



WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

www.washtenaw.org/preservation
MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Thursday, January 9th, 2025
TIME: 5:30 pm – 7:00pm
PLACE: Eastern County Government Center
Office of Community & Economic Development – 2nd Floor
415 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI

1. **Call to Order**– Chair
2. **Roll Call** – Secretary
3. **Approval of Agenda** – Chair
4. **Approval of Minutes** – Chair
 - a. June 6th, 2024 Meeting
5. **Public Comment**
6. **Welcome New Commissioner** – Debby Covington
7. **Business**
 - a. 2025 HDC Meeting Calendar – Action
 - b. Commissioner Updates – Discussion
 - c. HDC Elections- Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer– Action
 - d. 2024 Review– Discussion
 - i. CLG Annual Report
 - ii. LHD Annual Audit Report
 - e. 2025 HDC Goals– Action
 - i. 2025 draft provided by staff. 2024 HDC Goals attached for reference.
8. **Staff Report**
 - 2025 Historic Preservation Budget Changes
 - HDC [Historic Markers](#)
 - Historic District Ordinance updates
 - Local Historic District Affidavit updates
 - Thornoaks, Merriman, Conant, Popkins
 - Groves Farm Study Committee update
 - [Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant](#)
 - [Gordon Hall Rehabilitation Grant](#)
 - [2024 Preservation Awards](#)
 - [HistWeb Native American Layers](#)
 - Washtenaw County Updates

Adjournment

Next Meeting: TBD by ratification of Calendar

Attachments:

June 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes- Draft
2025 HDC Meeting Calendar
HDC Board Positions
2024 CLG Annual Report
2024 LHD Annual Audit Report
2025 HDC Goals- draft
2024 HDC Goals
Staff Report

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes**

DATE:	Thursday, June 6, 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 5:34 pm.

Roll Call

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

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

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

Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting: May 2, 2024:

Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. Commissioner Oehrli moved to approve the minutes of May 2, 2024. Chair Ralph seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Participation: none

Commissioner follow-up to citizen participation: none

Items for Consideration

1) Review of Commissioner absence circumstances

- a) Commissioner participation and attendance rules were reiterated.

2) Recommendation of Commissioner Termination

- a) The recommendation for termination was not needed. Commissioner attended the meeting and provided relevant information for excused absences.

3) Ordinance updates

Staff presented ordinance updates that were necessary. The last ordinance updates were completed 14 years prior.

- a) Washtenaw County Historic Preservation Ordinance
 - Section 4A- Edit made to note that changes of a property needed a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), and that the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission becomes the first reviewer.
 - Commissioner Stevenson suggested we add photographs to the list of suggested supporting materials contained within a COA.

- Chair Ralph suggested the “all required supporting” materials be changed to be more inclusive. Staff suggested replacing that with language stating “all applicable supporting materials.”
- Section 4B- all uses of Secretary of Interior should be capitalized.
- Section 4B1- “cultural” added to be more inclusive.
- Section 10- the noted law was repealed and replaced; new law is noted.
- b) Thornoaks
 - The word “cultural” to be added and the date updated.
- c) Old Zion Parsonage
 - Section 2- COA language was originally included. Update COA language based on previous suggestion “all applicable” and add “photograph.”
 - Capitalization, editing, addition of “cultural,” updated dates
- d) Milton and Kittie Geer
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing, dates
- e) Merriman Farm
 - Same edits as above - COA language, capitalization, editing, dates
- f) McMahon Springs
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing, dates
- g) McCormick Farm
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing, dates
- h) Kramer-Kuebler-Adler Farmstead
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing, dates
 - There is language in this ordinance that had bridge-related language (because it was pasted from the Delhi Bridge ordinance).
 - Section 6. Neglect of maintenance section now mirrors the section content from other relevant property types. Reason for change: property is not a bridge.
- i) Jarvis Stone School
 - Section 6 neglect of maintenance section has also been updated to not reflect the Delhi Bridge language. Language now mirrors the section content from other relevant property types.
- j) Gordon Hall
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing, dates
- k) Geer School
 - Legislation 1970 noted as the correct.
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing, dates.
 - Section 2.3 update- Commission Determination- added language that noted rejected plans need to be sent back to the Local Historic District.
 - Section 2.3a – Language added that allows COA to be done by administrative approval.
- l) Esek Pray
 - Same edits as above- COA language, capitalization, editing cultural, dates.
- m) Conant Farm
 - Cultural added
 - Section 6. Neglect of maintenance section now mirrors the section content from other relevant property types. Reason for change: property is not a bridge.

Chair Ralph made a motion to accept the updates to the historic district ordinances with modifications. Commissioner Oehrli seconded the motion. Motion has passed unanimously.

Business and Reports:

Staff Report

- o Local Historic District Affidavits updates
 - o Wild Frey and Thornoaks affidavits completed.
 - o Awaiting signatures from three other property owners.
 - o Merriman Farms is still for sale.
- o Groves Farm Study Committee update
 - o Study committee has been approved by BOC. The draft will be reviewed by the homeowner, then it will be sent to the study committee.
- o Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant
 - o Consistent updates are being received from the consultant. The site description and context narratives are upcoming and site visits are being accomplished this summer.
- o 2025 CLG Grant update
 - o The awards will be publicly announced in June.
- o Awards updates
 - o The awards criteria are posted online, now open, and have been shared widely on social media and in the media.
- o Washtenaw County updates
 - o Board of Commissioner meetings are first and third Wednesday of each month. Staff encourages HDC commissioners to call in or submit comments in support of the work of the HDC.
 - o Staff commented that underserved properties are at a disadvantage because preservation and historic designation have high costs associated. Additional historic preservation funding would allow the county to serve a more diverse set of stakeholders.
 - o Groves Farm will need local historic district signage. Staff are applying for a \$1200 grant for a small sign.
 - o The next HDC meeting location is to be determined. Ideas were shared for locations within Manchester, Dexter, and Northfield Townships. Staff will research. Commissioners suggested that Manchester outreach is applicable.

Treasurer Report: none

Other Reports: none

Items for Discussion:

- **Commissioner Updates:**
 - o Commissioner Kelly was contacted by a family within Scio Township that is interested in property becoming a Local Historic District. Staff asked that the family contact staff to begin discussions.

Adjournment: Commissioner Ralph motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:25pm

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at TBD 2 nd floor 415 W. Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti, MI
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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Collaborative solutions for a promising future

Washtenaw County Historic District Commission

Public Meeting Posting

The Washtenaw County Historic District Commission will hold its 2025 meetings on

Thursday, January 9

Thursday, March 6

Thursday, April 3

Thursday, May 8

Thursday, June 5

Thursday, July 10

Thursday, August 7

Thursday, September 4

Thursday, October 9

Thursday, November 6

at

5:30pm

**Eastern Government Center
Second Story Conference Room
415 W. Michigan Avenue
Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

Subsequent meeting dates will be publicly posted.

For further information contact:

historicpreservation@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

HDC Elections
Excerpt from the WCHDC Bylaws

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

- Section 1. Officers shall be Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.
- Section 2. The Chair shall preside over all meetings of the Historic District Commission and shall have duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage.
- Section 3. The Chair shall have the privilege of discussion on all matters before the Commission and voting thereon.
- Section 4. The Vice Chair shall act for the Chair in his/her absence. In the absence of both Chair and Vice-Chair, the Secretary shall act for the Chair.
- Section 5. The Treasurer shall have a treasurer's report at each regular meeting.
- Section 6. The Secretary shall perform such duties as the Commission may determine.
- Section 7. The appointed members of the Commission shall be known as Commissioners.
- Section 8. A Washtenaw County staff member shall be an ex officio member of the Historic District Commission without vote.



Michigan State Historic Preservation Office

Certified Local Government Program

CLG 2024 Annual Report

1. CLG BASIC INFORMATION

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Washtenaw County Historic District Commission

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL

Lawrence Kestenbaum

CLG CONTACT PERSON (official person on file with National Park Service)

Kat Slocum

TITLE

Historic Preservation Specialist

MAILING ADDRESS

415 W. Michigan Ave Ypsilanti MI 4819

EMAIL

historicpreservation@washtenaw.org

TELEPHONE

734-544-2954

CLG/HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION WEBSITE (if applicable)

www.washtenaw.org/1943/Historic-District-Commission

2. HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE AND PRESERVATION PLANNING

A. DID THE CLG KEEP ITS HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE IN EFFECT FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR? ☒ YES ☐ NO (if no, briefly explain)

B. DID THE CLG ADOPT OR AMEND/REVISE/MODIFY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING DURING THE YEAR?

(Provide a link or attach any documents for which you select yes)

HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE

☒ YES ☐ NO

PRESERVATION PLAN (including master plan component)

☐ YES ☒ NO

HDC BYLAWS OR RULES OF PROCEDURE

☐ YES ☒ NO

DESIGN GUIDELINES (under PA 169, guidelines must be approved by SHPO)

☐ YES ☒ NO

COA APPLICATION/REQUIREMENTS

☐ YES ☒ NO

SURVEY PLAN

☐ YES ☒ NO

OTHER PRESERVATION-RELATED REGULATIONS/PROCEDURES (e.g., blight ordinances, demolition ordinances, downtown design standards, etc.)

☐ YES ☒ NO

3. HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

A. PROVIDE THE NAME AND TITLE FOR THE COMMUNITY'S STAFF LIAISON TO THE HDC

Kat Slocum, Historic Preservation Specialist

B. DOES THE HDC USE AN ON-CALL PRESERVATION SPECIALIST (e.g., architect, historian, etc.)? ☐ YES ☒ NO (if yes, provide name/title)

C. IDENTIFY **CURRENT** HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEMBERS.

(Submit a resume or Attachment A for each **NEW** commissioner appointed during the year)

NAME	ROLE (e.g., chair, vice-chair, etc.)	TERM STARTED	TERM ENDS
Alice Ralph	Chair	1/1/2023	12/31/2026
Alec Jerome	Vice-Chair	1/1/2022	12/31/2025
Kim Clarke	Treasurer	1/1/2021	12/31/2024
Debby Covington	Commissioner	1/1/2025	12/31/2028
Katie Remensnyder	Commissioner	1/1/2023	12/31/2026
Dena Rapley	Commissioner	11/1/2023	12/31/2026
Jo Angela Oerhli	Commissioner	1/1/2023	12/31/2026
Peter J. Kelley	Attorney	1/1/2021	12/31/2024
Anne Stevenson	Commissioner	1/1/2022	12/31/2025

D. DOES THE HDC INCLUDE AT LEAST ONE MEMBER WHO IS A QUALIFIED PRESERVATION PROFESSIONAL? ☒ YES ☐ NO If you answer no, briefly identify how the CLG sought to identify qualified professionals (architects, historians, architectural historians, archaeologists, etc.) to fill vacancies AND submit a copy of related announcements, advertisements, or other means used to seek qualified members.								
E. ARE THERE CURRENTLY ANY HDC VACANCIES? ☒ YES ☐ NO If yes, how many? We have 1 vacancy- preferably for an attorney. We are actively seeking candidates.								
F. DID NEW COMMISSIONERS RECEIVE TRAINING MATERIALS AND INFORMATION ON THE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE? ☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT APPLICABLE								
G. DID AT LEAST ONE COMMISSIONER AND/OR STAFF PERSON PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING (e.g., conferences, webinars, and in-person workshops)? ☒ YES ☐ NO If yes, identify the training and participants below. If no, briefly explain why no one participated in training.								
NAME OF TRAINING			PROVIDER			ATTENDEES		
The ABC's of Historic Designation Part 2: local designation			National Alliance of Preservation Commissions			Kat Slocum, Sarah Pounders, Jo Angela Oerhli, Dena Rapley		
Housing and Historic Preservation: Joint webinar			National Alliance of Preservation			Kat Slocum, Sarah Pounders		
H. WHEN ARE YOUR HDC’S REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS? (e.g., first Wednesday of each month) First Thursday of every month with some variation to accommodate holidays.								
I. IDENTIFY THE MONTHS IN WHICH YOUR HDC MET AT LEAST ONCE.								
MONTH	MEETING HELD?	QUORUM PRESENT?	MINUTES ON WEBSITE?*		MONTH	MEETING HELD?	QUORUM PRESENT?	MINUTES ON WEBSITE?*
January 2024	☒	☒	☒		July 2024	☐	☐	☐
February 2024	☐	☐	☐		August 2024	☒	☐	☐
March 2024	☐	☐	☐		September 2024	☐	☐	☐
April 2024	☒	☒	☒		October 2024	☐	☐	☐
May 2024	☒	☒	☒		November 2024	☐	☐	☐
June 2024	☒	☒	☒		December 2024	☐	☐	☐
*if not available on your website, submit minutes for at least two meetings								
J. PROVIDE INFORMATION ON DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW DURING THE YEAR.								
APPLICATION TOTALS				RESULTS OF REVIEWS				
# OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED: 13				# OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS ISSUED: 13				
# OF APPLICATIONS REVIEWED BY STAFF ONLY: 13				# OF DENIALS ISSUED: 0				
# OF APPLICATIONS REVIEWED BY THE HDC: 0				# OF NOTICES TO PROCEED ISSUED: 0				
WERE ANY HDC DECISIONS APPEALED? ☐ YES ☒ NO (if yes, complete the information below)								
# OF HDC DECISIONS APPEALED:								
# OF DECISIONS OVERTURNED:								
# OF DECISIONS AFFIRMED:								

4. INVENTORY AND DESIGNATION

A. IDENTIFY NEW SURVEY PLANS, PROGRESS ON EXISTING PLANS, AND/OR CHANGES TO EXISTING SURVEY PLANS, INCLUDING CHANGES IN PRIORITIES OR PROCESSES.

In 2019, Washtenaw County received a CLG grant to complete survey of historic resources in Northfield Township. Currently, Washtenaw County, in partnership with Northfield Township Historical Society, are completing NRHP nomination of 4 properties identified in that initial survey. As of the end of 2024, the contractor has completed edits for 3 of the property with 1 property pending edits. Our project calendar is on time with anticipated presentation to State Review Board in May of 2025.

B. DID THE CLG ACTIVELY WORK ON OR COMPLETE HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS? ☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes, identify them below. If the survey was completed but data and reports were not previously provided to SHPO, submit a copy with this report. Use additional sheets if necessary to capture all surveys in progress or completed.

NAME OF SURVEY	HOW MANY RESOURCES?	SURVEY PROVIDED TO SHPO?
Groves Farm Historic Resource Survey	1	☒ YES ☐ NO
		☐ YES ☐ NO
		☐ YES ☐ NO
		☐ YES ☐ NO
		☐ YES ☐ NO
		☐ YES ☐ NO

C. DOES THE CLG HAVE SURVEYS TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR NEXT YEAR? ☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes, briefly identify them, including the reason for the survey (e.g., part of work plan, development pressure, considering designation, etc.). If no, identify future survey goals that may be of interest.

Building upon the NRHP CLG grant in Northfield township, the HDC has expressed interest in possibly adding those NR properties as LHDs. Discussions are ongoing. In 2025, the WCHDC seeks to shift focus to townships with little to no Local Historic Districts (Ex: Northfield Township, Manchester Township). Ongoing communication with various townships are proving fruitful.

D. WAS ANY MUNICIPAL-SPONSORED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY COMPLETED DURING THE YEAR? ☐ YES ☒ NO

If yes, identify them below.

NAME OF SURVEY	SHPO CONTACTED PRIOR TO WORK?	FOLLOWED STATE STANDARDS?
	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO

E. DID THE CLG ENGAGE IN LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR? ☒ YES ☐ NO

If yes, identify them below. If associated reports were not previously provided to SHPO, submit a copy with this report. Use additional sheets if necessary.

DISTRICT NAME	STATUS AND ACTION	REPORT PROVIDED TO SHPO?
Groves Farm	☒ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☒ YES ☐ NO
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed	☐ YES ☐ NO

	☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☐ YES ☐ NO
	☐ Draft/Underway ☐ Final/Completed ☐ New District ☐ Modification ☐ Elimination	☐ YES ☐ NO
F. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY NATIONAL REGISTER OR LOCAL DISTRICT PROPERTIES THAT WERE MOVED OR DEMOLISHED? ☐ YES ☒ NO If yes, briefly identify them below.		
NAME/ADDRESS OF PROPERTY	NAME OF DISTRICT (IF APPLICABLE)	

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION		
A. WERE ALL HDC MEETINGS HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, P.A. 267 OF 1976? ☒ YES ☐ NO (if no, briefly explain)		
B. WAS INFORMATION ABOUT THE HDC, ITS MEETINGS, AND ITS ACTIVITIES MAINTAINED ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT’S WEBSITE? ☒ YES ☐ NO		
C. BEYOND A WEBSITE, HOW DOES THE HDC PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES TO THE PUBLIC? ☐ Mailings ☐ Newspapers ☒ Posting at Municipal Building ☒ On-site Project Signs ☐ Direct Email ☐ Door Fliers ☐ Email List/Listserv ☐ Local Access Channels ☒ Community Events ☐ Other		
D. DID THE CLG/HDC PROVIDE, SPONSOR, OR PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES (e.g., walking tours, lectures, Preservation Month activities, historical marker programs) OR FORMAL TRAINING ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION? ☐ YES ☐ NO If yes, identify the activities below. SHPO encourages sharing photos so we can highlight your efforts! Use additional sheets if necessary.		
ACTIVITY	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	DATE
Historical Marker Program	Washtenaw County	ongoing
Online Storymap- significant updates this year	Washtenaw County	ongoing
HistWeb GIS- mapping of Native American Resources	Washtenaw County	Nov 24, 2024

6. CLG/HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS		
A. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE IF/HOW YOU MET THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN YOUR LAST ANNUAL REPORT.		
GOAL	DID YOU MEET THIS GOAL?	IF YES, DESCRIBE HOW IT WAS MET. IF NO, DESCRIBE WHY IT WAS NOT MET.
Continue to update LHDs in WashCo	☒ YES ☐ NO	Annual Audit, connected with new owners, established "realtor packet" for perspective buyers of historic properties
Promote Survey and designation of historic sites	☒ YES ☐ NO	Completed survey of Groves Farm, assisted various homeowners in National Registry nomination, assisted Milan in their CLG survey.
	☐ YES ☐ NO	
	☐ YES ☐ NO	
B. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR TOP GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR (2025). EACH CLG MUST IDENTIFY AT LEAST ONE GOAL.		
GOAL	IS THIS A MULTI-YEAR GOAL?	DO YOU NEED SHPO ASSISTANCE TO MEET THIS GOAL? IF SO, BRIEFLY DESCRIBE.
Complete LHD designation of Groves Farm	☐ YES ☒ NO	Not at this time

Participate in more community outreach	☒ YES ☐ NO	We would like to host a "Historic Tax Credit Workshop" cohosted by SHPO to bring WashCo owners/developers to learn about the tax credits in person.
Add more GIS layers to HistWeb including Racial Covenant Deed zones	☒ YES ☐ NO	Not at this time
Our primary goal is to reestablish our HDC annual budget. This has been an ongoing effort and a recent Board of Commissioner Vote approved increases of \$15,000 for 2025 and \$15,000 for 2026.	☒ YES ☐ NO	Not at this time.

7. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

A. SHPO HAS A NEW CLG COORDINATOR. WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WOULD LIKE THE NEW COORDINATOR TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY AND LOCAL PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES/NEEDS?

Washtenaw County is actively seeking to add more historic districts and apply for CLG grants to preserve and stabilize existing historic districts. Currently our historic districts are aggregated in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. We are interested in pursuing historic properties in developing areas that would benefit from grants and protections. Our HDC annual budget and the staff position for this program has experienced 10 years of cuts. This year, following substantial programming and effort, that budget may be seeing progress including reinstatement of the HDC annual budget (to support once existing programming), and increase in staff time to facilitate projects. We have had many years of success with CLG grants and we are explicitly interested in gaining grant funding/credits for multiple districts, sites, and historic marker signs. When the HDC had a budget, they worked to install historic marker signs throughout the County. Those signs are now falling into disrepair. With insufficient funding currently allocated to the HDC, we are unable to complete maintenance on these signs and may need to remove many of them. We would like to explore financial options (grants/other funding) to prevent this.

B. WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT/ACHIEVEMENT/EVENT FROM 2024 IS YOUR CLG/HDC MOST PROUD OF? OR IS THERE A PRESERVATION SUCCESS STORY FROM YOUR COMMUNITY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT?

SHPO encourages sharing photos!
The Historic Preservation Program of Washtenaw County has had a productive year! We completed a drafted report for a new LHD, re-launched our County Preservation awards, conitued progress on our 2022 CLG grant for National Registry nominations in Northfield Township, were awarded a new CLG grant to complete rehabilitation work at Gordon Hall, completed updates to our local historic ordinance and individual LHD ordinances, and have gained 2 years of increased County funding to support Historic Preservation programming.

C. DESCRIBE ANY PROBLEMS, ISSUES, OR CHALLENGES (e.g., economic, political, operational) ENCOUNTERED IN THE LOCAL PRESERVATION PROGRAM IN 2024.

Our biggest challenge is insufficient funding and resources for projects and staff.

D. WHAT ARE THE MOST CRITICAL PRESERVATION ISSUES/NEEDS FACING YOUR COMMUNITY?

Informing/educating owners of tax credits.

E. DID YOUR COMMUNITY RECEIVE ANY PRESERVATION GRANTS (other than CLG grants) IN 2024?

☐ YES ☒ NO (If yes, briefly identify them below.)

We are interested to learn of more grants that we may pursue.

F. DID YOUR COMMUNITY HAVE ANY LOCAL INCENTIVE/GRANT/LOAN PROGRAMS (e.g., façade grant programs, DDA programs, low-interest loans,

abatements, etc.) AVAILABLE FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN 2023? ☐ YES ☒ NO (If yes, briefly identify them below.)	
NAME OF PROGRAM	# OF PROPERTIES BENEFITED
G. DO YOU HAVE ANY UPCOMING PROJECTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS FOR A POTENTIAL CLG GRANT APPLICATION? ☒ YES ☐ NO We have multiple properties interested in pursuing the CLG grant for 2026.	
H. IF REIMBURSEMENT WERE AVAILABLE FOR SOME OF THE COSTS TO ATTEND THE MHPN STATEWIDE PRESERVAION CONFERENCE OR BIANNUAL NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PRESERVATION COMMISSIONS CONFERENCE, WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED? ☒ YES ☐ NO	
I. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH SHPO? We recently completed ordinance updates for our County historic preservation ordinance and each LHD (except one which requires more substantial edits). These edits have been drafted, reviewed by corporation counsel, and have been added to the Board of Commissioners calendar for Jan 2025. We have also updated our "New Commissioner Binder" a training manual for new Commissioners. Note that our County webpage is currently out of date (Since Sept. 2024). The County is currently undergoing significant updates with new webpage launch anticipated in late December. Lastly, the ordinances which are undergoing a resolution from the Board of Commissioners is too large of a file to attach at this time. Available upon request via file sharing.	

Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts Audit 2024

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. All site visits took place in July-December 2024. 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 of local historic districts.

USS Washtenaw artifacts



Staff visited the artifacts on July 25th. The artifacts remain in good condition. An Annual Loaned Artifacts Condition Report was sent to the National Museum of the Navy. The artifacts on loan include the USS Washtenaw ship's ribbon, ship bell, builder's plaque, and steering wheel. The rest of the artifacts and the display case were donated by a local veteran from the Washtenaw chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America in May of 2011.

Esek Pray House



Staff visited the Esek Pray House on Sept. 13th. The owner was currently replacing some walkway pavers, but has not done any other alterations to the property. The owner plans to replace the coop shingles soon, will be doing paint touch ups on the house, and noted the declining health of one of the contributing Maple trees along the road that is of concern.

Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts Audit 2024

Geer School



Staff visited the Geer School on December 12th with PCCS Director of Capital Programs and Facilities. The Director noted that PCCS is prioritizing utilizing the building for school programming beginning in summer 2025. Scheduled work includes repair of the roof, which is currently leaking, repair to interior water damage, and repainting/stabilization of the belfry. All work is tentatively scheduled for Spring 2025. Apart from the aforementioned areas of repair, the building remains in good condition. Staff discussed the CLG Grant with the Director and noted that this would be the best option for pursuing financial incentives as the property is tax exempt and PCCS is not interested in selling the tax credit.

Geer House



Staff visited the Geer House on Sept. 13th. The house is in excellent condition. The property owner plans to reinforce and rebuild several wood elements on the side porch. Owner expressed interest in building a garage to replace an existing shed (same footprint). Owner would also like the relocated barn to be placed under the protection of the local historic district and asked that it be reconsidered by the HDC. Staff also relayed information about the state historic preservation tax credit.

McCormick Farm



Staff visited McCormick farm on Sept. 13th. The farm buildings are in good condition. Property owners were notified about the state tax credit available for future projects. Staff noticed some deterioration to the rear chimney and the owner indicated plans to repaint and repair. No immediate plans for other repairs. The owner has asked for a referral to someone who would be willing to do research on the large barn to learn more about its history of use and construction methods. The owner also offered to be a contact point for other LHD owners who need older, aged wood for their rehabilitation projects; he has a barn full of wood that could be useful to others.

Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts Audit 2024

Jarvis Stone School



Staff visited Jarvis Stone School on Aug. 8th. The state of Michigan historical marker and plaza has been installed and the Salem Area Historical Society held a dedication ceremony. No maintenance projects are needed or planned at this time. This LHD remains well kept and maintained by the SAHS.

McMahon Springs



Staff visited McMahon Springs on Sept. 27th. The property remains in excellent condition. Staff reiterated that they are in communication with MDOT regarding proposed plans nearby to the property. Current status: no funding has been acquired and no further plans have been developed. Staff have been added to the MDOT list of project consultants for the project.

Delhi Bridge



Staff visited the Delhi Bridge Historic District on Sept. 20th. The bridge remains in good condition.

Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts Audit 2024

Gordon Hall



Staff visited Gordon Hall on August 14th. The property remains in good condition. Work was actively underway including electrical rerouting, repairs to weathered siding, sealing, and repainting. Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS) was recently awarded a CLG grant to complete foundation repairs and to increase structural support loads in the basement. The property remains well maintained and managed by an active Historical Society which is guided by their Master Rehabilitation Plan. DAHS continues to fundraise for their ongoing projects. Along with the CLG grant work, DAHS is seeking to add a lift to the structure, begin interior demolition of the main stairwell and walls, and install new HVAC.

Conant Farm



Staff visited Conant Farm on August 28th. The property was recently sold to new owners who called and requested information about what it means to live in a Local Historic District. The new owners have already made substantial progress on clearing debris and overgrowth from the property. Staff were toured throughout the property including the interior of the buildings. There is substantial disrepair in all structures. The main residence has multiple areas of rot, broken windows, collapsing ceiling. The Conant house has the most severe damage including a gaping hole in the roof, substantial mold, and foundation bowing and water damage. The homeowner expressed interest in replacing the roof but does not have the financial ability to repair the house along with the multiple buildings throughout the property.

Wild-Frey Farmstead



Staff visited the property on Sept. 20th of 2024. The current homeowner is a woodworker by trade and has started repairs to the exterior of the house. A new front porch was built and seamlessly integrates with the historic structure. The owner noted upcoming projects for window replacement, basic stabilization projects, and exterior painting. The silo is a safety concern, and the owner has consulted with experts on possible solutions. He will communicate with staff about the plans to stabilize the silo.

Washtenaw County Local Historic Districts Audit 2024

Old Zion Parsonage



Staff visited the property on November 21st. The property remains in good condition. A small deck on the North elevation was replaced to match the existing footprint of the previous deck. Jack Lewis passed away in January of 2024. Jack, and his wife Angelika, worked hard to nominate their property as an LHD and maintain it over the years. He will be greatly missed. Staff sent a Certificate of Appreciation to Angelika to recognize the work her and Jack have done over the years and their stewardship of the district and historic preservation program.

Kramer-Kuebler-Adler Farmstead



Staff visited Kramer-Kuebler-Adler Farmstead on Sept. 20, 2024. The house and extant structures remain well-maintained. The owner plans to paint the barn roofs and siding in the future. The owner installed a generator next to the garage to allow for water access during power outages. The owner expressed frustration at the tax credit process and staff offered to assist upon request.

Merriman Farm



Staff visited Merriman Farm on August 21st, 2024. This property was recently sold- August 5th. Prior to the purchase, the owners emailed with staff about what it means to live in a Local Historic District. They continue to express desire in keeping the historic appearance while adding structures and modifications to suit their needs. *Note: this property has not been actively lived in since the late 1970s (vacation home, and Airbnb).* The new homeowners will utilize this as their primary residence- they are also active farmers with livestock. Three (3) COAs were submitted and administratively approved 1) addition of a dog kennel 2) addition of a chicken coop 3) addition of a lean-to on the west elevation of the gambrel barn. The owners discussed multiple projects they are looking to complete in the first few years including: inspection of the trees by an arborist to determine structural integrity and possible removal, building a well house/pump house over the existing well pipes, addition of two large barns on Lot B of the property, repair and relocation of the pig barn, fencing installation to match existing fence, enclosure of the garage

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	into a room, expansion of the annex from the residence to what is now the garage, and building of a carriage house as a new garage. The homeowners continue to express that the new structures will match the color and aesthetic of the existing outbuildings. One of the homeowners is a licensed builder and will complete the work. These owners are promising and appear to be stewards of the property already.
Thornoaks Neighborhood 	Staff visited the Thornoaks neighborhood on Sept. 17, 2024. The homes in the neighborhood remain well-maintained and in good condition. Staff noted a property that was for sale.
Popkins School House 	Staff visited Popkins on August 16th 2024. Two plexiglass windows and wooden frames on the North elevation were broken due to breaking and entering. Litter was noted throughout the interior of the structure. Maintenance noted that they had multiple break ins at the property since the last audit. In the last year, paint was applied to the northeast door, and a deadlock bolt was installed in the southeast door. The building structure appears sound, however there is deterioration noted on the belfry, trim, window frames, roof, and tuckpointing. Staff recommended the installation of cameras and signs indicating the area is under surveillance. Staff is concerned about this property as it appears to be falling into disrepair each year with only minimal effort at stabilization. Need to ascertain what the goal of Integris Ventures is for this property. Note that Popkins School was the only ordinance not updated for 2025. Requires significant updates in 2025- see suggested ordinance edits in LHD files.

2025 Historic District Commission Goals

1. Support designated historic resources in Washtenaw County.

- a. Increase communication with historic districts/sites (national, state and local) through quarterly emails to residents/property owners. Include information on COAs, press releases, tax credit announcements, and other relevant items.
- b. Tax credit support- host a meeting/workshop in Washtenaw County with staff from the SHPOs office. Seek to increase community understanding of tax credits, network residents with SHPO staff that can assist with tax credit applications and facilitate opportunities for residents to connect with each other.
- c. Complete administration for Gordon Hall Rehabilitation Grant. Act as liaison between SHPO, DAHS, Phoenix, Hopkins Burns, and Washtenaw County.
- d. Apply for 2026 CLG grant.

2. Promote survey and designation of historic sites.

- a. Continue to support Northfield Township MPDF Grant. Introduce LHD designation to selected property owners to increase protection of sites.
- b. Complete LHD designation of Groves Farm in Northfield Township- our first LHD in that township.
- c. Evaluate other resources for LHD nomination in underrepresented townships and/or of underrepresented groups to increase DEI and access to economic incentives.
- d. Form a Study Committee, complete a report, and designate a new LHD.

3. Promote heritage tourism and placemaking.

- a. Evaluate existing County Historic Markers and determine prioritization of maintenance. Update Historic Markers on webpage GIS with all sign locations and pictures of each marker.
- b. Research sites of historic significance throughout the County for installation of new signs. Specifically examine underrepresented areas and/or underrepresented populations.
- c. Research grants to support funding maintenance to existing Historic Markers and/or installation of new Historic Markers.
- d. Complete updates to all [Storymaps](#). Explore possibility of creating Storymap for Northfield township using 2019 survey.
- e. Improve visibility of historic preservation in Washtenaw County through online engagement, 2025 Preservation Awards, and public meetings.

2024 Historic District Commission Goals

(Adopted Jan 4th, 2024)

1. Continue and update oversight of LHDs in Washtenaw County
 - increased communication with local historic districts*
 - tax credit support*
2. Promote survey and designation of historic sites
 - support Northfield Township CLG Grant*
 - *promote Groves Farm to Northfield Township*
 - *acquire funding for study committee*
3. Promote heritage tourism and placemaking
 - *apply for grants/funding for historic plaques*
 - *support local historic sites and organizations*
 - *improve visibility of historic preservation in Washtenaw County through online engagement, awards, and public meetings*

Washtenaw County Historic District Commission Staff Report

January 9th, 2025

2025 Historic Preservation Budget Changes

- On November 20th, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners (BOC) passed a resolution to allocate an additional \$30,000 from the General Fund for “Historic District Preservation”. Half of the funds (\$15,000) are to be applied to 2025, with the other half (\$15,000) applied to 2026. Further details to follow on how those funds are specifically budgeted (HDC budget and/or staff).

HDC Historic Markers

- The HDC has numerous [Historic Markers throughout the County](#). Most were installed when the HDC had a regular annual budget. Following budget cuts, the HDC no longer installed signs and existing signs did not have maintenance. As a result, signs throughout the County have fallen into disrepair. Recently a resident contacted staff and noted that the sign at Highland Cemetery required replacement. Following this report, staff initiated an audit of all Historic Markers to determine condition and priority for maintenance and/or replacement. This audit is still ongoing. Initial data from 2012 indicates approximately 33 signs present, 9 signs unconfirmed, 17 signs removed, and 13 LHDs with no sign.

Historic District Ordinance updates

- Staff completed all edits to County Historic ordinance and select Local Historic District ordinances that required updates. Corporation counsel has approved all edits. The ordinances have been added to the Washtenaw County BOC agenda for January 22nd.

Local Historic District Affidavit Updates

- Staff is currently working to submit affidavits to attach to the deed of the following properties: Wild-Frey Farm, Merriman Farm, Conant Farm, Popkins School, and Thornoaks.

Groves Farm Study Committee update

- A first draft report of the Groves Farm for inclusion as a Local Historic District was sent to the State Historic Preservation Office on November 15th. Per Section 3 of Public Act 169, the report has a 60-day review with the Michigan Historical Commission and State Review Board. Following this review, the Study Committee must hold a public hearing. Following edits to the report, an ordinance must be drafted, and the Groves Farm final report must be submitted to the Washtenaw County BOC- two readings are required for LHD designation.

[Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant](#)

- Overall, the project continues to run on time and on budget.
- Cheri (selected contractor) has completed first draft NRHP nominations for Zeeb Farm, St. Johns Church, German Park Recreation Club, and the Leland House. Staff submitted comments for the final draft.
- Final drafts for all sites are anticipated in the spring with presentation to the State Review Board in May.

[Gordon Hall Rehabilitation Grant](#)

- Washtenaw County was awarded a 2024 CLG grant (\$170,647) to complete rehabilitation work at Gordon Hall. Staff completed grant initiation paperwork and drafted the RFP. SHPO is currently reviewing the RFP prior to our posting in Jan.

[2024 Preservation Awards](#)

- The 2024 Preservation Award recipients were selected at the August HDC working session. Awards were presented to recipients at the Washtenaw County BOC meeting on September 18th.

[HistWeb Native American GIS Layers](#)

- Staff completed GIS mapping of Native American Resources and Trails in Washtenaw County. These digital layers were added to HistWeb in November in celebration of Native American Heritage Month.

Washtenaw County Updates

- We welcomed a new historic preservation intern in September. Britt Teliin joins us from EMU where she is completing her Masters degree in historic preservation.
- The HDC has a membership to the [National Alliance of Preservation Commissions](#) (NAPC). Included in the membership are FREE webinars and online resources for staff and commissioners.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Slocum, Staff to the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Washtenaw County Office of Community & Economic Development