



WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

www.washtenaw.org/preservation
MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Thursday, March 6th, 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. Jan 9th, 2025 Meeting
5. **Public Comment**
6. **Business**
 - a. 2025 HDC Yearly Goals, edits – Discussion
 - b. COA 4151 Thornoaks- Action
 - c. Highland Cemetery Sign Funding Request- Action
 - d. HDC Subcommittees- Action
 - i. Heritage Tourism
 - ii. Historic Resource Support and Designation
 - e. Woodlawn Cemetery- Discussion
 - f. Historic Markers- Discussion
 - i. Cheney School
 - ii. Groves Farm
7. **Staff Report**
 - WCHDC Budget
 - MHPN 2025 Preservation Awards
 - Historic District Ordinance updates
 - Groves Farm Study Local Historic District Status Update
 - [Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant](#)
 - [Gordon Hall Rehabilitation Grant](#)
 - Washtenaw County Updates

Adjournment

Next Meeting: TBD by ratification of Calendar

Attachments:

Jan. 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes- Draft
2025 HDC Goals- draft
COA Application: 4151 Thornoaks

- Ypsilanti Historic District Commission Solar
 - Ann Arbor Solar Guidance
- Highland Cemetery Historic Sign Proposal
HDC Subcommittees Outline and Suggestions
Staff Report

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes**

DATE:	Thursday, January 9, 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 5:37 pm.

Roll Call

- Secretary Clarke conducted roll call:
 - **Commissioners present:** Alice Ralph, Anne E. Stevenson, Kim Clarke, Jo Angela Oehrli, Katie Remensnyder, Alec Jerome, Debby Covington, Dena Rapley.
 - **Commissioners absent:**
 - **Staff present:** Kat Slocum, Britt Teliin.

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

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

Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting: August 8, 2024:

Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none. Commissioner Clarke seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Participation: None

Welcome New Commissioner – Debby Covington

Items for Consideration

- **2025 HDC Meeting Calendar:** Staff gave information on the dates that were chosen. Motion to approve calendar by Vice Chair Jerome. Commissioner Stevenson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Commissioner Updates:** Staff gave information about needing one more seat to be filled by an attorney.
- **HDC Elections: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer**
Chair Ralph expressed interest in continuing as Chair. Vice Chair Jerome expressed interest in continuing as Vice Chair. Secretary Clarke stated interest in continuing as Secretary. Commissioner Rapley expressed interest in serving as Treasurer.

Vice Chair Jerome motioned to approve positions. Commissioner Remensnyder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **2024 Review – Discussion**

- **CLG Annual Report:** Staff discussed the inventory and designation. The only items needed in 2024 were administrative approvals. Groves Farm historic resource survey will be submitted to SHPO. The Native American Resource Layers of geo-rectified Native American Trails was a success. Staff updated the online Storymaps in Washtenaw County.
- **LHD Annual Audit Report:** Staff presented the Historic District site visits completed in Fall 2024. There are 16 Historic Districts as of last year. Staff mentioned that most of the sites were doing well, and some owners received approval last year for small changes like paint and generators. However, Conant Farm is not in good shape. Commissioner Remensnyder and Commissioner Stevenson mentioned that it would be good to have full documentation, such as a Historic American Buildings Survey, of the farmstead buildings that are in decline.

- **2025 HDC Goals**

- 2025 draft provided by staff. Staff provided several HDC goal suggestions. Chair Ralph stated that newer commissioners (within two years) should engage in the processes of grants and or the HABS report. Staff mentioned only about 50 historic markers remain and that Highland Cemetery reached out to have its taken down and possibly replaced. Commissioner Covington noted that the David Byrd Center marker is hard to read now. Vice Chair Jerome suggested figuring out ways to reenforce and give the HDC more authority on properties. Vice Chair Jerome also talked about supporting historic preservation as a whole and wanting to investigate some legal notifications for the next meeting in March.

- **Adopted 2025 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 SHPO office. Seek to increase community understanding of tax credits, connect 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 markers.
- d. Complete updates to all Storymaps. Explore possibility of creating a Storymap for Northfield Township using 2019 survey. Exploring adding the Underground Railroad tour as a Storymap.
- e. Improve visibility of historic preservation in Washtenaw County through online engagement, 2025 Preservation Awards, and public meetings.

Staff Reports:

Staff updated the Commission on the following items:

- **2025 Historic Preservation Budget Changes**

Budget was approved of \$15,000 for 2025 and \$15,000 for 2026. Staff is meeting next week to learn where funding will go. It has been noted that this is the first budget since 2011. Staff is currently drafting a 5-year plan with key performance indicators for historic preservation. Commissioner Covington asked to consider internal and external marketing for the commission as a budget expense.

- **HDC Historic Markers:** Staff have noticed that many of the markers are in stages of deteriorating and need to be looked at. Staff will make site visits.

- **Historic District Ordinance updates:** Staff stated it will be complete in March, and they will schedule a meeting in February.

- **Local Historic Districts**

- **Thornoaks:** The 4071 legal case has no updates at this time. The presiding judge has resigned and staff is awaiting appointment of a new judge.
- **Merriman:** Property was recently sold and will be used as an active farm. Owners want to adapt the property to suit their farm needs and had a few items administratively approved. They also noted that two trees on the property are diseased and will be inspected.
- **Conant:** Property was recently resold by private sale and the new owner was not told it was a historic site. Interior of structure is in very bad condition as it was used in the past as a rescue facility for cats; one building is currently a hazardous. Staff is working with the homeowner as much as possible. Staff will have an update by next meeting and pursuing a HABS report. Barn on property is in decent shape.

- **Popkins:** The site has had issues with break-ins, window damage and people trying to reside inside. Three windows were shattered when staff visited in August. Staff have asked police for more surveillance of area and will visit again soon.
- **Groves Farm Study Committee update:** The report was submitted and a public meeting will be the next step.
- **Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant:** This grant is moving along well. Staff mentioned it is on time and on budget.
- **Gordon Hall Rehabilitation Grant:** This grant is also moving along but has had some delays during the holidays.
- **2024 Preservation Awards:** Staff mentioned the awards were a success.
- **Washtenaw County Updates:** Staff introduced Britt Teliin, the new Historic Preservation Intern. Also, the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) membership has been renewed.

Treasurer Report: No report.

Items for Discussion: Nothing further discussed.

Adjournment: Vice Chair Jerome motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 pm.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at Eastern County Government Center Office of Community & Economic Development 2nd floor 415 W. Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti, MI

2025 Historic District Commission Goals

1. Support designated historic resources in Washtenaw County.

- a. 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.
- b. 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. Invest in County Historic Markers.
- b. Research sites of historic significance throughout the County for installation of new signs. Specifically examine underrepresented areas and/or underrepresented populations.
- c. Complete updates to all [Storymaps](#). Explore possibility of creating Storymap for Northfield township using 2019 survey.
- d. Advertise and market existing Heritage Tourism projects.

4. Outreach and Engagement

- a. Improve visibility of historic preservation in Washtenaw County through online engagement, 2025 Preservation Awards, and public meetings.
- b. Collaborate with community organizations/institutions, local businesses, advocacy groups, and local stakeholders on meaningful projects that contribute to inclusivity and equitable representation.
- c. Involve local residents, especially from marginalized groups, in the planning and design of preservation projects that directly affect their communities.
- d. Promote protection of historic resources throughout WashCo through engagement with local governments, organizations, and institutions.

5. Ensure Protection of Historic Resources

- a. Increase oversight of designated historic resources in need of maintenance or in neglect.
- b. Promote protection of historic resources under other agencies/local governments/organizations.

COA Application Review Packet

Historic District Thornoaks
Name of Owner James Bardwell
Phone Number 734-764-8028
Email address jbardwel@umich.edu
Address of Property 4151 Thornoaks Dr, Ann Arbor, MI



What are the character defining features? This side-gable ranch has a two-car attached garage on the right side south facing main elevation. The foundation is poured concrete and exterior siding is board and batten. A small patio is located off the front left elevation, accessed by a glass sliding door. There are fixed windows on the front elevation. The asphalt shingled roof has three skylights. There is also a low row of rectangular clerestory windows on the upper right of the roofline. There are two brick chimneys in this residence. There is also a small bump-out with balcony. The rear (north) elevation has fixed plate glass windows and glass sliding doors that provide access to a large wooden deck. There is also a walkout lower level. There are three sets of windows on the west elevation.

What is the current integrity? Good.

Summary of proposed work: Solar Panel installation on South elevation roof.

Proposed work description: The owner is seeking to install 33 solar panels on the South elevation of the roof resulting in production of 60% of the current electrical usage. The selected solar panels (Rec Alpha Pure-R Series) are similar in color to the existing shingles. Wiring and electrical boxes are to be installed on the west elevation near existing utility boxes. The supports, solar panels, and supportive wiring/electrical box/inverter are non-permanent. Cost and efficiency ratings were compared between installation on the North Elevation and South Elevation. A summarized cost and efficiency comparison is provided below.

Location	# of panels required	% usage provided	Cost	Solar savings over 30 years
North elevation	46	37%	\$71,114.60	\$141,983.44
South elevation	33	60%	\$53,286.80	\$202,748.57

Based on the project cost and efficiency combined with a reduced footprint on the roof, the South elevation is the preferred area for installation.

Attachments:

Photo of North, South, and West elevations
Rendering of proposed solar installation (South Elevation)
Product details
National Parks Service Preservation Brief on Solar (pages 14-15)



North Elevation (rear of property)



South elevation (front of property)



Proposed area for supportive wiring instillation (West elevation)



Proposed solar panel installation (South elevation)

SOLAR'S MOST TRUSTED



REC ALPHA PURE-R SERIES

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS



COMPACT PANEL SIZE

9 A MODULE CURRENT
COMPATIBLE WITH MLPE

430 WP
20.7 $\frac{W}{FT^2}$
22.3% EFFICIENCY




LEAD-FREE
ROHS COMPLIANT

EXPERIENCE

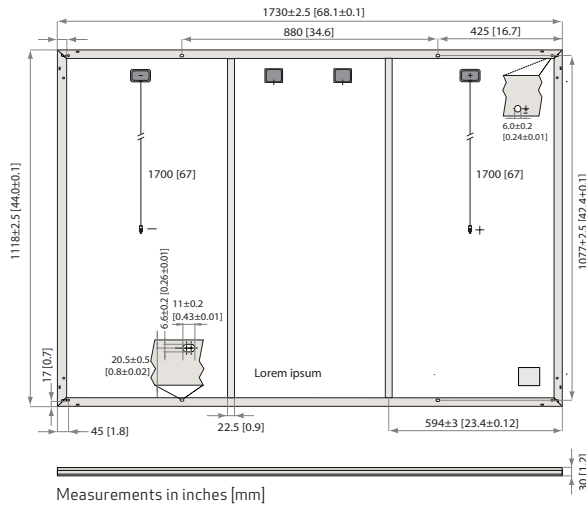
PERFORMANCE

REC ALPHA PURE-R SERIES

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

GENERAL DATA

Cell type:	80 half-cut REC bifacial, heterojunction cells with lead-free, gapless technology
Glass:	0.13in(3.2mm)solar glass with anti-reflective surface treatment in accordance with EN12150
Backsheet:	Highly resistant polymer (black)
Frame:	Anodized aluminum (black)
Junction box:	4-part, 4 bypass diodes, lead-free IP68 rated, in accordance with IEC 62790
Connectors:	Stäubli MC4 PV-KBT4/KST4 (12 AWG) in accordance with IEC 62852, IP68 only when connected
Cable:	12 AWG (4 mm ²) PV wire, 67+67 in (1.7+1.7 m) in accordance with EN 50618
Dimensions:	68.1 x 44.0 x 1.2 in (20.77 ft ²) / 1730 x 1118 x 30 mm (1.93 m ²)
Weight:	47.4 lbs (21.5 kg)
Origin:	Made in Singapore



ELECTRICAL DATA

Product Code*: RECxxxAA PURE-R

Power Output - P _{MAX} (Wp)	400	410	420	430
Watt Class Sorting - (W)	0/+10	0/+10	0/+10	0/+10
Nominal Power Voltage - V _{MPP} (V)	48.8	49.4	50.0	50.5
Nominal Power Current - I _{MPP} (A)	8.20	8.30	8.40	8.52
Open Circuit Voltage - V _{OC} (V)	58.9	59.2	59.4	59.7
Short Circuit Current - I _{SC} (A)	8.80	8.84	8.88	8.91
Power Density (W/ft ²)	19.26	19.74	20.22	20.70
Panel Efficiency (%)	20.7	21.2	21.8	22.3
Power Output - P _{MAX} (Wp)	305	312	320	327
Nominal Power Voltage - V _{MPP} (V)	46.0	46.6	47.1	47.6
Nominal Power Current - I _{MPP} (A)	6.64	6.70	6.80	6.88
Open Circuit Voltage - V _{OC} (V)	55.5	55.8	56.0	56.3
Short Circuit Current - I _{SC} (A)	7.11	7.16	7.20	7.24

Values at standard test conditions (STC: air mass AM1.5, irradiance 10.75 W/sq ft (1000 W/m²), temperature 77°F (25°C), based on a production spread with a tolerance of P_{MAX}, V_{OC} & I_{SC} ±3% within one watt class. Nominal module operating temperature (NMOT: air mass AM1.5, irradiance 800 W/m², temperature 68°F (20°C), windspeed 3.3 ft/s (1 m/s). * Where xxx indicates the nominal power class (P_{MAX}) at STC above.

MAXIMUM RATINGS

Operational temperature:	-40 ... +85°C
System voltage:	1000 V
Test load (front):	+ 7000 Pa (146 lbs/ft ²)*
Test load (rear):	- 4000 Pa (83.5 lbs/ft ²)*
Series fuse rating:	25 A
Reverse current:	25 A

* See installation manual for mounting instructions.
Design load = Test load / 1.5 (safety factor)

WARRANTY

	Standard	REC ProTrust
Installed by an REC Certified Solar Professional	No	Yes Yes
System Size	All	≤25 kW 25-500 kW
Product Warranty (yrs)	20	25 25
Power Warranty (yrs)	25	25 25
Labor Warranty (yrs)	0	25 10
Power in Year 1	98%	98% 98%
Annual Degradation	0.25%	0.25% 0.25%
Power in Year 25	92%	92% 92%

See warranty documents for details. Conditions apply

CERTIFICATIONS

IEC 61215:2016, IEC 61730:2016, UL 61730	
IEC 62804	PID
IEC 61701	Salt Mist
IEC 62716	Ammonia Resistance
UL 61730	Fire Type Class 2
IEC 62782	Dynamic Mechanical Load
IEC 61215-2:2016	Hailstone (35mm)
IEC 62321	Lead-free acc. to RoHS EU 863/2015
ISO 14001, ISO 9001, IEC 45001, IEC 62941	



TEMPERATURE RATINGS*

Nominal Module Operating Temperature:	44°C (±2°C)
Temperature coefficient of P _{MAX} :	-0.24 %/°C
Temperature coefficient of V _{OC} :	-0.24 %/°C
Temperature coefficient of I _{SC} :	0.04 %/°C

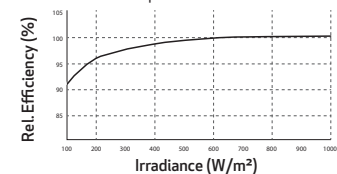
*The temperature coefficients stated are linear values

DELIVERY INFORMATION

Panels per pallet:	33
Panels per 40 ft GP/high cube container:	858 (26 pallets)
Panels per 53 ft truck:	858 (26 pallets)

LOW LIGHT BEHAVIOUR

Typical low irradiance performance of module at STC:



Available from:

Founded in 1996, REC Group is an international pioneering solar energy company dedicated to empowering consumers with clean, affordable solar power. As Solar's Most Trusted, REC is committed to high quality, innovation, and a low carbon footprint in the solar materials and solar panels it manufactures. Headquartered in Norway with operational headquarters in Singapore, REC also has regional hubs in North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific.



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ILLUSTRATED
GUIDELINES ON
SUSTAINABILITY
FOR
REHABILITATING
HISTORIC
BUILDINGS



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Technical Preservation Services

SOLAR TECHNOLOGY

72



73



Recommended: [72-73] Solar panels were installed appropriately on the rear portion of the roof on this historic row house that are not visible from the primary elevation.

RECOMMENDED

NOT RECOMMENDED

Considering on-site, solar technology only after implementing all appropriate treatments to improve energy efficiency of the building, which often have greater life-cycle cost benefit than on-site renewable energy.

Installing on-site, solar technology without first implementing all appropriate treatments to the building to improve its energy efficiency.

Analyzing whether solar technology can be used successfully and will benefit a historic building without compromising its character or the character of the site or the surrounding historic district.

Installing a solar device without first analyzing its potential benefit or whether it will negatively impact the character of the historic building or site or the surrounding historic district.

Installing a solar device in a compatible location on the site or on a non-historic building or addition where it will have minimal impact on the historic building and its site.

Placing a solar device in a highly-visible location where it will negatively impact the historic building and its site.

Installing a solar device on the historic building only after other locations have been investigated and determined infeasible.

Installing a solar device on the historic building without first considering other locations.

74



Recommended: [74] Free-standing solar panels have been installed here that are visible but appropriately located at the rear of the property and compatible with the character of this industrial site.

75



Not Recommended: [75] Solar roof panels have been installed at the rear, but because the house is situated on a corner, they are highly visible and negatively impact the character of the historic property.

SOLAR TECHNOLOGY

RECOMMENDED

NOT RECOMMENDED

Installing a low-profile solar device on the historic building so that it is not visible or only minimally visible from the public right of way: for example, on a flat roof and set back to take advantage of a parapet or other roof feature to screen solar panels from view; or on a secondary slope of a roof, out of view from the public right of way.	Installing a solar device in a prominent location on the building where it will negatively impact its historic character.
Installing a solar device on the historic building in a manner that does not damage historic roofing material or negatively impact the building's historic character and is reversible.	Installing a solar device on the historic building in a manner that damages historic roofing material or replaces it with an incompatible material and is not reversible.
	Removing historic roof features to install solar panels.
	Altering a historic, character-defining roof slope to install solar panels.
	Installing solar devices that are not reversible.
Installing solar roof panels horizontally -- flat or parallel to the roof—to reduce visibility.	Placing solar roof panels vertically where they are highly visible and will negatively impact the historic character of the building.

76



77



79



Not Recommended: [79] Although installing solar panels behind a rear parking lot might be a suitable location in many cases, here the panels negatively impact the historic property on which they are located.

Recommended: [76-77] Solar panels, which also serve as awnings, were installed in secondary locations on the side and rear of this historic post office and cannot be seen from the front of the building. [78] Solar panels placed horizontally on the roof of this historic building are not visible from below.

78



Ann Arbor Historic District Commission Design Guidelines for Solar Panels and Related Appurtenances

Introduction

In 2007, Ann Arbor was designated by the United States Department of Energy as a Solar America City. This designation has increased awareness of individuals' energy consumption and has encouraged residents to investigate the use of alternative utilities that consume fewer natural resources, without reducing the conveniences of modern life. The Ann Arbor Historic District Commission offers the following material in anticipation of the demands of property owners, providing specific guidelines that consider the impact of solar panels on historic resources.

In addition to the inclusion of solar panels or solar shingles to the historic resource, the resource's owner must demonstrate that the addition of the solar panels is a part of a comprehensive energy-reducing plan that is compliant with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for the overall benefit of the resource. This plan must be provided as part of the application.

How the Secretary of the Interior's Standards Apply

Standard 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

The Standards refer to "character-defining features" of a property: examples include doors, windows, porches, transoms, and the like. Both the materials and the arrangement of these features define a property's historic character, which must not be obscured, radically changed, damaged, or destroyed in making a property more energy efficient.

Example: A business owner whose building faces south wants to install an array of solar panels. Because any significant alteration to the primary facade would obscure character-defining features, the HDC could not approve installation of the south-facing wall, and the owner would have to propose an alternative location for the solar array – e.g., on the roof. *Standard 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

Example: A homeowner proposes to install solar panels on a stucco wall. HDC would be required to review the effect of the installation on the stucco finish. If the likely consequence would be to cause the finish to deteriorate, the HDC would have to deny the application.

Standard 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials,

features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Alterations to the exterior must not be so intrusive that they destroy the integrity of the building's character by their very presence. Repairs or alterations must not damage or destroy historic materials directly or indirectly.

Example: A business owner proposes to install a solar array on the rear wall of a building. Although the proposed installation would not obscure or damage character-defining features, and no historic material would be destroyed, it is not clear what effect the weight of the new equipment would have on the structural integrity of the wall. The HDC might then require the owner to obtain a professional structural analysis of existing physical conditions to demonstrate that the installation will do no long-term damage to the building.

Example: A homeowner proposed to install a row of solar panels on the south-facing rear roof of her house. The panels would be fixed at a 69-degree angle from the horizontal, while the roof lies at a 45-degree angle. Because the HDC must consider the effect of the proposed work on the massing of the house – that is, the outline of the building – the Commission might require that the panels be fixed at the same angle as the surface on which they are installed, even if that is not the optimal angle for solar collection.

Standard 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

The HDC must consider not only the details of installation of a system, but also how it will be uninstalled and what effect that would have on the physical integrity of the structure. The method of eventual removal and repair of any resulting damage to the structure shall be clearly identified in the HDC application and any work permit application.

Appropriate

- Placing freestanding or detached solar collectors in locations that are not visible from the public right-of-way.
- Mounting solar panels at grade or on ground pole mountings. In the absence of an appropriate ground-based mounting location, panels should be mounted on side or rear facing roof surfaces.
- Installing mechanical and service equipment on the roof related to the solar units and their related devices so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features. Such equipment should be installed in such a manner that over time the equipment will not cause damage to the resource.

- For sloped roof installations, mounting solar panels parallel to and within 8” of roof surface.
- On flat roof structures, installing solar panels set back from the roof edge to minimize visibility. Pitch and elevation should be adjusted to reduce visibility from the public right-of-way.
- Installing solar panels to provide maximum coverage of the available roof surface. When such an application is not feasible, place the panels in the most unobtrusive configuration, noting that for the most efficient application, the highest installation is generally the most favorable.
- Positioning solar panels behind existing architectural features such as parapets, dormers, and chimneys to limit their visibility.
- Using solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to established roof materials. All equipment, including the panels, frames and mounting hardware should be in a similar or compatible color to the surface on which it is mounted.
- Providing adequate structural support for all new mechanical equipment.
- Installing vertical runs of ducts, pipes, and cables in closets, service rooms, and wall cavities.
- Integrating solar panels into the design of new construction at the earliest point possible to assure cohesion of design within a historic context.
- Solar shingles and other types of solar collectors will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Commission.

Not Appropriate

- Mounting solar panels and their related devices on primary elevations or roofs that face the primary elevation or in planes that are highly visible from the street view. This location has the highest impact on the historic character of the historic building and all other options should be thoroughly explored.
- Placing freestanding or detached solar collectors in locations that detract from and/or destroy historic landscape materials.
- Removing historic roofing materials during the installation of solar panels.
- Removing or altering the historic roof configuration – dormer, chimneys, or other character defining features – to add solar panels.

- Placing solar shingles on character defining elevations or visible from the street facing façade.
- Any other alteration or installation procedure that will cause irreversible changes to historic features or materials.

Application Materials

The following materials must be submitted with a completed HDC application. Additional information that may clarify the application is encouraged.

- ☐ Completed *Residential Solar Panel Worksheet* diagram (see attached)
- ☐ Photos of the roof where the panels are intended to be located
- ☐ Overall Energy Reduction plan for the historic resource
 - o Include list of work previously performed and dates of work
 - o Include list of work remaining to be performed and their estimated dates of work after the installation of the proposed solar panel system
 - o Provide estimated energy savings or energy production caused by the installation of the proposed system
 - o Provide written statement of energy savings due to work performed up to this point
- ☐ Manufacturer's product cut sheets, clearly denoting which system will be installed
- ☐ Manufacturer's photographs of the panels
- ☐ Manufacturer's installation methods, including type and location of mounting hardware and converter/wiring/metering details
- ☐ A section view showing the relationship of the panels to the roof slope, distance from roof surface to panels, and thickness of panels.

Administrative Approvals

City Staff may issue a certificate of appropriateness for solar panel installations that meet the following criteria. Other installations require review and issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Historic District Commission.

Installation of new **solar panels** on non-character defining roof surfaces not visible from the street or other character defining elevations, provided the solar panels are flat, do not extend more than 8" above the roof surface, are similar to the color of the roof material and cover not more than 10% of the roof surface on which they are located.



CITY OF

Ypsilanti

PRIDE | DIVERSITY | HERITAGE

Historic District Fact Sheet

Alternative Energy

This Fact Sheet is not a substitute for the ordinance, but addresses common questions about City ordinances. For further information, please contact the Historic District Assistant.

All permit applications are available from the Building Department and at cityofypsilanti.com/permits.

Completed applications may be dropped off at the Building Department.

City Hall

One South Huron
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Building

3rd Floor, City Hall
Phone: (734) 482-1025
cityofypsilanti.com/157

Planning

3rd Floor, City Hall
Phone: (734) 483-9646
cityofypsilanti.com/planning

Historic District

3rd Floor, City Hall
Phone: (734) 483-9646
cityofypsilanti.com/hd

All permits, fees, and factsheets can be found at cityofypsilanti.com/permits.

Ypsilanti's Historical Preservation ordinance and the Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Structures set by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior govern the review of any work proposed in the district.

Under the ordinance, the HDC cannot approve any installation that would destroy or wholly obscure a character-defining feature, either by virtue of its installation or its removal. Examples of "character-defining features" include, but are not limited to, doors, windows, porches, rooflines, significant landscape features, and transoms. Both the materials and the arrangement of these features define a property's historic character and must not be obscured, radically changed, damaged, or destroyed.

General Considerations for Alternative Energy Installations

The term "alternative energy" covers a variety of technologies including geothermal, wind, and solar power. The general principles below apply equally to all types of alternative energy installations.

Effect on the Historic Material. The solar panels should not damage or obscure any historic material or character-defining feature on the structure. Installations can be denied if there is any uncertainty as to how the installation will affect the structure or materials in the future.

Visibility. Any alternative energy installation, including solar panels, should not be visible on the primary façade (or facades if located on a corner lot) of the historic structure. The best location for solar panels is usually on the south facing roof. However, if this location can be seen from the street then solar panels would not be approved in that location.

Inverters and disconnects. Any inverter and/or power disconnect boxes installed as part of an alternative energy system should not be visible from the front of the structure. Any conduits for the alternative energy system to these boxes should not differ in color from the surface on which they are mounted.

Age of Structure. The age of the structure on which any installation would be installed is also a consideration. *Example:* South-facing solar panels that would be visible from the street on a 10 year old garage that sits behind a historic structure may be an acceptable alternative to placing panels on the main historic structure.

Installation and attachment. The proposed method and materials for attachment and the method of eventual removal and repair of any resulting damage to the structure shall be clearly identified in any work permit application.

Solar Panels

Angle of Attachment. If placed on the roof of the structure, the angle of the solar panels should match that of the roof. Flat roofs will have different consideration.

For more information, please see National Park Service's [Preservation Brief 3: Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings](#).

Highland Cemetery

Highland Cemetery board member Mary Seelhorst contacted staff regarding the deterioration of the WCHDC Historic Marker at Highland Cemetery. Mary noted the board was interested in installing a new sign. Plans with notes are attached as well as a cost estimate.

Staff suggested repairing existing sign and installing the new suggested panel in the Cemetery at a different location.

Images below were taken by staff Feb 25th, 2025.





HIGHLAND CEMETERY

Highland is typical of the "rural tradition" cemetery design which emphasizes its natural setting. This design originated in France and was first seen in Greenwood Cemetery in New York. Highland Cemetery, as well as Forest Hill in Ann Arbor, was designed by James Glenn, a landscape architect from Niles, Michigan.

Dedicated on July 14, 1864, Highland Cemetery served as the final resting place for Ypsilanti's pioneer, commercial, social and educational community. Mary Anne Starkweather commissioned the Richardson Romanesque chapel, designed by George Mason, in honor of her husband John, which crowns the entry drive.

The oldest gravesite is that of Walter Oakman. His body and dozens of others were moved to Highland from Pioneer and Prospect Cemeteries.

WASHTENAW COUNTY YC-27 HISTORICAL MARKER



Flutter & Wow Museum Projects Quote

Design and Fabrication of New Historical Marker for Highland Cemetery

7 February 2025

The following quote is good through June 30, 2025. To accept the quote and begin work on the project, send a response via email to Jason Stevens at: jason@flutterwow.com

We are happy to discuss this quote and answer questions. You can also call and talk to Jason: **734.224.3727**

Design and Fabrication of New Historical Marker

In collaboration with Mary Seelhorst, develop content for new sign

Scan historic map if necessary

Graphic design of new sign, subject to client approval

Design of sign structure, similar in form and size to the sign depicted in the attached image (p.2)

Production, assembly and finishing of new sign and structure

Delivery of new sign, installation-ready

Project completion: summer 2025

\$4325.00

Deinstallation and disposal of existing sign

Installation of new sign

\$1950.00

Total

\$6275.00

Payment terms: 50% down to begin the job, and 50% balance upon completion.

Thank you!

Jason Jay Stevens
Principal, Flutter & Wow Museum Projects
3660 Plaza Drive, Suite 4
Ann Arbor, MI 48108



Example of sign structure for new cemetery sign, provided by Mary Seelhorst.

NOTE to HC BOARD: pages 3-6 are not part of the quote. It's what I sent to Jason, so you can see what he's responding to.

Jason —

Highland Cemetery: replacing historical marker

Mary Seelhorst

December 15, 2024

Annotated with decisions
for "real" estimate

After I suggested we look into replacing the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission marker at the cemetery entrance, I was tasked with looking into it and bringing forward a plan with pricing. (For those who don't know, I do museum exhibit development for a living, including outdoor interpretive panels like this one.)

I hoped to upgrade from the current slab-type marker and use an image of the beautiful old cemetery plan/map.

CURRENT MARKER



WHDC

Kat Slocum of WHDC would love to see it replaced. They have no specific physical requirements other than using their new logo, below. They have no objections to me rewriting the narrative.

In fact, **they've offered to help pay for it.** Once our board has approved a direction, I will also run it past WHDC for their input, and again after we have a firm fabrication proposal and pricing. They'll need to approve it as well prior to production.

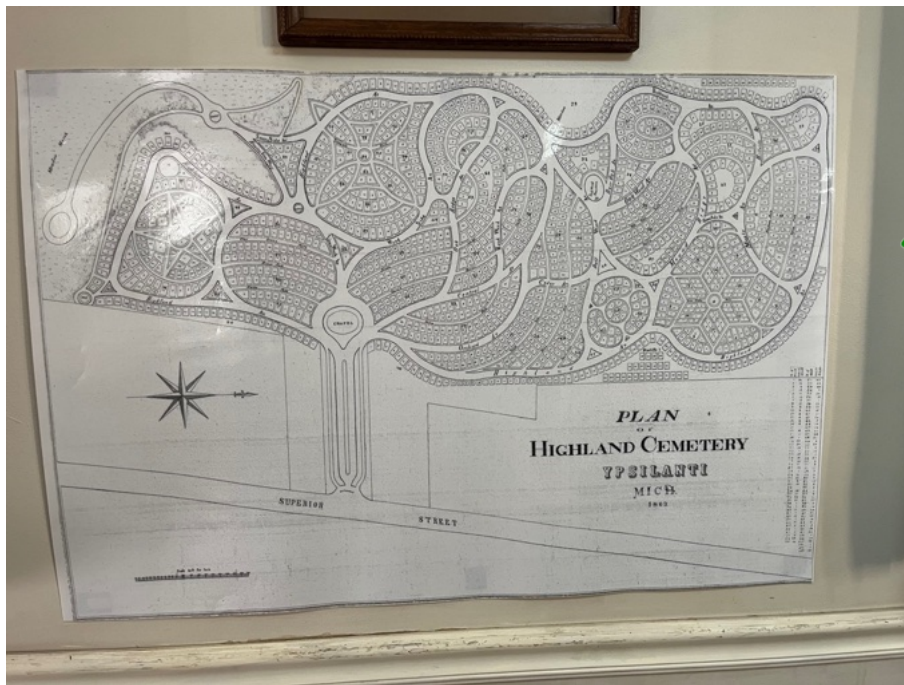


↑ I have this file

USING THE ORIGINAL CEMETERY PLAN

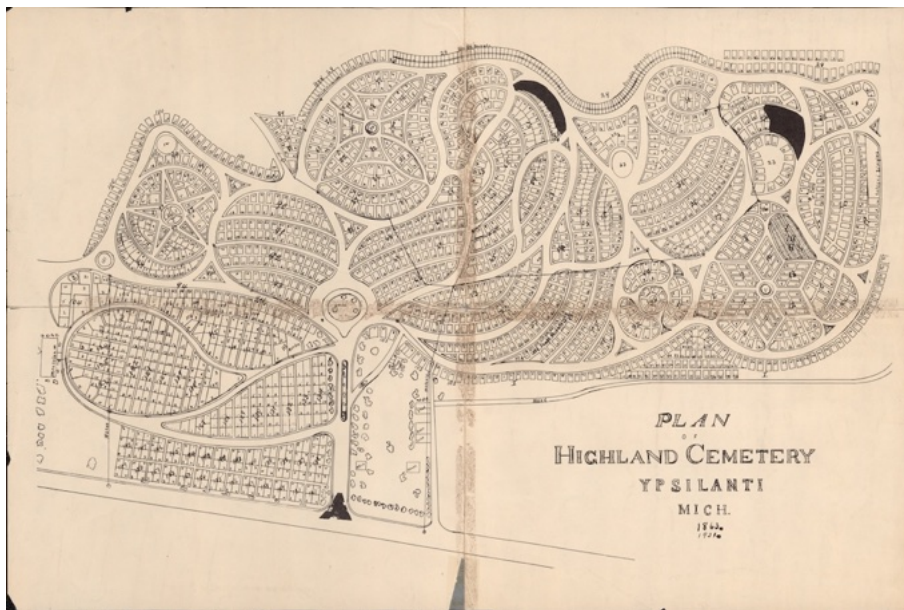
I've been unable to locate the source document for the plan, although I found several others from various years, mostly hand-drawn. (Interestingly, River St has three different names over the years.) I hoped to find a cleaner version than what you have framed, but never fear, there are options.

Tina said the one you have came from Ypsi Historical, but they found a different, later version. I can ask again, not sure how extensive their search was. This is what I found.

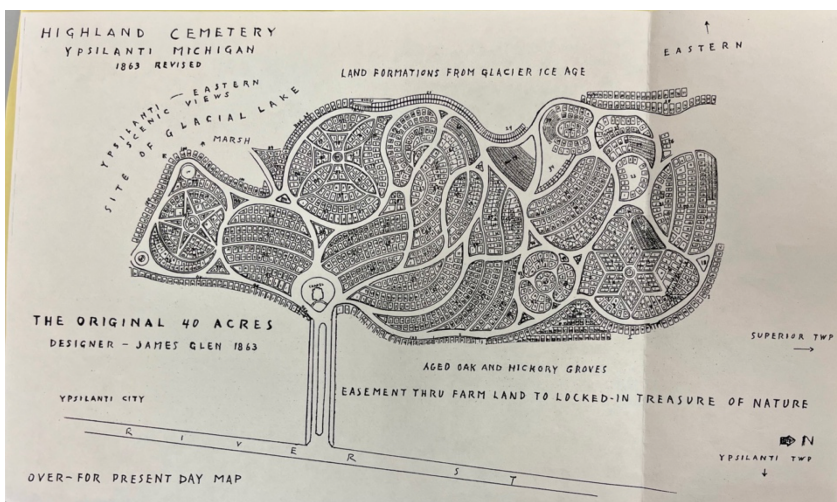


The earliest version:
(your framed drawing)

← use this one -
you'll need to
remove from
frame &
scan



Ypsi Historical Society,
1931



The Bentley, U of M. Undated.
Love the annotations on this!

PANEL STYLE OPTIONS

Assuming we want to erect an interpretive panel with images, rather than a simple slab marker, there are three options for the frame/base.



CONTRATOR

I've talked with Ann Arbor design and production studio Flutter & Wow (Jason Stevens) about doing the design and managing the fabrication. I've worked with them before. They do great work, and are willing to take on this very small project. After we make a few decisions about what we want, they'll give us a price and we can accept or not. His ballpark is \$2200. (We'll have to have a proposal/estimate before WCHDC can decide how much to assist.)

One option is for them to install, or you to install. (I told him the cemetery is rather expert at putting things in the ground.)

Can you do estimate with & without installation?

I like this shape ... see notes next page.

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

Panel style:

I prefer the bottom image for panel structure. It potentially offers two surfaces for images/text. The flat one could work as a highly visible drive-by historical marker with the WCHDC logo, indicating our designation as a historic site. The angled surface serves as a reader rail with images and the story. I don't know if there is a price difference for these styles. *Thoughts?*

Images:

If YHS can't find the source document for the oldest version of the map, I suggest having F&W remove your plan from the frame, scan it on their large-format scanner, and clean it up a bit prior to reproducing it. This would also give you a nice clean digital file for future uses.

I'd like to select a historic photo to provide to F&W for the new layout. We could colorize it, or not. Was there ever a postcard made of the cemetery?

← They sent me a postcard, B&W. cost to colorize?

Text:

I propose that I rewrite the blurb on the existing marker. We should determine whether to keep it strictly historical or add the cemetery logo or other present-day information. *TBD*

Contractor:

I highly recommend Flutter & Wow, no competing bids. For a project this small, I doubt we'd find as high-quality work for a lower price. They're local, and they care about the community. I recommend no competing bids, as it adds incentive for them to do it.

ACTIONS REQUIRED of the BOARD

We need to agree on these items:

- Style of marker
- Which plan to use for the graphic
- Historic photo or not? (deciding which one can come later)
- Use cemetery logo or other info?
- Whether to go with F&W or if we need other bids

Notes in this document reflect the board's decisions

One more thing...

not for F&W

~~NATIONAL REGISTER of HISTORIC PLACES~~

~~Tina told me the cemetery is on the National Register, but the marker didn't go up because there was no money to pay for it. Since we're in a better financial position now, and since we might have financial assistance to replace the county marker, may we consider this now?~~

~~It would be a separate contract than the above, directly with a firm that would produce the brass or aluminum plaque. There isn't an "official" supplier; designees find their own contractor and determine size and wording themselves. We could do a smallish plaque and mount on the right side stone column at the gate for a few hundred; a freestanding, larger one might be more. (We can also mention the national register designation on the county panel)~~

Overview: This document outlines potential subcommittees in the HDC. These subcommittees would have focused efforts on specific projects that require minimum oversight from HP Staff and provide meaningful outcomes that contribute towards HDC 2025 goals. Each subcommittee would be comprised of a minimum of three (3) people who would work towards project completion including: organizing meetings, maintaining subcommittee communications, providing HP staff regular updates for inclusion in HDC agenda, and completing project deliverables. HP Staff recommends one (1) Subcommittee Lead who will act as the point of contact for members and HP Staff.

Subcommittees

1) Heritage Tourism

a. [Historic Marker Project](#)- tasked with the oversight of Washtenaw County HDC Historic Markers.

Tasks:

1. Complete audit of all documented HDC Historic Markers
 - travel to each
 - take photo of existing marker
 - submit information through [online portal](#).
2. Establish 2025 Maintenance Plan:
 - prioritize sign replacements
 - Determine projected costs- contact vendors for cost estimates. Costs vary by sign installation method (attached to building, sign, post, etc.).
3. Establish 2026 Historic Marker Plan: including any remaining maintenance and locations for new signs (LHDs/historic locations currently without signs).

b. [Storymaps](#) Marketing and Advertisement- tasked with marketing and advertising of existing heritage tourism projects.

Tasks:

1. Establish Plan for disseminating flyers at targeted events/venues in Washtenaw County (ex: Heritage Foodways flyers at Farmers Markets).
2. Determine regular schedule for dropping off flyers at selected events/venues.
3. Engage with the local community
 - Get contact information of local organizations/institutions (public schools, colleges, nonprofits, museums, etc.)
 - send storymap links
4. Regularly order necessary printed materials from HP staff for dissemination

Note: HP staff completed updates to Storymaps in 2024.

2) Historic Resource Support and Designation

a. [Historic Tax Credit](#)- contact owners of designated historic resources with information about Historic Tax Credit program in order to increase use of state funds in Washtenaw County.

- Utilizing a list of all designated historic resources (National/[State](#)/[Local](#)) contact owners via mail with information on State Tax credit.

HDC Subcommittee Ideas 2025

- Contact SHPO regarding the desire to host a Tax Credit workshop in Washtenaw County with SHPO staff.
- Organize and plan event if SHPO agrees.

b. Designation- encourage designation of historic resources throughout WashCo to the National, State and/or Local registry. Increased designation results in greater access to economic opportunity (tax credits, CLG grants, etc.)

- Research sites associated with underrepresented groups/communities.
- Establish and maintain relationships with local societies/groups/organizations who can assist with completing designation of sites (EMU, historical societies, etc.).
- Facilitate contact between owners seeking designation and entities who can assist with survey and nomination.

Washtenaw County Historic District Commission Staff Report

March 6th, 2025

WCHDC Budget

- Staff met with Finance and Operations. The \$15,000 budget increases for 2025 and 2026 can be utilized at the HDC discretion. The funds cannot be used for staff hours.

MHPN Preservation Awards

- Staff submitted a nomination for Washtenaw County Historic Preservation to the MHPN 2025 Preservation Awards.

Historic District Ordinance updates

- Two public hearings were held for the historic district ordinances that were updated. No members of the public provided comment. The ordinances were unanimously adopted by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners. Staff will update the ordinances with Records/Deeds office and will update ordinances linked on the website.

Groves Farm Study Committee update

- The State Review Board and State Historic Preservation Office reviewed the Groves Farm Study Committee Report at their January meeting. The board indicated that the report was thorough and they supported the designation. They requested one edit- to include the specific names of the tribes who inhabited the area. A public hearing has been scheduled for April 9th at 6pm. Location will be in Northfield township, exact location TBD by Northfield Township Historical Society. Following the public hearing, Groves Farm will be presented to the BOC for designation.

Northfield Township MPDF CLG Grant

- Overall, the project continues to run on time and on budget.
- Cheri (the selected contractor) has completed revisions on multiple National Registry nominations.
- Final drafts for all sites are anticipated in the spring with presentation to the State Review Board in May.
- The public hearing for the nominations will be held April 9th at 6pm in conjunction with the Groves Farm meeting.

Gordon Hall Rehabilitation Grant

- The RFP was completed, reviewed by SHPO, and posted to the County webpage. A Pre-bid Meeting was held on Feb 12th. The RFP closes March 2nd at which point the bids will be reviewed.

Washtenaw County Updates

- A reminder that 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