

DATE: Thursday, May 5, 2022
TIME: 5:30 pm – 7:00pm
PLACE: Superior Room, Learning Resource Center, 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Call to Order– Chair

Roll Call – Secretary

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting – Chair

Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meetings: November 7 and December 2, 2021, February 10, 2022– Chair

Commissioner Elections- Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer

Citizen Participation and Commissioner follow-up – Chair

Application Reviews

Business and Staff Reports

Staff report:

- Local Historic District Updates
 - Wilde-Frey farm
 - Thornoaks
 - 2021 Audit
 - USS Washtenaw Artifacts
- Certified Local Government Program
 - City of Milan survey
 - Gordon Hall application
 - CLG grant timeline changes
- Washtenaw County Updates
 - Building requirement updates
 - virtual capabilities
- Items for Consideration by Commission
 - Establishing Goals

Treasurer Report

Items for Discussion

- Commissioner Updates

Adjournment

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 2, 2022- Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, Superior Room

Attachments:

Minutes of the November 7, 2021, December 2, 2021, and February 10, 2022 Meetings

Staff Report

2021 Local Historic Districts Report

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes**

DATE:	Thursday, November 4, 2021
TIME:	5:30 pm-7:00 p.m.
PLACE:	Virtual Zoom Meeting

Call to Order

Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission meeting to order at 5:33 PM.

Roll Call

- **Commissioners present:** Katie Remensnyder attending from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, MI; Alice Ralph attending from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI; Patti Smith attending from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI; Alec Jerome attending from Scio Township, Washtenaw County, MI; Olivia Davidson attending from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, MI; Blake Swihart attending from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI; James Mann attending from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, MI
- **Commissioners absent:** Peter Kelley
- **Staff:** Melinda Schmidt

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

Chair Ralph motioned to approve the agenda of November 4, 2021 Historic District Commission meeting. Vice Chair Jerome seconded the motion. The agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting: October 7, 2021:

Chair Ralph motioned to approve the October 7, 2021 meeting minutes with a friendly amendment to the fourth paragraph on the first page under the Staff Report. Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Business and Reports: Staff Report

Staff updated the Commission on the following items:

- **Wilde-Frey farmstead:** The Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners appointed a Study Committee to evaluate the Wilde-Frey Farm. As soon as Scio Township has hired a consultant help complete the survey and study committee reports, the study committee will start the survey process.
- **Thornoaks:** The applicants for a new roof at 4071 Thornoaks Drive have withdrawn the application. They are interviewing roofing companies familiar with flat roofs.
- **Certified Local Government Program:**
 - **Milan Survey Community Partnership program:** Washtenaw County was chosen to partner with SHPO to complete a survey of downtown Milan as part of an educational initiative. This program will involve SHPO staff, Washtenaw County staff, and the Milan Local Historic Study Committee. Commissioners are welcome to attend. The survey will take place mid-November.
 - **CLG Application for Geothermal Installation at Gordon Hall:** Washtenaw County has submitted a 2022 CLG grant application with Dexter Area Historical Society to cover a portion of the cost to install a geothermal system at Gordon Hall.
- **2022 Meetings:**
 - In-person meetings will recommence in January 2022 because the emergency order allowing for remote meetings will expire in December 2021. Staff and commissioner discussed the best way to safely meet in person. Commissioners agreed maintaining a six-foot distance and requiring masks would be necessary. Commissioner asked if the ventilation systems have been upgraded to maximize fresh air. The conference room at OCED is not big enough to ensure social distance. The commission asked staff to find a more suitable room. Staff will reach out to each commissioner with more details about a 2022 meeting location and to discuss the commissioner's comfort level with in-person meetings.

- Calendar : The HDC asked staff to change the room for the HDCC meeting location to a bigger space. Commissioner Jerome motioned to adopt the calendar as presented with the requested revision. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Updates: Commissioner Mann reported that the lantern tours are going well, and movie nights at Ypsilanti Historical Society will continue on Friday nights. Commissioner McKay reported that the Detroit Observatory addition is complete. In the future, the HDC could take a tour.

Adjournment: Chair Ralph motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 pm. Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2022. Location TBA

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes**

DATE:	Thursday, December 2, 2021
TIME:	5:30 pm-7:00 p.m.
PLACE:	Virtual Zoom Meeting

Call to Order

Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission special meeting to order at 5:39 PM.

Roll Call

- **Commissioners present:** Katie Remensnyder attending from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, MI; Alice Ralph attending from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI; Alec Jerome attending from Scio Township, Washtenaw County, MI; Olivia Davidson attending from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County, MI; Blake Swihart attending from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI; Aprille McKay attending from Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, MI
- **Commissioners absent:** Peter Kelley, James Mann, Patti Smith
- **Staff:** Melinda Schmidt, Nathan Voght

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

Chair Ralph motioned to approve the agenda of December 2, 2021 Historic District Commission meeting. Vice Chair Jerome seconded the motion. The agenda was unanimously approved.

Business and Reports: 4071 Thornoaks Drive COA Application

Staff reviewed the application packet for a new roof and gutters at 4071 Thornoaks Drive; the applicants are replacing the flat roof after a fire destroyed it in July. They want to change the drainage system from scuppers to gutters after the fire started due to a heat intake in a scupper. The roof will be replaced with EPDM Versico 60mil rubber roofing fully adhered to ¼" tapered ISO board roof insulation. The insulation board will be mechanically fastened to the decking after the damaged plywood is replaced. The system will be a "hot roof," with closed cell foam covered in EPDM rubber. Maximum rise is 6" at the center of the low-pitch roof. The low pitch will not be visible from the street. Diversified Roofing will install new perimeter metal and flash to the rubber. The L-metal edging will be 3" with a dripedge kick and fit into the proposed gutter. The edging will be the Natural Clay color from National Metal Sales to match the house color. Diversified Roofing will flash and counter flash the abandoned scupper drains. The gutters will be installed by a different company after the roof is finished. Square box gutters will be used to compliment the fascia shape and will match the color of the fascia and the metal edging. Specific colors and will be chosen with the contractor who will install the gutters.

Commissioner Jerome asked what the size the gutters will be, others were interested as well. Staff responded that size hasn't been chosen yet since the applicants are waiting to hire a gutter company until the roof replacement is approved and underway. Commissioners discussed the change from scuppers to gutters, and what shape and size gutters might be appropriate for the house.

Commissioner Ralph suggested the commission consider approving the application as presented with the condition that the gutters of choice be submitted to make sure the choice is compatible with the house. Commissioner Davidson clarified that the commission approve the roof now so work can begin, with the condition that the commission approves the gutters later. Commissioner Jerome agreed, citing Standard #9, and suggested administrative approval for the size and color of the box gutters to ensure they are compatible with the size and scale of the home. Commissioners agreed the box gutters should be bigger than the standard 5 inches. Commissioners agreed the gutters could be approved through administrative approval instead of an application to the HDC.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #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.

Commissioner McKay *moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for a roof replacement at 4071 Thornoaks Drive, as submitted with pictures, which includes EPDM Versico 60mil rubber roofing fully adhered to ¼" tapered ISO board roof insulation; the insulation board will be mechanically fastened to the decking after the damaged plywood is replaced. The system will be a "hot roof," with closed cell foam covered in EPDM rubber, and maximum rise will be 6" at the center of the low-pitch roof. New perimeter metal will be installed and flashed to the rubber; and 3-inch L-metal edging and drip edge will be installed in the Natural Clay color. Square box gutters will be installed in a compatible color with the drip edge and fascia, and the abandoned scupper drains will be flashed and counter flashed. This work is approved based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9, with the condition that the box gutters are submitted to staff for administrative approval based on size and color compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the home.*

Commissioner Jerome seconded the motion.

Commissioner Ralph opened the floor to discussion. With none, a roll call vote was taken to approve the motion. Results are as follows:

Commissioner Davidson: Yes

Commissioner Jerome: Yes

Commissioner McKay: Yes

Commissioner Ralph: Yes

Commissioner Remensnyder: Yes

Commissioner Swihart: Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Chair Ralph motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 pm. Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for January 2, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. at the Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Special Meeting Minutes DRAFT**

DATE:	Thursday, February 10, 2022
TIME:	5:30 pm-7:00pm
PLACE	Learning Resource Center Washtenaw County 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Call to Order

- Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission meeting to order at 5:35 PM

Swearing in of Commissioners: Robert Mulcahy swore in commissioners James Mann, Peter Kelley, and Kim Clarke

Roll Call

- Staff conducted roll call:
 - **Commissioners present:** Kim Clarke, Olivia Davidson, Peter Kelley, James Mann, Katie Remensnyder, Alice Ralph, and Blake Swihart
 - **Commissioners absent with notice:** Alec Jerome, Aprille McKay
 - **Staff present:** Melinda Schmidt, Robert Mulcahy

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the agenda. There were none. Commissioner Kelley moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4071 Thornoaks Drive Application Review:

Chair Ralph called the **4071 Thornoaks Drive wall repair and siding replacement** application hearing to order. Staff presented the application for the repair of the remaining three exterior walls and replacement of siding on the entire house. The north wall, bearing the brunt of the damage, needs new siding. Interior demolition revealed that every elevation wall has pockets of deterioration, rot, and animal infestation, including a bird nest and a beehive. The rot in the walls necessitates replacement of the siding attached to the rotting portions of each exterior wall. Wall repair includes removing the siding, Celotex, and bad studs on all elevations; installing new plywood, and coving the exterior walls with Tyvek.

The proposed replacement siding is 6-inch wide Hardie Cedar-Mill Panel Vertical siding in the Woodstock Brown color. This siding is fiber cement and resembles cedar. The color closely resembles the current siding color. The applicant plans to install a vertical pattern on the entire house. The applicant provided a sample of the siding.

The current siding is a mix of vertical, diagonal, and flat wood siding painted tan. The vertical and diagonal siding is 4 inches wide. The front facade features all three types of siding, the rear elevation has vertical siding, the north elevation had diagonal siding, and the south elevation has diagonal and vertical siding. The garage has all three types of siding.

Several commissioners conducted a site visit at 4071 Thornoaks Drive earlier in the week. Chair Ralph, who attended the site visit, explained the deterioration present on all the walls.

Commissioners discussed the proposed siding pattern changes, and the need to preserve the building envelope and significant design elements. Commissioners agreed the diagonal siding is a character defining feature of the home, and discussed at length how to maintain the design integrity of the house while allowing for the proposed Hardie Cedar-Mill Vertical siding on most of the house. Commissioners determined keeping the diagonal pattern on the front elevation would maintain design integrity, while allowing for a different siding pattern on the rest of the home that will better keep water from the walls.

Commissioner Mann moved to approve with condition the Certificate of Appropriateness application for wall repair and new siding at 4071 Thornoaks Drive, as submitted with pictures, which includes removing the siding, Celotex, and bad studs on all elevations; installing new plywood, and covering the exterior walls with Tyvek; and installing HardiePanel Cedar-Mill Sierra 8 vertical siding in Woodstock Brown color. This application is **approved with condition that** the design, color, texture, and diagonal orientation of the existing siding on the front facade is maintained. This work is approved based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 2 and 6.

Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation cited:

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.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was put to vote. The motion unanimously passed. Commissioners asked that the property owner notify staff of the siding type proposed for use on the diagonal portions of the front elevation. Commissioner Ralph asked that the letter to the property owner include a recommendation to hire a contractor certified in installing James Hardie products.

Adjournment: Chair Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:20pm.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for <i>Thursday, March 5, 2022- Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, Superior Room, 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108</i>

Washtenaw County Historic District Commission Staff Report May 5, 2022

Local Historic Districts

- **Wild-Frey Farm:** The Wilde-Frey Farm Study Committee is waiting for Scio Township's contract with a local architectural historian to finalize before starting the study committee process.
- **Thornoaks:** Staff sent out a postcards to the Thornoaks Neighborhood reminding property owners of designation status in January 2022. Also, the property owners at 4071 submitted an appeal of the February 10, 2022 HDC decision regarding replacement siding, specifically appealing the requirement to keep diagonal siding on the front facade. The hearing is set for early May. Contact staff with further questions.
- **2021 Audit:** The 2021 Local Historic District Audit is attached.
- **USS Washtenaw Artifacts:** The contract with the Navy for the USS Washtenaw Artifacts, housed at 200 N. Main, will expire this year. Staff will begin the process of renewing the contract soon.

Certified Local Government Program

- SHPO staff visited Milan in November 2021 and January 2022 to survey a portion of the city in for local designation. We have not received a copy of the survey, but anticipate we will soon. The survey is part of a CLG Community Partnership program between Washtenaw County and SHPO.
- The CLG grant application submitted in partnership with Dexter Area Historical Society for the installation of a geothermal system was not accepted this year.
- The CLG grant cycle calendar has been adjusted going forward. The application submission window will be in the fall instead of summer. The grant period has been extended to two years instead of one.

Washtenaw County government updates

- Building requirement updates: Following state and local health department protocols, masks are no longer required in county buildings. This policy is always subject to change as the health department monitors the situation. However, we ask you still wear a mask at HDC meetings. Masks will be provided for those who need them at the meeting.
- Virtual capabilities: The LRC is being updated will some virtual meeting capacity. If the HDC would like to open meetings to the public virtually, staff can set it up for future meetings.
- Virtual accommodation for commissioners: if you would like to apply for virtual attendance, new ADA regulations allow for commissioners to attend in this way if an application is approved by HR. To seek accommodation, please submit requests to Chyanne Duncan, Benefit Services Division Administrator at duncanc@washtenaw.org.
- HDC Staff will be out of town during the August 4, 2022 HDC meeting. Another Washtenaw County staff can assist, but HDC leadership will run the meeting.

Items for Consideration by Commission

- Establishing Goals: adopting yearly goals is a requirement of CLG communities
- Suggested 2022 Goals:
 1. Continue and update oversight of LHDs in Washtenaw County
 - better communication with local historic districts
 - more usable webpage
 - general organization of files
 2. Promote survey and designation of historic sites
 - support Milan
 - Wilde-Frey Farm Study Committee
 - support Northfield Township
 3. Promote heritage tourism and placemaking
 - continue HistWeb editing
 - support local historic sites and organizations

Commissioner Project Ideas and Updates:

Please come prepared with any project ideas you would like to share with the Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda Schmidt

Historic Preservation Specialist, Office of Community & Economic Development
schmidt@washtenaw.org

Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts Audit

2021

Purpose of the Report: The Washtenaw County Historic District Commission staff conducts yearly site visits to each of the fifteen designated Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts. The purpose of this annual visit is threefold: to stay in contact with property owners by providing them with resources and information; to ensure the continued stewardship of designated Local Historic District resources; and to keep an updated photo log of all resources. During visits, staff discussed ongoing maintenance, future plans, and any questions the homeowner had about upcoming projects. These conversations aim to foster positive relationships with property owners and promote a culture of historic preservation within Washtenaw County.

USS Washtenaw Artifacts Display

200 N. Main, Ann Arbor



Staff visited and documented the USS Washtenaw artifacts on June 3 in order to complete and submit the yearly report required by the Department of the Navy. The artifacts are on loan from the Navy. The artifacts are housed in a museum-grade glass case located in the lobby of the Washtenaw County Administration building at 200 N. Main Street. The artifacts remain in good condition.

Esek Pray House

8755 West Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township



Staff visited the Esek Pray property on June 17. They have undertaken basic maintenance over the past year. Projects include window sash repair and threshold repair on the front door. The house remains in excellent condition.

Old Zion Parsonage

2905 South Fletcher Road, Freedom Township



Staff visited the Old Zion Parsonage property on June 29. Over the past year, they replaced failing gutters on the home with new gutters in the same color, and did some painting. Replacing gutters is considered ordinary maintenance, and the property owner notified staff of the project during the 2019 Audit visit. Next year, they plan to replace the brick walkway from the driveway to the back door with the same brick as the driveway. The walkway will be the same dimension as the current walkway, but graded to prevent pooling water.

McMahon Springs

2426 Whitmore Lake Road, Ann Arbor Township



Staff visited the McMahon Springs property on June 22. Over the past year, the property owner replaced the ridge caps and some failing shingles on the roof of the house. The house was painted in 2021. In fall 2021, the property owner notified staff that a large tree had fallen in front of the house, and they decided to cut down another tree that may threaten the house. There are no work plans for next year.

Gordon Hall

8341 Island Lake Road, Webster & Scio Townships



Staff visited Gordon Hall on May 25. Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS) continued ordinary maintenance in 2021. This included replacing the failing front porch in-kind. The interior work on the north wing is complete, and staff toured the space, which now has two full accessible bathrooms and an upstairs meeting room. The historical society asked about grant opportunities to finance the installation of a geothermal system. The Washtenaw County Preservation program applied for a 2022 Certified Local Government grant in partnership with DAHS to partially fund the endeavor.

Alder Farm

9505 Bethel Church Road, Freedom Township



Staff visited the Alder Farm property on June 29. Over the past year, the property owner continued maintenance work on the house and the barns. The property owner requested more information on a feature on the earthen ramp leading up to the large barn. A square opening is located on the earthen ramp, and leads to a chamber under the ramp. The chamber is not accessible from the interior of the barn. Staff has briefly looked for more information on this feature but has not found any useful information so far.

Delhi Bridge

Delhi Mills at Huron River



Staff visited the Delhi Bridge on June 22. Over the past year, the Road Commission continued ordinary maintenance on the bridge and roadway.

Geer School

9981 West Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township



Staff visited Geer School on June 17. Over the past year, ordinary maintenance has continued at the school. The Plymouth Canton School District uses the school for class visits during the spring, and does not have plans beyond ordinary maintenance at this time.

Geer House

8605 Plymouth-Ann Arbor Road, Superior Township



Staff visited Geer House on June 17. Over the past year, property owners have fixed the side porch. They plan to draw up plans for a carriage house garage next year. They plan to move the Quonset hut to a new location and build the carriage house where it currently sits near the driveway. Staff is in contact about the application.

Conant Farm

5683 and 5671 Napier Road, Salem Township



Staff visited the Conant Farm property on June 17. Over the past year, they have continued maintenance for the property but supply and trades shortages have stalled other projects. Specifically, they would like to move forward with the construction of a new garage in place of the current building. Other priority projects include barn repair and building a new basement for the Conant House to prevent further water damage to the structure. Staff will work with property owners on the applications for work.

McCormick Farm

9105 Ann Arbor Road West, Superior Township



Staff visited the McCormick Farm property on June 17. Over the past year, they have undertaken a large amount of maintenance, including replacing a section of the large barn roof, brush and tree removal, and barn window repair. Brush removal and window repair work will continue into 2022. Property owners had questions about the newly reinstated state historic tax credit. Staff will send information as it is available.

Popkins School

2211 Old Earhart Road, Ann Arbor Township



Staff visited Popkins School on June 15, and spoke with Popkins School property owners later that day. Popkins School is owned by Integrus Ventures. The company also owns the Earhart Corporate Center located behind Popkins School. Basic maintenance, including landscaping, has occurred over the past year. There are no plans for work in the coming year.

Jarvis Stone School

7991 North Territorial Road Plymouth, MI



Staff visited Jarvis Stone School on June 17. The Dickerson Barn, also on the property, won Barn of the Year 2021 from the Michigan Barn Preservation Network. Over the past year, Salem Area Historical Society kept up ordinary maintenance on the buildings and grounds. The society asked for confirmation of the date of construction for the school. Staff did some initial research and sent it to the historical society.

Merriman Farm

15490 Buss Road, Manchester Township



Staff visited Merriman Farm on September 9, after contacting the real estate agent listing the property. The house, barns, outbuildings, and trees remain in good condition. Staff notified the realtor of the local historic district status of the property. Staff will continue to monitor the property and reach out to any new property owners.

Thornoaks Neighborhood

Thornoaks Drive and Huron River Service Drive, Ann Arbor Township



Staff drove through the neighborhood several times in fall 2021. The homes remain in good condition. The HDC received nine applications from neighborhood property owners in 2021. Five were approved administratively because they entailed replacement in-kind or simple landscape plans. Two applications approved in 2020 were re-submitted in 2021 due to supply and work delays, and extended administratively. Two applications were considered by the HDC. The first, an application for a roof replacement which changed the roofline, was tabled pending more information, and rescinded by the applicant. The second, submitted by the same property owner, included a roof replacement compatible with the house, and was passed by the HDC. Staff will send out informational postcards to the neighborhood in January 2022.

Looking to 2022

In 2022, an HDC subcommittee will consider a potential new historic district in Scio Township. This would be the first local historic district in Scio Township. The HDC will continue to support a committee in the City of Milan seeking local historic district designation; and Northfield Township Historical Society as they consider next steps in the preservation of local historic houses and farmsteads. Also, the Historic District Commission will work to have better communication with property owners and clarify the application process.

In 2021 we were able to meet with some property owners face-to-face once more. Washtenaw County Local Historic District property owners are wonderful stewards of these unique places, and the Historic Preservation program will continue to support and partner with the community that cares for each local historic district.