

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes**

DATE:	Thursday, May 2, 2024
TIME:	5:30 pm-7:00 pm
PLACE	Eastern County Government Center Office of Community & Economic Development- 2 nd floor 415 W. Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti, MI

Call to Order

- Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Roll Call

- Staff, Sarah Pounders, conducted roll call:
 - o **Commissioners present:** Alice Ralph, Kim Clarke, Anne Stevenson, Angela Oehrli, James Mann, Dena Rapley, Alec Jerome
 - o **Commissioners absent:** Katie Remensnyder, Peter Kelley
 - o **Staff present:** Kat Slocum, Sarah Pounders

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the agenda. Staff asked that the Resolution of Support for HB5430 be added to the agenda. Commissioner Oehrli asked for clarification of the difference between the Resolution of Support and the Letter of Support. Staff clarified. Chair Ralph moved to approve the agenda with the Resolution of Support for HB5430 added. Commissioner Oehrli seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting: April 4, 2024:

Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. Commissioner Mann moved to approve the minutes of April 4. Commissioner Oehrli seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Participation: none

Commissioner follow-up to citizen participation: none

Items for Consideration

- Groves Farm Study Committee Nominations
Staff introduced the commitments of and the required structure of study committees, as detailed by Section 399.203 of Public Act 169 of 1970 (PA 169), as amended, Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act. Study committee members' responsibilities would include editing and adding content on site-specific architectural and cultural histories. Study Committees must have one member from the relevant local historical committee. Jennifer DeLisle, president of the Northfield Township Historical Society, has agreed to serve as a committee member. Cheri Szcodronski, the author of the National Register nomination for Groves Farm, has also agreed to be on the committee. Staff noted that Commissioner Remensnyder volunteered to serve as a Committee member via email. Staff asked for two more volunteers from the HDC. Commissioner Stevenson and Commissioner Oehrli volunteered to be a part of the study committee. Commissioner Rapley asked for clarity on how the narratives of females and indigenous people are being included. Staff shared several areas within the study committee report where both narratives have been added and identified further opportunities to add diverse voices.

- Resolution of Support for HB5430

Staff asked if there is any feedback on the Resolution of Support. There was none. Vice Chair Jerome moved to support. Chair Ralph asked called a vote of support. Unanimously approved.

- Letter of Support for HB5430

Chair Ralph asked for feedback on the letter of support for HB5430. Vice Chair Jerome moved to support. Chair Ralph called a vote of support. Unanimously approved.

Business and Reports:

Staff Report

- Local Historic Districts updates
 - o Wild Frey Farm has sold to a local buyer. The new owner has submitted three COAs, all of which received administrative approval (1. Window replacement 2. Roof replacement 3. Front deck replacement).
 - o No updates on Thornoaks.
 - o Merriman Farm is under contract. No further information is known. Staff will contact new owners when that information becomes available.
 - o Groves Farm visit: Staff visited Groves Farm on April 23. Updated photos were taken of all elevations of each structure, nonextant structures were noted, and the findings are being added to the study committee report.
- Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant
 - o Cheri Szcodronski has four properties identified, and she will draft the NRHP nomination forms.
- Ordinance updates
 - o Staff have completed updates to the Local Historic District ordinances. They are currently undergoing internal review and are to be sent to Corporation Counsel for final review.
- HDC outreach to local organizations
 - o Staff is attending the Michigan Historic Preservation Network conference next week for professional development and networking.
- Gordan Hall SHPO grant for rehabilitation that was submitted in February
 - o No updates. We are still awaiting a decision from SHPO.
- HDC Community Awards announcement draft
 - o Staff presented the document overview and suggested the application close on August 1st and awards be granted in September.
 - o Commissioner Oehrli suggested that a rubric be created to judge nominations fairly. Vice Chair Jerome suggested that the nomination of a realtor coincide with media coverage of the upcoming Merriman Farm sale. Commissioner Rapley suggested that the required amount of information to be submitted be approachable by any potential nominee. It was suggested that the award nominations should not exceed two pages. Chair Ralph asked that the word "by" be added to the document in SOI bullet point.

Treasurer Report: none

Other Reports: none

Items for Discussion:

- **Potential Projects:**

Commissioner Rapley discussed holding a tax credit workshop or facilitating a pilot group of tax credit submissions with Local Historic District owners. Staff will explore the possibility of holding training or a “pilot group” in partnership with SHPO.

- **Commissioner Updates:** There were none.

Adjournment: Commissioner Ralph motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:11pm.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for June 6, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at Eastern County Government Center Office of Community & Economic Development 2 nd floor 415 W. Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti, MI
