WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Minutes of Monthly Meeting

DATE: February 3, 2005

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: 705 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Zeeb Road Room 2010

1. **Call to Order**- Chair N. Snyder called the meeting to order at 4:29 pm.

- 2. **Roll Call**: Nancy Snyder, Tom Dodd, Paul Darling, Alice Ralph, Jasper Pennington, staff, Marnie Paulus and intern, Kathy Holtz. Pat Kelly, absent. Jean King arrived shortly after roll call. D. Riddering arrived later.
- 3. **Approval of Minutes of December Meeting**: On a motion by T. Dodd, seconded by J. Pennington, the minutes were approved as amended.
- 4. **Approval of Agenda**: On a motion by J. Pennington, seconded by A. Ralph, the agenda was approved as amended with the addition of resignations and Gordon Hall.
- 5. **Introduction of Guests**: Staff person Kathy Holtz was introduced. Eulalia Stewart was there to discuss Popkins School.
- 6. Application Reviews: None
- 7. Business:

Oath of Office: J. Pennington and P. Darling took the oath of office as new commissioners of the WCHDC.

Election of WCHDC Officers:

Chair: Nancy Snyder

Vice-Chair: Donald Riddering Secretary: Jasper Pennington

Treasurer: Pat Kelly

Motion to approve the slate of officers by T. Dodd, seconded by J. Pennington, and carried.

Goals for 2005 were discussed concerning staffing in regard to the goals set by the WCHDC. Discussion ensued. The education committee will review the goals from 2004. N. Snyder and J. Pennington will report on goals for 2005. Other committees were outlined for benefit of new member Paul Darling.

Alice Ralph suggested that committees meet twenty minutes before the regular WCHDC meetings.

N. Snyder reported on her efforts to get outside funding for Historic Markers and study committee reports.

Preservation Awards criteria will have to be approved by WCHDC in March.

Educational workshop discussed. M. Paulus suggested a workshop to be designed in conjunction with Manchester Village residents to educate about the benefits of owning property within a historic district

A. Ralph suggested that the goals be flexible for this year; M Paulus suggested the goal of one marker and on historic district due to budget constraints.

Approval of Calendar: Motion to approve the 2005 calendar was put forth by P. Darling and seconded by T. Dodd; motion carried.

Popkins School Historic District:

Eulalia Stewart reported that the foundations for the new development south of the Popkins School are now filled with soil. The project is stalled.

N. Snyder attempted to contact Ann Arbor Township Planners; no response so far regarding S. Ranzini's proposal to rehabilitate the Popkins School for a business. Discussion ensued regarding the zoning of the Popkins School. Snyder will report back next month on her communications with the township.

York Township Study Committee:

Motion made by T. Dodd to replace M. Higbee with J. Pennington and J. King in an advisory capacity to the York Township Study Committee. Seconded by A. Ralph and carried.

Resignations: M. Higbee sent letter of resignation due to changes in his professional schedule. N. Snyder will write letter of thanks to him.

M. Paulus expounded on her decision to leave the county and move to Turkey explaining that there were centuries of historic resources in need of rehabilitation.

Questions and a discussion followed. J. King questioned the feasibility of two people sharing Paulus' job. Discussion followed and the commission expressed a desire to be an integral part of the hiring process. J. Pennington, T. Dodd, A. Ralph, assented.

- J. King also expressed concern regarding the present structure and representation of the WCHDC's interests.
- 8. Reports:

Communications: Forum News in the Office

Staff Report for 3 February, 2005:

Proposed York Twp. Historic District: We now have resolution, contract and letters from Hugh McCann, Steve Puuri and Joe Zurawski. Jasper Pennington has agreed to replace Mark Higbee as advisor to the study committee. Possible date for board action: March 2nd.

Conant Farm Historic District: Fred Roperti called to say that the Salem Township Board would vote on the contract on Feb. 9.

Dexter Main St. Bridge: M. Paulus attended a meeting at the Road Commission last month where the consultant took comments from the public. Two neighbors who live in the subdivision across the street were very concerned about rate of speed and traffic volume on Island Lake Road and not much impressed by the significance of Gordon Hall. One of the alternatives presented by the consultant was to move the underpass to the south of the Fred Pelham-designed viaduct (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980) which would impact Gordon Hall. Paulus advised the WCHDC to bookmark the Road Commission website, educate themselves on this project and send a representative to each The consultant firm JJR and the WCRC know that an application for work must be submitted before work that would affect GH can proceed but this is the time to be proactive. The information is posted on the web. Go to Google and type in Dexter Main Street Bridge to read about the feasibility study.

Article in Ann Arbor News on 2/3/05 about UM putting Gordon Hall on the market announced.

East Delhi Bridge-Paulus will attend a meeting 2/11/05 to hear about the project and will report back. She suggested accessing the WCRC webpage or calling spokesperson Ken Reiter for an invitation. This resource is not protected by a historic district ordinance and is not on the state's National Register eligible list but warrants a revisit by a truss bridge expert and the state architectural historian.

Manchester Village: Holtz and Kreykes attended the MVHD committee meeting. The committee has determined that the central business district and half of Ann Arbor Hill on the west side would be a desirable boundary for the district.

HistWeb 2 Grant- Met with IT department to talk about next steps. Kreykes has almost completed Dexter Village, Holtz has loaded information about 42 National Register eligible Centennial Farms, Hanel is writing up the Bridgewater Surveys and Paulus has scanned and entered data for 8 out of 10 Washtenaw County Historic Districts for the website.

Per diems: Please put in your mileage and add up the amount owed to you. This will save time for Chris Watkins, management assistant.

Report from Commissioners: Discussion ensued on the WCHDC addressing their role with the WCBOC rather than reacting to the WCBOC agenda. Representation of their views to the WCBOC and a more proactive role were discussed, especially with regard to the projects impacting historic bridges. M Paulus suggested that having a WCHDC member at the bridge meetings would be helpful. J. King wondered which attorney represented the views of the WCHDC.

A. Ralph offered that a better relationship with the SHPO would be good and expressed the need to be more proactive rather than reactive. J. King particularly disagrees with the bypass plan proposed through the Gordon Hall property as explained in the Dexter Leader. Discussion followed on how to get WCHDC heard more clearly concerning protection for Gordon Hall. J. King expressed concern over wording of newspaper article concerning Gordon Hall. "U-M choosing Hall over safety of citizens". Discussion ensued over how to respond. Also the necessity of a publicity committee was discussed.

Action Steps:

- WCHDC Commissioners will speak at in the public forum of the WCBOC meetings to express concerns when there is a related agenda item (www.ewashtenaw.org).
- T. Dodd will write letter to the Dexter Leader regarding misstatements in the Gordon Hall article.
- J. King will advocate for historic preservation with new Road Commissioners David Rutledge and Mr. Etter.
- WCHDC Commissioners will speak at the public meeting of the WCRC.
- WCHDC Commissioners will send a letter to the new Road Commissioners regarding how the Historic District Commission operates.

- J. King will investigate grant funding for the purpose of protecting Gordon Hall.
- J. King in her role as Scio Township Trustee will propose the E. Delhi Bridge be protected under ordinance #115.
- Each commissioner will report to the commission on his/her activities in March.
- 11. **Treasurer's Report:** \$4,480 remains in the budget.
- 12. Reports from Committees- postponed to March
- 13. Adjournment at 6:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Holtz, Historic Preservation Intern Edited by J. Pennington and M. Paulus