

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Monthly Meeting

<p>DATE: June 2, 2005 TIME: 4:30 p.m. 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 4:36 pm.
2. **Roll Call:** Nancy Snyder, Tom Dodd, Paul Darling, Alice Ralph, Don Riddering and Elmer White; Pat Kelly, Jean King, and Jasper Pennington absent. Staff present: Jessica Eisenman.
3. **Approval of Minutes of April Meeting:** On a motion by D. Riddering, seconded by P. Darling, the minutes were approved as amended with the correction of “Mr. Tren” to the proper spelling “Mr. Trendov”.
4. **Introduction of Guests:** No guests present.
5. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion to defer both the review of the brochure until J. Pennington is present, and the “Options for Disseminating Study Committee Reports” until P. Denig returns. Marker report to be added by T.Dodd. T. Dodd motion P. Darling 2nd, agenda approved as amended.
6. **Application Reviews:** None
7. **Business**
Welcome New HDC Member – Board introduced themselves to Elmer White, new board member. E. White gave a brief bio of how he fits with the HDC. Mr. White took his oath of office.

Newspaper Articles for Discussion – N. Snyder spoke on the two articles distributed at the request of J. King. The articles were a) *Livingston County Airport: Engineering Firm should be Fired*, an editorial on the engineering firm Mead & White, who are in the process of doing the study of the Delhi Bridge there have not been any issues to date with the firm, the article was intended top be informational only; and b) A printout from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) web stating their policy on the rehabilitation of Historic Bridges. J. King intends to contact them because she feels that the ASCE might be able to assist in the HDC’s desire to save old bridges.

8. Reports:

- Communications:** - none
Staff Report: – none.
Treasurer’s Report: none
Reports from Commissioners:

East Delhi Bridge Study Committee: (N. Snyder)

N. Snyder reported about the East Delhi Bridge and the Conservancy. The most pressing issue will be the Conservancy raising \$700,000 in six months to help rehabilitate the bridge; they have begun fundraising and are contacting foundations, and public/private individuals and corporations. However the WC Road Commission says that they do not

know the cost to date, however the Foster bridge has cost much more than originally expected. The Conservancy is doing a "shadow study" of the bridge and is planning to have their own engineering study done by Lichtenstein (the firm that evaluated the Foster/Miller Bridge) since there are discrepancies in the quotes for the cost to rehab the bridge. The Road Commission had removed the "Save the Delhi Bridge" signs in Scio Township on June 1, 2005 that were in front of residences supporting this cause. They were removed because they were in the right-of-way and the Road Commission was mowing the grass. Ken Reiter from the Road Commission has apologized on their behalf.

Conant House Study Committee: (N. Snyder)

N. Snyder has received the report from the Ina Hanel, but does not have it at the meeting. The four County Historic Preservation interns have divided the work and set up a schedule of days to meet for the committee between June and September to keep on track with the study. Neither N. Snyder nor D. Riddering attended the first meeting.

Gordon Hall: (A. Ralph)

A. Ralph reported that The University of Michigan is putting this property on the market in late summer; therefore she has increased her efforts to forge partnerships among groups within the County to work to save Gordon Hall. Steve Morris, President of the Southeast Michigan Business School Alumni Association is spearheading the sale of the property, which reports claim that the University is looking to sell it in the low range of \$2M putting the proceeds to student based scholarships. A. Ralph stated that they are looking into the details of Katherine McCormick's will to determine what stipulations surrounded the future uses allowed on the property. The Village of Dexter has an annexation agreement that will come into effect in 2006 under PA 425, as does Webster Township which may help save the property. In addition, there may be a possibility to purchase the property under Scio Township's Proposal J, the greenbelt millage, or by trying to get the County to look at the Scio portion of the property as a way to bring groups together to preserve it as open space or agriculture. If a specific proposal arises, Curt Hedger said he can analyze it for legal issues if it is passed on to him through the Planning and Environment Department and/or Bob Guenzel. An archeological study has been started; the initial surveying produced a stone with intentional markings on it which might imply Paleo-Indian presence, which would be able to stop the sale of the property until a complete archeological study has been done. In addition, research of the study committee found that there was an underground archway which may be linked to the Underground Railroad. A. Ralph and Paul Cousins, a member of the Dexter Historical Society Board, went to Lansing to lobby for the preservation of Gordon Hall. In addition the Dexter Historical Society was invited to bid on the property by the University of Michigan. On Tuesday, June 7, 2005 the Road Commission is meeting with Dexter Village to discuss Gordon Hall, a representative of the HDC has not been invited. This meeting is against the cooperation that T. VanDerworp is trying to achieve so a

HDC representative should attend. There needs to be further discussion of how to get more visibility; more visible space on county website, separate website, or a list-serve.

Popkins School: (N. Snyder)

N. Snyder reported that during the week of May 30, 2005 T. VanDerworp and P. Denig of Washtenaw County met with Mike Moran of Ann Arbor Township to discuss the new development proposed for the property. M. Moran was not happy that the number of parking spaces had changed, and he said he would like to see the underground parking covered with grass, he also said it might be possible to change the zoning of the Popkins parcel through a PUD. M. Moran did indeed tell the Developer to fill the hole currently on the site or the permits would be revoked.

Marker Report: (T. Dodd)

T. Dodd distributed two WCHDC Marker Proposals, 1) 6170 Plymouth Road, Superior Township, a second McCormick farmstead; and 2) Park Lawn Beach, North Territorial Road, Dexter Township. T. Dodd reported a brief history of both sites. The farmstead is believed to have been where the township was first organized under the name Panama. Park Lawn Beach included the Inverness Inn, a grocery store, gas station and tavern. T. Dodd asked M. Paulus if the Inverness Country Club marker could designate the entire neighborhood not just one of the buildings. M. Paulus cited a marker located in the green of Dixboro in Superior Township that did this. T. Dodd to bring draft markers ready to the July meeting. T. Dodd also reported that there had been a request by RuthAnn Jamnick, Ypsilanti Township Supervisor to have a Marker approved for the Water Treatment Plant on Bridge Road in Ypsilanti Township. Currently there is talk of demolishing the Plant and R. Jamnick is working to preserve it.

Adjournment: On a motion by A. Ralph, seconded by P. Darling, the meeting adjourned at 6:31 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Eisenman, Senior Brownfield Planner
Washtenaw County