



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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TO: Suzanne Shaw, Chair
Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners

THROUGH: Robert E. Guenzel
County Administrator

FROM: David Behen, Interim Director
Department of Planning and Environment

DATE: November 6, 2002

SUBJECT: Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of a Historic District Study
Committee to evaluate 15490 Buss Road/Merriman Farm for Historic
District status

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Board of Commissioners appoint individuals recommended by the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission to a Study Committee to evaluate 15490 Buss Road for the purpose of nominating the property for Historic District status.

BACKGROUND

15490 Buss Road is located in Manchester Township. It consists of a Greek Revival farmhouse, two barns, two outbuildings and 78.12 acres of cropland, forest and wetlands with significant landscape features. Benoni and Azubah Merriman, pioneers from New York State, purchased 160 acres in Section 6 of Manchester Township in 1839. Their daughters eventually married into the McMahon family of Manchester while son George continued to farm and add acreage to the property. The farm remained in Merriman hands for over one hundred years until 1955. The current owner, Dr. Betty Jean Murray, purchased the farm as a gift from her parents. She wishes to have the property designated to ensure that the farmstead maintains its rural character and sense of place for future generations. If approved, 15490 Buss Road will join seven other historic districts and two districts under study at this time in Washtenaw County.

DISCUSSION

The current owner of the property approached Manchester Township to have the property listed as a historic district. Manchester 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 Merriman Farm Historic District Study Committee: Ina Hanel, Suzanne Smucker and Lorry Wagner as voting members. Betty Jean Murray and WCHDC Commissioner, Robert Kellum, will serve as advisors. Marnie Paulus is staff to the WCHDC.

IMPACT ON HUMAN RESOURCES

Staff will need to review the property periodically.

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 APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF A HISTORIC DISTRICT
STUDY COMMITTEE AS RECOMMENDED BY THE WASHTENAW COUNTY
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATING THE
MERRIMAN FARM PROPERTY FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT STATUS

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 6, 2002

WHEREAS, the property located at 15490 Buss Road (Merriman Farm) in Manchester Township has potential to be nominated as a historic district; and

WHEREAS, the current owner of the property approached Manchester Township to have the property listed as a historic district. Manchester Township has asked the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners through the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission to conduct this work on their behalf; 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 the 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 Merriman Farm Historic District Study Committee: Ina Hanel, Suzanne Smucker and Lorry Wagner as voting members.

WHEREAS, the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission recommends that Betty Jean Murray and WCHDC Commissioner, Robert Kellum, will serve as advisors and Marnie Paulus serve as staff.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners hereby appoints individuals to the Merriman Farm Historic District Study Committee, as follows:

Ina Hanel
Suzanne Smucker
Lorry Wagner

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners hereby acknowledges that Betty Jean Murray and Robert Kellum will serve as advisors, and Marnie Paulus as staff.