

**DATE:** Thursday, November 3, 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 Meeting: September 1, 2022–** Chair

**Citizen Participation and Commissioner follow-up –** Chair

**Application Reviews**

- 4118 Thornoaks Drive

**Business and Staff Reports**

- **Staff report:**
  - Local Historic District Updates
    - Thornoaks
    - Wild-Frey Farm
  - Washtenaw County updates
    - Bell Road Bridge
  - Certified Local Government Program
    - 2023 CLG grant application with NTHS
    - Resolution of support
  - 2022 Calendar

**Treasurer Report**

**Items for Discussion**

- Commissioner Updates

**Adjournment**

*Next Meeting: Proposed for January 5, 2023, Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, Superior Room, 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108*

**Attachments:**

Minutes of the September 1 meeting

Staff Report

4118 Thornoaks Drive application packet

Resolution of Support for 2023 CLG grant application

2023 Calendar draft

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission  
Meeting Minutes**

|              |                                                                                         |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DATE:</b> | <b>Thursday, September 1, 2022</b>                                                      |
| <b>TIME:</b> | 5:30 pm-7:00pm                                                                          |
| <b>PLACE</b> | Learning Resource Center<br>Washtenaw County<br>4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108 |

**Call to Order**

- Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission meeting to order at 5:37 PM
- Staff conducted roll call:
  - **Commissioners present:** Kim Clarke, Olivia Davidson, Katie Remensnyder, Alice Ralph, Aprille McKay
  - **Commissioners absent with notice:** Alec Jerome, Peter Kelley, James Mann
  - **Staff present:** Melinda Schmidt

**Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:**

Chair Ralph motioned to approve the agenda for the September 1, 2022 Historic District Commission meeting. Commissioner Clarke seconded the motion. The agenda was unanimously approved.

**Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meetings: July 7, 2022:**

Chair Ralph motioned to approve the July 7, 2022 meeting minutes. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Business and Staff Reports:**

**Certified Local Government Program:** Staff introduced the Commission to Alan Higgins, the CLG coordinator with the Michigan SHPO. Mr. Higgins met with staff prior to the meeting for a routine review, and stayed to observe the HDC meeting. Mr. Higgins updated the commission on the CLG program, including the progress of the Milan Survey as part of the Community Partnership program, and an updated grant cycle for CLG grants moving forward. The grant application period will start October 3, and once grants are awarded, communities have 24-30 months to complete the project. Chair Ralph asked about the status of CLG funding. Mr. Higgins explained funding has increased over the past few years.

**2022 Local Historic District Survey:** Staff has finished survey work, with the exception of the Thornoaks Neighborhood, which is easier to survey in late November. Staff has been in contact with the new property owners at the Esek Prey house. They are considering solar panels and chimney repair, so those items may be included in upcoming applications.

**Wilde-Frey Farm:** The Study Committee met for the first time over Zoom in late August. Next steps include a site visit in mid-September and gathering resources. If anyone has any information or resources on the Farm or Scio Township history to share, please contact staff.

**Thornoaks:** Staff reviewed preliminary project plans submitted by a neighborhood resident. The project includes a small addition located on a side elevation that would not be visible from the street or attached to a main elevation. Staff presented preliminary architectural drawings and site photos. Commissioners discussed the siding type, roofline, and geometry in light of Secretary of the Interior's Standard 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.*

**Conant Farm:**

Staff presented two project ideas for Conant Farm for informal commissioner feedback. First, property owners have asked the HDC to consider the possibility of digging a new basement for the Conant House directly in front of the current location. The house has extensive water damage and need a new basement. Moving the house forward would allow the house to roll on the new foundation and put the house in a better location to avoid the water. The house was moved to the current location from Willow Run. Commissioners recognized the value of this new location for the safety of the house, and discussed the history of the site, which includes moving the buildings to the property. Second, property owners are considering moving the chimney on the Bower House to the south elevation, in order to minimize openings on the roof. The roof needs to be replaced soon, because it sustained damage from a large branch that fell during the winter. Commissioner requested more information; including the original house form, what aspects of the site contribute to its integrity, and if there are any other openings in the roof.

**Adjournment:** Since there was no further discussion, Chair Ralph adjourned the meeting at 6:42

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for *Thursday, October 6, 2022- Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, Superior Room, 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108*

# Washtenaw County Historic District Commission Staff Report

## November 3, 2022

### Local Historic Districts

- **Thornoaks:**
  - Residents of 4118 Thornoaks Drive have applied to remove a secondary chimney stack from the house. See attached application packet.
  - The State Historic Preservation Review Board upheld the HDC's February 10, 2022 decision regarding replacement siding at 4071 Thornoaks.
- **Wild-Frey Farm:**
  - The study committee met at the farm mid-September, and the survey report draft is underway. The committee will meet again to review the draft once it is completed. The completed survey report will be presented to the HDC at a meeting in early 2023.

### Washtenaw County Updates

- **Bell Road Bridge:**
  - The Washtenaw County Road Commission will transfer the Bell Road Bridge to Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation to install as part of the Boarder-to-Boarder Trail over Mill Creek in the Dexter Area. The HDC has advocated for Bell Road Bridge preservation in the past, and it was stored by the Road Commission after it was dismantled. It is likely the 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest truss bridge in the state, and is associated with Judge Dexter. The bridge will be rehabilitated under the supervision of Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation. Staff has been in contact with Ms. Macyda, a planner with preservation experience who works with Parks and Recreation and is involved with the project. Parks and Recreation is working with a bridge preservation and rehabilitation firm out of Ohio. Parks and Recreation will keep staff updated about the project.

### Certified Local Government Program

- Staff is working with Northfield Township Historical Society to apply for a 2023 CLG grant to continue survey work. Specifically, NTHS would like to create a National Register Multiple Property Designation Form for Historic and Architectural Resources (MPDF) for the township, based on the 2020 Reconnaissance Survey Report. The MPDF would make it easier for local property owners to designate their property in the National Register, because much of the work will already be done under the MPDF. As part of the grant project scope, National Register Nominations for 2-4 sites recognized as potentially eligible in the 2020 report would be completed under the MPDF. A resolution of support from the HDC is required for Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners approval of the application. The resolution is attached for your consideration.

### 2022 Calendar

- A proposed 2022 calendar is attached for HDC consideration.

### 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

## COA Application Review Packet

**Historic District** Thornoaks

**Name of Applicant** Lee Pearson

**Address of Property** 4118 Thornoaks Dr, Ann Arbor, MI



### What are the character defining features?

4118 Thornoaks is an attic-on-basement attached by a short hyphen to a one-story east wing. The home faces northwest. The foundation is concrete block. The front elevation is clad in vertical wood siding and the gable has exposed rafters and full-width front balcony. There is a walkout lower level on the front elevation accessed via a set of concrete steps. There are floor-to-ceiling and under the gable windows. The majority of the east wing of the front facade is clad in uncoursed, multicolored stone.

The west elevation features a large chimney made of uncoursed, multicolor stone. The chimney has an accessible outdoor fireplace with stone ledge.

The rear elevation has a door with louvered windows and a large picture window toward the middle portion of the structure.

The east elevation has two sets of windows – one large rectangular, stationary, the other a vertical series of three that can be opened. A small chimney projects from the middle of the elevation. The east elevation is not visible from the front of the house or the roadway.

An unattached, flat roof two-car garage is clad in vertical wood siding, and is at a slight angle to the home.

### Summary of proposed work from the applicant:

The east elevation has a small chimney in bad repair. Instead of repairing it, a costly repair, I'd like to remove the section above the roof, capping it off and covering the area with plywood and shingles to match the existing roof. I am proposing to only demo the top portion of the chimney above the roof, leaving the section below the eaves intact.

The chimney currently vents a water heater, which I would replace with an on-demand water heater vented out the side of the house. The new vent would be round PVC vent pipe coming out of the bricks about 2-3 feet above the ground from the remaining chimney. I would paint the PVC brown so it blends into the background. This is really the only place for the vent due to the height of the basement basically being at ground level.

Please note that this chimney is not original to the house, but was added in the 70s.





4118 Thornoaks Drive aerial with project site circled

**Staff Notes:**

Staff visited 4118 Thornoaks Drive mid-October. The proposed project location is not visible from the roadway or the front of the house. The east elevation is hidden from view. The chimney is a small, brick chimney hidden from view; it is not the primary chimney. The primary chimney is located on the west elevation; it is a large, stone chimney visible from the front of the house.

**Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation applicable:**

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.

**Proposed motions:**

**Approve:** *"...move to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for removal of the chimney stack above the roofline on the east elevation of 4118 Thornoaks Drive, and installation of a PVC pipe vent out of the east elevation wall, as submitted with pictures; based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation 9."*

**Attachments:**

Photos of proposed project site on east elevation of 4118 Thornoaks Drive  
Photos of 4118 Thornoaks Drive  
Photo of proposed materials  
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation



Project site, east elevation, view facing northwest



Portion of chimney proposed for removal





Project site, east elevation, view facing west







East half of front facade, view facing southeast. The rockface continues around onto a portion of the east elevation (see previous picture)



Rear (south) elevation, with view of west elevation and stone chimney, view facing northeast





Front facade and west elevation, view facing southwest



Chimney on west elevation





View towards the east elevation from the driveway







Example of PVC exhaust pipe; it will be painted brown to match the chimney



## The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Standards that follow were originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990 as part of Department of the Interior regulations (36 CFR Part 67, Historic Preservation Certifications). They pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
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.



## **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission Resolution of Support for Northfield Township CLG Grant Application**

Whereas, the Northfield Township Historical Society approached WCHDC to request sponsorship for a grant application to complete a Multiple Property Documentation Form for Historic and Architectural Resources and up to four individual National Register Nominations in Northfield Township, and Northfield Township is located within the Washtenaw County Historic District's jurisdiction; and

Whereas, the Washtenaw County is a Certified Local Government which allows the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission to sponsor the Northfield Township Area Historical Society's application for 2023 Certified Local Government grant funds; and

Whereas, WCHDC will provide administrative support for the grant application; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

The Washtenaw County Historic District Commission, at their regular meeting on November 3, 2022 approves this resolution to sponsor the Northfield Township Historical Society CLG Grant application.

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WCHDC Chair

Date

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Melinda Schmidt, OCED Staff

Date



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission**

### **Public Meeting Posting**

The Washtenaw County Historic District Commission will hold its 2023 meetings on

**Thursday, January 5**

**Thursday, March 2**

**Thursday, May 4**

**Thursday, June 1**

**Thursday, July 6**

**Thursday, August 3**

**Thursday, September 7**

**Thursday, October 5**

**Thursday, November 2**

at

**5:30pm**

**Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center**

**Superior Conference Room**

**4135 Washtenaw Ave**

**Ann Arbor, MI 48108**

Subsequent meeting dates will be publicly posted.

*For further information contact:*

Melinda Schmidt

[schmidt@washtenaw.org](mailto:schmidt@washtenaw.org)

734-544-2954

Meeting packets will be posted online at: <http://www.washtenaw.org/agendacenter>

The County of Washtenaw will provide the necessary auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon seven (7) days notice to the county of Washtenaw. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should

contact the County of Washtenaw by writing or calling the following:

Human Resources

220 North Main Street; P.O. Box 8645;

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8645.

Phone (734) 222.6800, TDD (734) 994.1733