

## Washtenaw County Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes

**DATE:** Thursday, September 10, 2009  
**TIME:** 5:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center (LRC)  
4135 Washtenaw; Ann Arbor, MI 48107

### Call to Order:

- Nancy Snyder called the meeting to order at 5:41p.m.

### Roll Call:

- **Present:** Martha Churchill, Charles Gray, Jean King, Jasper Pennington, Nancy Snyder, Alice Ralph, Elmer White
- **Absent:** Paul Darling, (excused), Peter Kelley (excused)
- **Staff:** Melissa Milton-Pung

Charles Gray moved for approval of Consent Agenda as amended, with support from Alice Ralph. The motion carried unanimously.

### Public Comment:

None.

### Business:

#### Staff Announcements

Staff member Melissa Milton-Pung provided information on four upcoming events of related interest:

- Barn Dance Fundraiser for Jarvis Stone School in Salem Township, September 12
- E. Delhi Bridge (Local Historic District) Rededication Ceremony, September 13
- Salem Country Fair at Jarvis Stone School in Salem Township, September 19
- Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) Fall Benefit, at Riverside Arts Center in Ypsilanti, October 2

#### Goals

##### *New HDC Brochure*

Staff reported that changes to the brochure draft had not yet been made, due to competing tasks in the office over the past month, and the departure of a few interns at the start of the fall semester. Alice Ralph agreed to make further revisions to the brochure document.

##### *USS Washtenaw County Artifacts*

Elmer White reported on committee efforts to return the USS Washtenaw County Artifacts to public display. The committee met immediately preceding the HDC meeting, and approved the exhibition proposal presented in August by James Leacock of Multiform Studios. The preferred

location for the case is at 200 N. Main Street, in Ann Arbor. The committee has commenced efforts to raise a goal amount of \$7500, to fund the new exhibition case.

### **Role of Historic Preservation in Washtenaw County**

Conan Smith sent his regrets for missing the meeting. Melissa Milton-Pung continued the discussion with the HDC, which examined similar issues as the August meeting, including the current financial state of the County, potential budget cuts, the pending elimination of the Office of Strategic Planning, and the potential elimination of the Historic District Commission. Milton-Pung pointed out that 12 local historic districts and a 25-year-long history of Certified Local Government Designation (and access to federal grants) are at stake.

Other discussion topics included:

- Minimal needs for staff support to HDC, compliance with Open Meetings Act
- Legal implications to local historic districts if HDC is eliminated
- Other entities/departments which may be interested in hosting HDC and/or staff
- Fate of other similar boards/commissions in Washtenaw County

HDC Commissioners considered a resolution to refuse per diems and mileage in protest against the potential elimination of the Historic District Commission and historic preservation services. They decided to table the item until the next meeting.

Commissioner Elmer White volunteered to contact County Clerk Larry Kestenbaum or another appropriate county officer to explore the methods by which the HDC, local historic districts, and Certified Local Government status can be maintained. He will invite Mr. Kestenbaum to the October 8 HDC meeting to seek the establishment of a County employee for service delivery of clerical support or minimal point of contact between the HDC and County offices.

### **Historic Photos on Display at Ypsilanti Public Library**

Commissioner Jasper Pennington announced that a collection of local historic photographs are presently on display at the Ypsilanti District Library, located on Michigan Avenue in downtown Ypsilanti.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Elmer White, seconded by Alice Ralph, all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 8, 5:30 p.m. at the Learning Resource Center (LRC), 4135 Washtenaw Avenue, Ann Arbor.