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TO: Suzanne Shaw, Chair  
Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners

THROUGH: Robert E. Guenzel  
County Administrator

FROM: Mark J. McFadden, Director  
Washtenaw County Metropolitan Planning Commission

DATE: March 6, 2002

SUBJECT: Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of a Historic District  
Study Committee to evaluate 2426 Whitmore Lake Road for  
Historic District status.

### **BOARD ACTION REQUESTED**

That the Board of Commissioners appoint individuals recommended by the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission to a Study Committee to evaluate 2426 Whitmore Lake Road for the purpose of nominating the property for Historic District status.

### **BACKGROUND**

2426 Whitmore Lake Road is located in Ann Arbor Township. It consists of an Italianate farmhouse, a garage converted from an old dairy barn, significant landscape features, a stream fed by artesian springs which leads to a trout pond, and a brook on the eastern end of the property. Seth Markham, a pioneer from New York State, homesteaded this land in 1825. When he passed away in 1840, his sister Cynthia Markham Pease inherited 119 acres which she eventually sold to James McMahon in 1863.<sup>1</sup> McMahon, an Irish emigrant, was an attorney who served as County Clerk and Ann Arbor Township Supervisor.<sup>2</sup> He built the fine Italianate residence in 1867, but lost it to the sheriff for back taxes in 1875.<sup>3</sup> The current owners, Linda and Brian Etter, having previously lived on the Old West Side of Ann Arbor for 16 years, appreciate the value of preserving older homes in their original state. They wish to have the property designated not only to apply for tax credits under PA 535 of 1998, but to ensure that this house maintains its character and sense of place for future generations. If approved, 2426 Whitmore Lake Road will join six other historic districts and two districts under study at this time in Washtenaw County.

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Muraski, "Historic Houses," *Huron Valley Ad-Visor*, March 13, 1968, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Chapman, History of Washtenaw County, Michigan, 1881, 1019

<sup>3</sup> Muraski, op.cit., 20.

## **DISCUSSION**

The current owners of the property approached Ann Arbor Township to have the property listed as a historic district. Ann Arbor Township has asked the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners, through the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission, to conduct this work on their behalf.

Under the Michigan Historic Districts Act (P.A. 169 of 1970, as amended in 1992), a historic district study committee must be established to evaluate the property and determine if it meets criteria to be included in a historic district. Also under P.A. 169, the County Board of Commissioners has the authority to establish such a committee.

The Washtenaw County Historic District Commission recommends that the following individuals be appointed to the 2426 Whitmore Lake Road Historic District Study Committee: Janis Bobrin, Tom Nicely, Gene Ragland, Grace Shackman, and Susan C. Wineberg as voting members. Serving as advisors would be Brian and Linda Etter and Nancy Snyder. Marnie Paulus is staff to the WCHDC.

## **IMPACT ON HUMAN RESOURCES**

None

## **IMPACT ON THE BUDGET**

None

## **IMPACT ON INDIRECT COSTS**

None

## **IMPACT ON OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OR OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

None

## **CONFORMITY TO COUNTY POLICIES**

This request conforms with County Policy

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING A HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE AS RECOMMENDED BY THE WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATING 2426 WHITMORE LAKE ROAD FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT STATUS.

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 6, 2002

WHEREAS, the property located at 2426 Whitmore Lake Road in Ann Arbor Township has potential to be nominated as a historic district; and

WHEREAS, Ann Arbor Township has asked the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners via the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission to have the property listed as a historic district; and

WHEREAS, should it be approved, 2426 Whitmore Lake Road would join six other historic districts and districts under study at this time in Washtenaw County; and

WHEREAS, under Michigan's Historic Districts Act (P.A. 169 of 1970, as amended in 1992), a historic district study committee must be established to evaluate the property and determine if it meets criteria to be included in a historic district; and

WHEREAS, under P.A. 169, the County Board of Commissioners has the authority to establish such a historic district committee; and

WHEREAS, as dictated by law, the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission is presenting a list of nominees to serve on this historic district committee; and

WHEREAS, the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission recommends that the following individuals be appointed to the 2426 Whitmore Lake Road Historic District Study Committee: Janis Bobrin, Tom Nicely, Gene Ragland, Grace Shackman and Susan C. Wineberg; and

WHEREAS, the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission recommends that Brian and Linda Etter and Nancy Snyder serve as advisors and Marnie Paulus serve as staff

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners hereby appoints the following individuals to the 2426 Whitmore Lake Road Historic District Study Committee.

Janis Bobrin  
Tom Nicely  
Gene Ragland  
Grace Shackman  
Susan C. Wineberg

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners hereby acknowledges that Brian and Linda Etter and Nancy Snyder will serve as advisors and Marnie Paulus as staff.