

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Minutes of Monthly Meeting

DATE: June 3, 2004

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

**PLACE: 705 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Zeeb Road Room 2010**

1. Call to Order: Don Riddering called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Don Riddering called the roll. Commissioners Pat Kelly, Tom Dodd, Mark Higbee, Don Riddering, and Pat Majher were present constituting a quorum. Staff member Anne Kreykes was also present. Alice Ralph, Jasper Pennington, Jean King, and Marnie Paulus were absent. Nancy Snyder arrived later.
3. Approval of Minutes of May 2004 Meeting: **On a motion by Dodd, seconded by Higbee, the minutes were approved.**
4. Approval of Agenda: Approval of Agenda as submitted: **On a motion by Higbee, seconded by Kelly, the agenda was approved.**
5. Introduction of Guests: Betty Jean Murray, the owner of 15490 Buss Road, Manchester Township, Washtenaw County, was introduced.
6. Application Reviews: None
7. Business:
 - Betty Jean Murray, owner of Merriman Farm in Manchester Township, expressed concerns about the length of time it took to generate the Preliminary Report for the proposed Historic District for her property. A main concern was that some members of the study committee did not meet deadlines and were not accountable for getting their portion of the work done. Her suggestions were that the process should be more organized and specific tasks assigned based on the volunteers area of expertise. Possible ideas are that the HDC searches out qualified and interested volunteers and that they undergo a training process. Eastern Michigan University historic preservation program may also be a good source for volunteers. A contact person would be helpful to the homeowner to answer questions in a timelier manner. Helpful hints are to tell the homeowner of a proposed Historic District that this is a time consuming process and could take up to two years

from beginning to end. Pat Majher reiterated that volunteers should complete their tasks assigned and meet deadlines. Nancy Snyder suggested that the study committee meet monthly with an established day and time to follow up on what has been done.

Mark Higbee asked Betty Jean Murray how the delay in producing the Preliminary Report affected her. Betty Jean Murray said that in her case, estate planning was a concern due to health issues and personal conflicts regarding the protection of the property. Mark Higbee stated that the sixteen month time frame within which the Preliminary Report was generated was not excessively long given the amount of research and legal issues involved when creating a Historic District.

Betty Jean Murray expressed concern that the Final Report could take another year to be approved, and the HDC discussed the fact that it would probably only take another three months if the report is approved with minor changes.

Betty Jean Murray suggested that the Local Historic District Guidelines that the state of Michigan (Amy Arnold) produced should be given to owners of prospective Historic Districts and study committees to follow. She also left a copy of helpful hints to improve the Historic District process.

On a motion by Higbee, seconded by Kelly, Betty Jean Murray was thanked for coming and sharing her concerns and helpful information regarding the Historic District process.

- The July Fieldtrip is in the process of being planned by Pat Kelly. Jean King asked if they would be able to go inside Gordon Hall and it was decided that there is not enough time to do that this time. A Gordon Hall tour was suggested for a separate field trip at a future time.
- The Judd Road bridge was discussed and Nancy Snyder reported that the road commission may agree to closing the bridge to vehicular traffic. Pat Kelly said that the bridge may still pose safety concerns. Jack Valentine's email sounded hopeful that this alternative would be taken instead of replacing the bridge.

8. Reports:

Communications: Anne Kreykes reported that the Preservation magazine is in the office.

Staff Report:

- Anne Kreykes reported that Alice Ralph was awarded the \$500.00 scholarship to the NAPC conference.
- The owner of Conant house in Salem Township contacted Marnie Paulus to request that her property be a Historic District. Salem Township has requested their lawyer to review the ordinance and they will respond this month.
- The Comprehensive Plan draft went to the BOC June 3, 2004. The following regional workshops are being held this month and attended by some HDC commissioners. Marnie Paulus will attend all of the workshops.
 1. June 7, 7:00 p.m. Manchester
 2. June 8, 7:00 p.m. Ypsilanti – Nancy Snyder/Tom Dodd
 3. June 9, 7:00 p.m. WISD – Pat Kelly
 4. June 10, 7:00 p.m. – Milan – Pat Majher
 5. June 15, 7:00 p.m. – Whitmore Lake High School
 6. June 16, 7:00 p.m. – Chelsea – Pat Kelly
- The Public Hearing for Merriman Farm is June 22 at 10:00 a.m. at the Manchester Township Hall.
- The Histweb 2 grant starts this month and will begin with surveying 34 properties in Bridgewater Township. Anne, Ina, Kathy and Marnie will be going each Wednesday and would welcome HDC commissioners that may want to come along. Pat Majher noted that CLG funds are going to be awarded to grants that utilize the “cool cities” concept.
- Please attend the US-12 Heritage Trail Celebration June 9 and meet our governor, Jennifer Granholm.

Treasurer’s Report: \$335.00 remains in the WCHDC budget.

Report from Commissioners:

- Task Force Report – (postponed)
- Awards Committee – (postponed)
- Report from Education Committee – (postponed)
- Pat Majher discussed the idea that a presentation should be planned for marker dedication ceremonies. The Harwood ceremony was attended by about forty people and was a success. Tom Dodd presented the county-wide marker project as a work in progress. The layout is in PageMaker and he hopes that eventually the public will be able to click on a marker page, and print out the information. The project is coming along nicely.
- Tom Dodd reported that he will not be here for the August meeting.

Agenda Items for August 5, 2004 Meeting:

- Task Force Report
- Awards Committee
- Report from Education Committee
- Marker Committee – Pat Majher suggested making up a donation form to send to Pittsfield, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and Scio Townships to pay for the markers. Jim Wolters, Pittsfield Township Supervisor, expressed the desire for more markers in the township and that they may be willing to pay for them.

9. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m. **On a motion by Snyder, and seconded by Higbee, the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Kreykes, Historic Preservation Intern
Washtenaw County Historic District Commission