

Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
STAFF REPORT
August 2010

1) Commissioner Appointments

Thanks to those WCHDC Commissioners who have expressed their continued interest in serving on this Commission. HDC Commissioner reappointments/appointments will take place at our next meeting on September 2. Reappointments include Elmer White, Chuck Gray, Jean Ledwith King, and Nancy Snyder. We have one new appointment: Ron Woods. Staff has personally thanked former HDC Commissioner, Martha Churchill, for her years of service on the HDC.

2) USS Washtenaw County Artifacts

HDC Commissioner Elmer White led a group of veterans and HDC staff to Brighton on June 16, to meet with Jim Leacock of Multiform Studios. Mr. Leacock provided a tour of the design studio, and facilitated a brief charette to determine the best choice of display case for the USS Washtenaw County artifacts. The display case will be funded entirely by private donation, and should be ready for installation at 200 N. Main (Clerk /Treasurer Building in downtown Ann Arbor) around Veterans Day in mid-November 2010.

Additionally, on June 1, staff submitted to the US Department of the Navy a required annual report on the current condition of the USS Washtenaw County Artifacts. We received acknowledgement on July 8 that the report was received and satisfactory.

3) MHPN Fall Benefit – October 1, 6pm to 10pm, in Durand

You are invited to attend the 2010 Michigan Historic Preservation Network's Fall Benefit on Friday evening, October 1st, at the stately Durand Union Station. ***Durand is closer than you think (only 59 miles from Ann Arbor) and Washtenaw County Staff is organizing a carpool to the event.***

The annual Fall Benefit helps raise a large percentage of MHPN's annual revenue to help in its mission to advocate for historic places in Michigan and provide information and support throughout the state. Tour the wonderful c. 1905 train depot designed by Spier and Rohns for the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. Enjoy music, substantial hors d'oeuvres, delightful desserts and a hosted bar (coffee and tea and other non-alcoholic beverages will also be served). Always the highlight of the evening - try your luck at bidding on a unique assortment of great items in the silent and live auctions. You'll have a special opportunity to support our Field Representatives by 'buying' days, weeks, and months of their time! You can even do some early holiday shopping at the MHPN Holiday Marketplace.

Tickets are normally \$75/person, but a special government official rate is being offered for \$40/person. Register online at www.mhpn.org or by calling Katie Large at (517) 371-8080.

4) Certified Local Government Grant

2010-2011 Grant Cycle: Gordon Hall Application

Staff worked with HDC Commissioner Alice Ralph to prepare this year's CLG Grant Application, this time for Gordon Hall, a WCHDC Local Historic District located west of Dexter. The application was submitted in record time, on March 30, accompanied by a letter of support from HDC Chair Nancy Snyder. Special thanks to HDC Commissioner Alice Ralph for her assistance in this grant application. We received notification on June 30 that our application had been selected for funding. This project will include \$14,752 in federal pass-through dollars, with a cash match from the Dexter Area Historical Society & Museum in the amount of \$9,835. The total project value is \$24,587.

Similar to the most recent CLG Grant in Chelsea, we proposed funding for a Rehabilitation Master Plan, among other research. This RMP would provide a guiding document for the Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum (DAHSM), a 501 (c)(3) non-profit and the owner of Gordon Hall, and follow the site care recommendations made by Washtenaw County Staff several years ago. This document would assist the organization in appreciating its built assets, which have already been listed on the National Register and recorded by HABS/HAER. Finally, the product of this proposed project would put into place the historic resource documentation, evaluation, and implementation plan necessary to assist DAHSM in seeking funding for future rehabilitation and interpretation projects at Gordon Hall.

This is Washtenaw County's 6th CLG Grant since staff member Melissa Milton-Pung joined the County in 2005. We remain committed to making the best use of these competitively-awarded funds. It's important to note, however, that due to budgetary cut-backs, Washtenaw County has not allowed time in Staff's workplan to donate in-kind project management for this project. As a result, a portion of the grant award must be retained by Washtenaw County to cover the cost of staff oversight. We're excited to see the efforts put forth by the Dexter Area Historical Society & Museum in raising matching funds (40% of the project value) to make this attractive grant proposal, and look forward to the project results in 2011.

5) Section 106 Reviews for Projects Funded with Federal Stimulus Money

The Washtenaw County Office of Community Development (OCD) is contracting with the Washtenaw County Economic Development and Energy Department (EDE) to perform the appropriate review and evaluation of identifying historic properties impacted by CDBG, HOME, NSP I, NSP III, and CDBG-R funding, in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The purpose of this Programmatic Agreement is to streamline the reviewing procedure for Federally-funded Washtenaw County Office of Community Development projects, for the term beginning April 1, 2010 and ending December 31, 2011. This agreement is put into place with the concurrence of all Washtenaw County Historic District Commissions, including the City of Ann Arbor, the City of Ypsilanti, the City of Saline, the Village of Manchester, and the Washtenaw County HDC.

The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has traditionally conducted Section 106 Review oversight for Federally-funded projects such as these. Due to high volume and a number of time-sensitive projects, Washtenaw County staff member Melissa Milton-Pung will now be the reviewing authority. Staff will be conducting the appropriate level of historic resource reviews as a means to streamline the federal compliance process for the City of Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County Community Development. As you know, Melissa holds a masters degree in Historic Preservation and have had many years of experience in the field, and therefore meet the Federally-defined standards of 36 CFR 61 to conduct these reviews as needed.

6) Local Historic District Applications

Per February's WCHDC meeting, Staff presently has one Local Historic District Designation Applications waiting for presentation before the Washtenaw County BOC: *Harwood Farm, Pittsfield Township*. This application is complete. We have the application from the property owner, and the resolution of support has been passed by Pittsfield Township. We need to fill the Study Committee before proceeding, as Staff does not have the ability to provide significant time to this endeavor.

This application is stalled, as it appears that Pittsfield Township may be in the process of seeking to create its own Historic District Commission. As indicated in the May 2010 Staff Report, Staff met at length with members of the Pittsfield Township Historical Commission in July, and also spoke with Pittsfield Township Supervisor Mandy Grewal, to ascertain the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County HDC in this matter.

Multiple efforts were made to contact the property owner, Janice Harwood. We are presently seeking to confer with the property owner and local officials about the wisdom of designating a Washtenaw County LHD in a jurisdiction that may soon be covered by another HDC.

7) Historic Marker Request

Please note that a previously received local historic district application from the *L.C. Allen House in York Township* has been converted to a historic marker request. Proposed wording for this marker has drafted by former HDC Commissioner Martha Churchill and property owner Sally Clark. It is appended to this report. **It is requested that the HDC provide comment for this wording, and either approve as written, approve with changes, or deny the request at the September 2 meeting.**

Respectfully Submitted,



**Melissa Milton-Pung, Principal Preservation Planner
Washtenaw County Office of Economic Development & Energy**

Proposed Historic Marker Wording:
L. C. Allen House
620 Mooreville Road, Milan/York Township

This home was built and established by Lovatus Chapman Allen around 1850. "L.C.", as he was known, traveled to this area from Vermont in 1849. He was born there in 1816.

Soon after their arrival here, Sarah Dewey Allen and L. C. became the parents of their third child. Together they raised eight children at this home. The names were Kate, Mary, Louisa, Laura, Ada, Alice, Ida and, one son, William "Fitch" Allen. The family lived in a modest house at first, then had this lovely home built.

The farm of 200 acres was purchased from William and Susannah Hanson in 1851.

L. C. Allen was a prominent citizen and successful farmer in this area. Locally he served as school teacher, school inspector, Justice of the Peace and several area township offices. He was elected to two terms in the Michigan House of Representatives on the Union ticket starting in 1862.

L. C.'s older brother, Harmon Allen, arrived in Michigan many years earlier and was one of the founders of Milan in 1831. L. C.'s grandfather, Elihu Allen, was a cousin to the celebrated Ethan Allen.

Lovatus Chapman Allen passed away in 1901 with his daughter Kate and her husband, Franklin Butler, at his side. His wife Sarah had died in 1860.