

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Monthly Meeting

<p>DATE: November 3, 2005 TIME: 4:30 pm PLACE: 705 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan Zeeb Road Room 2010</p>

1. **Call to Order-** Chair Nancy Snyder called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.
2. **Roll Call:**
Present: Paul Darling, Tom Dodd, Jean King, Jasper Pennington, Alice Ralph, Don Riddering, and Nancy Snyder
Absent: Pat Kelly and Elmer White
Staff: Patricia Denig
3. **Approval of Minutes of April Meeting:** On a motion by D. Riddering, seconded by P. Darling, the minutes were approved.
4. **Introduction of Guests:** No guests
5. **Approval of Agenda:** Request to add Popkins School under Report from Commissioners. On motion of D. Riddering, seconded by J. King, Agenda was approved as amended.
6. **Application Reviews:** None
7. **Business:**
Meeting dates – Decision made to stay with current meeting date and time.
8. **Working Session:** None
9. **Reports:**
Communications: Staff reported that they have been contacted by the Ann Arbor News relative to the proposed sale of Gordon Hall and the potential \$5,000 fine for destruction of a Historic District. Staff referred the reporter to Local Historic Districts Act 169 of 1970, Section 399.215 violation; fine; payment of costs, and emphasized that any individual or organization could also be required to pay all costs necessary to restore or replace a resource unlawfully altered, repaired, moved, excavated or demolished. Commissioner Ralph mentioned that she had also spoken to the reporter and emphasized that she encouraged discussion up front on changes to a district rather than relying on punitive actions.
Staff Report (P. Denig): Staff reported that the interview committee responsible for making the selection for the Historic Preservation Planner position was hoping to meet by the end of the week to make a decision. Staff will report to the Commissioners once the selection has been made. HistWeb III grant is continuing to move forward, although the preliminary study report for the Manchester Historic District (the first deliverable for the grant) has been delayed slightly as the study committee has not yet finished surveying the resources. A revised performance schedule has been submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and we are awaiting a response from them on if the revised schedule is acceptable. As it related to applying for a 2006 SHPO grant, SHPO now expects to have the applications out in early November with a December 15th deadline.

Treasurer's Report: P. Denig reported that approximately 60% of the budget has been expended for the Historic Preservation program through the end of August. Commissioners brainstormed on ways to spend some of the funds prior to year end since they can not be rolled over. Suggestions included printing additional copies of the Gordon Hall Historic District Report as well as a brochure relative to the initiative to save Gordon Hall. Staff will work with requests as they are received.

Reports from Commissioners:

East Delhi Bridge Study Committee: (N. Snyder) The Study Committee met October 11, 2005 and discussed task done to date and what was left. The draft report is targeted for the first part of 2006. Additionally, the E. Delhi Conservancy was approached by the Road Commissioner to split the cost of the engineering study (approximately \$30,000 total expense) and the Conservancy has agreed.

Popkins School: (N. Snyder) Mrs. Stewart reported that nothing has happened with Popkins School to date, although the Township is pressuring the developer to do something. It was noted that the Wild Bird Sanctuary is interest in the property for office space.

Gordon Hall: (A. Ralph)

The bidding period established by the University of Michigan Business and Finance Office for the sale of the Gordon Hall Historic District property ends on November 15. Reports refer to a few developers expressing interest in bidding on the property for projects that might be considered in conflict with the historic designation. The Dexter Area Historical Society and Museum will submit a bid on behalf of the Society and community partners with whom they are negotiating.

No official response from UM has been received but occasional conversations with UM officials are pursued by the DAHS. There has been no response concerning the County request for information from the University of Michigan regarding Gordon Hall Historic District expenditures and income for recent years.

County Commissioner Mark Ouimet has consistently supported the DAHS and community effort. A. Ralph made comments regarding the Gordon Hall Historic District at the late October meetings of the Scio Twp Planning Commission and the Scio Board of Trustees. A. Ralph has pursued and expects letters of support from MHPN and SHPO for the DAHS and community partners bid. A. Ralph is exploring potential support from UM faculty senate reps. DAHS also pursues letters of support for the bid that they are assembling.

Discussion included timeline and possibilities for grant applications that would support further archeology at the GHHD if the DAHS bid is successful.

Conant House Study Committee: (Staff) A study committee member was able to meet and interview the family in October and they are now beginning work on the draft report.

Othneil Gooding House: No report. Commissioners King and Synder agreed to meet with the Chair of the Study Committee to discuss progress on this proposed Historic District.

Marker Report: (T. Dodd)

Commissioner Dodd reported that the 53rd marker, Park Lawn, is ready for placement. Once the post has been schedule for installation a date will be set for the ceremony and invitations sent out.

Merriman Farm is the next marker in the works

Commissioner Dodd will bring back a proposal for one set of guidelines on markers to the Commissioner in December.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Denig, Director of Planning Services
Washtenaw County