She and Mr. McKay noted the following:

- Past Perfect software is used to catalog and it also has a public access side.
- A college intern has been able to help with historical information highlighting many addresses.
- Information has also been put onto the Oakland County historical website.
- A once-a-year publication called Founding Collection highlights topics they believe are important to the community.
- The newest hot topic is Adams Road, and they are trying to document the history of Adams Road and build a good file.

Dr. Stamps asked if information documented by Jane Bush was available online.

Mr. McKay responded that he was not certain that the entire report was available online, but he thought they scanned the pages individually for their respective address files. He pointed out that her survey was undertaken 25 years ago and it was before the internet was widely used. He noted that historic sites were photographed more than 25 years ago as well, for a reference to help identify what was done that was approved or changes made that were not approved.

Mr. McLeod commented that in response to a question of how many historic sites are in the city, they have the original list that shows all of the structures on each individual property; however, there is not a current list to show where something was removed or a structure burned.

Mr. McKay stated that there are more structures gone than have been added in. He mentioned that their goal as a public entity is to reveal all of that information, and he commented that it is difficult because Rochester Hills is under such intense suburban pressure.

Ms. Altherr-Rogers asked if there is a list that notes when an address or house number has changed.

Mr. McKay responded that this happened a lot when Avon Township realized that some of the streets had the same name as streets in Rochester and at that time some properties were renumbered or streets renamed to avoid confusion for utilities and fire response.

Dr. Stamps noted that he found an article that referred to a subdivision located north of Crooks and east of Dodge Road. He explained that he discovered this relative to the Oakland University faculty subdivision.

Mr. McKay noted that there are older maps on the Oakland County Historical Resources site that could provide information.

Dr. Stamps commented that he would like to know Mr. McKay's long-term goals, noting that the Commission should be aware of how they can be responsible for the future and how to make the district better.

Mr. McKay responded that they spent the year studying Stoney Creek Village. He commented that the roundabouts and signs have been added to let people know that they are entering something very special and it is one of the most unique settings in the Midwest. He said that he would hope that 200 years from now they can still talk about the settlement. He commented that one of the reasons that it is not often recognized as a historic setting is because it has telephone poles with large utility lines all the way down Tienken Road, everyone's mailboxes are in front, garbage cans are in front and there is no way to walk down the street as there are no sidewalks. He mentioned that hopefully in ten years as technology changes and the road needs to be paved again, there might be a way to put utilities underground. He noted that the Commission members are the heroes and champions of Stoney Creek Village, and he stated that he would wonder how many people know about the non-contiguous historic sites in the city. He suggested that they could look at a joint program where signs could show a historic archival image of the site to see how a building has changed or not changed.

Mr. McKay discussed the Stoney Creek Historic District, mentioning that the alleyways need maintenance, and DPS noted that the City has not maintained the alleys in years. He offered that there should be a discussion whether it would be a good idea to vacate the alleys to the residents as the backyard areas are where the residents go to escape as the roadway in front is so busy. He also mentioned that when there was consideration to pave Washington Road, the residents did not want this to happen.

Dr. Stamps asked who the Commission could go to for the problems of no walking paths or other concerns, and questioned how to maintain a sense of community in Stoney Creek Village.

Mr. McLeod responded that a direct conversation with residents should be held. He noted that staff walked the roadway last fall trying to find a way to install a pathway and explore whether it might be possible at a minimum to get it on one side. He stated that ultimately Council should determine what they want and a conversation with DPS will also be necessary. He added that the Master Plan also sets the tone for the City that then goes into creating the Capital Improvement Program, paving roads and scoring potential projects.

Dr. Stamps noted that the Commission was invited to provide input into the strategic plan, and suggested that the Commission could host a meeting to involve the residents.

Mr. McLeod commented that staff could pull together a town hall meeting that could go into goal setting. He noted that once staff knows what the residents are looking at, they can have those administrative conversations. He explained that it is an opportune time because the Master Plan is under review. He mentioned that one of the things that is absent from the current Master Plan is a historic preservation section and a section should be added as a part of that process that addresses the plan for that area. He noted that if the plan states that Tienken will be redeveloped in a historic manner that changes the surface or configuration of the road, that plan would set the tone and create the capital improvements program that would be used to evaluate projects. He added that

the conversation could be expanded to the other district as well to learn their vision.

Dr. Stamps stated that this is proper planning, and the Commission should provide information on where they want the district to be 10 or 50 years from now and how to enhance and strengthen it. He concurred that a meeting would be a good idea. He asked if there were any specific things that the Commission could do as a whole to provide their information to the plan.

Mr. McLeod concurred with pulling together a meeting to bring in the residents of the historic districts and historic properties that could go into goal setting and what the HDC could do, and then suggested reconvening around the beginning of the year to review the comments and what they want to accomplish going forward.

Chairperson Thompson stated that while he has no problem with the concept, his concern is that Council will need to be on board. He noted that everyone has to be on the same page and there is a political component involved.

Mr. McLeod stated that this is an information collecting process and staff could navigate behind the scenes to see what the best approach will be.

Dr. Stamps recalled a property that had historic artifacts that was allowed to deteriorate and was delisted by Council as they said it was the owner's right to do whatever they wanted to do with the property. He suggested extending another invitation to those who live in contiguous and non-contiguous historic districts and gather their thoughts. He commented that a previous meeting yielded a lot of camaraderie in the conversations. He mentioned previous discussions regarding the possibility of a millage, and noted that there are 68 historical societies, museums and genealogy groups in Oakland County that would be trying to receive funding.

Mr. Elias suggested a social be thrown for the residents of the historic districts to facilitate a chat and asked if there was budget for something like that.

Vice Chairperson Granthen noted that former HDC member Carol Morlan is now on City Council and is still very much in support of the HDC.

Dr. Stamps suggested anyone with ideas share them to come up with a strategy. He asked if other neighborhoods have been involved in the strategic planning process.

Mr. McLeod noted that some neighborhoods are more involved than others. He explained that as a part of the Master Plan process every HOA president that could be reached was invited to participate; and out of 100 invited, around 40 came out. He added that everyone that attended was then asked to conduct a meeting of their own, and unfortunately there were not many takers.

Dr. Stamps suggested that whenever HDC members see a Council Member or the Mayor, they remind them of their membership on the Commission and that the feeling of history is one of the reasons why people want to come and buy a

house here.

Discussed

NEXT MEETING DATE

- September 12, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Thompson extended his thanks to the Museum staff for hosting this meeting and for the information they shared.

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Lyons, seconded by Lemanski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Minutes were prepared by Jennifer MacDonald.

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

Jason Thompson, Chairperson