

# WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## Minutes of Monthly Meeting

<p><b>DATE: March 4, 2004</b> <b>TIME: 4:30 p.m.</b> <b>PLACE: 705 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan</b> <b>Zeeb Road Room 2010</b></p>
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Before the meeting, the commissioners viewed *Archways to Our Past: the Story of Michigan's Historic Highway Bridges* courtesy of MDOT and Jasper Green Pennington.

1. Call to Order: Commissioner Don Riddering called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Staff Marnie Paulus called the roll. Commissioners Tom Dodd, Mark Higbee, Jean King, Don Riddering, Pat Majher, Nancy Snyder, Alice Ralph and were present constituting a quorum. Staff member Marnie Paulus was also present. Pat Kelly and Jasper Pennington were absent.
3. Approval of Minutes of January 2004 Meeting: Ralph asked that the word "historic" be inserted on page 2. **On a motion by Ralph, seconded by Majher, the minutes were approved as amended.**
4. Approval of Agenda: Commissioner King asked to add publicity to the agenda. **On a motion by Higbee, seconded by Majher, the agenda was approved as amended.**
5. Introduction of Guests: Jack Valentine, with an interest in saving the Judd Road Bridge in York Township, was introduced
6. Application Reviews: None
7. Business  
**Judd Road Bridge:** Jack Valentine of 100 Judd Road described the 1954 wooden Judd Road Bridge structure which will be 50-years old and National Register-eligible in May. To the neighbors, including residents of a nearby subdivision this is an important historic resource that preserves the rural character of the area as well as being a traffic calming device.

For example, on Christmas Eve in 1878, Sarah Bernhardt was trapped under an earlier version of the bridge during a snow storm after a singing engagement. A new railing is needed (and the neighbors have found a volunteer to do the work) and one of the piers has a shifted cap. The Road Commission has determined to replace the bridge with a million dollar structure that can handle double-decker freight cars in the case that the Ann Arbor Railroad someday introduces these cars. Different strategies were discussed with Mr. Valentine who will present at the Historic Bridges workshop on March 28. The bridge is not protected under a local historic district ordinance.

**Harwood Cemetery text:** Majher reported that Janice Harwood signed off on the text for the Harwood Cemetery marker text. **On a motion by Dodd, supported by Higbee, there was a motion to approve the Harwood Cemetery marker text. The motion carried. Commissioner King abstained.**

**Publicity:** King passed out notices about an upcoming lecture sponsored by the Washtenaw County Historical Society (WCHS) which is a local non-profit organization. She referenced two notices in WCHS *Impressions* about the county's newest historic district **Old Zion Parsonage** and proposed historic district **McMahon Springs**, but expressed disappointment that the WCHDC was not mentioned by name. She wants more publicity for the WCHDC and would especially like the informational brochure to be mailed to the WCHS membership. Higbee suggested sending the WCHDC minutes to the editor of *Impressions*. Majher expressed concern that the WCHS is largely perceived as an Ann Arbor rather than an all-county non-profit organization. Paulus reported that her office sent the informational brochure to all township supervisors, village presidents, city mayors, 28 clerks and all members of the Washtenaw County Consortium which is a mailing list of historical societies from around the county. Ralph suggested sending a monthly paragraph filled with pertinent information about the WCHDC to the *Impressions* editor. This issue will be discussed next month but in the meantime, Majher will email Susan Wineberg (editor of *Impressions*) to ask if she would like the WCHDC minutes emailed to her every month. Paulus and Snyder agreed to start printing out the 1,000 informational brochures for King to deliver to the WCHS.

Reports:

**Communications:** *Preservation Magazine* is in the office. Paulus announced the Michigan Barn Preservation Network conference in Lansing on March 12-13 and the Michigan Historic Preservation Network conference in greater Rochester April 22-24. New commissioners Dodd, Higbee, Kelly and Majher will have the opportunity to attend the HDC

and Study Committee workshop on Saturday, April 24. Paulus asked them to register by mail before the April 8 deadline and bring the receipts to the April meeting for reimbursement.

**Staff Report:** The WCHDC viewed the power point presentation about the Historic Preservation element of the Comprehensive Plan. Paulus shared the comments from the Planning Advisory Board and asked for comments from the WCHDC via phone or email.

Workshop: Commissioners signed up to bring refreshments on March 28. Riddering, Ralph and Dodd each agreed to bring two dozen cookies or brownies, and Majher and Snyder each offered to bring two gallons of cider or lemonade. The WCHDC will reimburse McFarlane-Faes for her mileage from Lansing. Ralph hopes to borrow a model of the Foster Road Bridge from the UM School of Architecture for the workshop. There followed a discussion about thank you notes and tokens of appreciation for the speakers. Paulus will handle the room reservation, equipment, paper goods and small tokens for the speakers.

Paulus distributed a fax from the *Stewards of Bridgewater* about the Wilbur Road Bridge.

Paulus also reported on surveying 7430 Whitmore Lake Road in Northfield Township where the owners Tim and Sharon Saville are “moving to save” a farmhouse, 100-ton barn and outbuildings up the road a mile to save them from demolition before the new Whitmore Lake High School is built this year.

**Treasurer’s Report:** \$2600 remains in the WCHDC budget.

**Report from Commissioners:**

- Awards Committee: The committee will meet after the March meeting and present the award recipient list to the WCHDC in April.
- Task Force: Ralph will bring a draft of her letter to the next meeting.
- Education Committee: No report
- Marker Committee: See Harwood Cemetery marker under

**Business.**

**Agenda Items for April 1, 2004 Meeting:**

- Historic Preservation Awards
- Publicity: Is a PR committee needed?
- Reports from committees and task force
- Follow-up on workshop

9. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m. **On a motion by Riddering, and seconded by Higbee, the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marnie Paulus, Historic Preservation Coordinator  
Washtenaw County Historic District Commission