

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission**  
**STAFF REPORT**  
**September 2008**

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**1) Proposed Local Historic Districts**

*a. Conant Farm Local Historic District*

On September 3, the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to create this local historic district!

*b. Othneil Gooding House*

Staff spoke with the property owner via telephone, and inquired about his level of interest in continuing the local designation process. The property owner is considering the benefits of local designation, easement options, and weighing family concerns. He asked staff to revisit this topic in November.

**2) Local Historic Districts**

*a. Staff Visits to Local Historic Districts*

Staff has conducted site visits at most of the Washtenaw County local historic districts during the month of August, with the assistance of summer intern Anthony Timek. Local historic districts visited include: Geer School, Popkins School, Milton & Kittie Geer House, Gordon Hall, Merriman Farm, McMahon Springs, and McCormick Farm. Two site visits, at Esek Pray House and Old Zion Parsonage, are scheduled to take place in September. Staff has monitored the rehabilitation activities of the Delhi Bridge with an informal site visit during rehabilitation, and has issued an internal inquiry regarding the status of the USS Washtenaw County Memorabilia. The purpose of these visits is to update photographic records and refresh or expand staff familiarity with the districts. These friendly, low-key visits have served to cultivate positive relationships with the historic property stewards, fulfill the function of local historic district audits, and open new avenues for projects of interest or upcoming Certificates of Appropriateness. Staff will provide a complete report on these visits at the October HDC meeting.

**3) Historic Sites of Concern**

*a. Nanry House*

Staff is coordinating with Superior Township and seeking competitive bids from local carpenters to assist in moth-balling the house.

*b. Rawsonville School*

At the suggestion of Commissioner Gray, staff has provided resource materials to County Commissioner Rolland Sizemore, in preparation for the school's planned move.

*c. McCalla Farm*

This former dairy farm, located on Michigan Avenue near I-94 in Ypsilanti Township, has been brought to the HDC's attention through previous comments by Commissioner Chuck Gray. Comments from EMU's Dr. Ted Ligibel and members of the general public have also been received more recently by staff. There is no immediate threat known to this site, although it is located in the vicinity of potential development – directly behind Wal-Mart. Staff is presently investigating the site, and will provide information to the HDC as it becomes available.

**4) Historic Markers:**

According to Commissioner Churchill, the Pilgrim Rest Historic Marker dedication ceremony, in Milan on Saturday, August 16, went off without a hitch. Several well-wishers were present, including Commissioner White and former HDC Commissioner Tom Dodd.

**5) Native American Trails Project**

Per Commissioners' request, *please see the enclosed materials* regarding the markers program opportunity with Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation.

**6) Workshop Series**

Please join us for the final workshop in the series of Washtenaw County/HDC/Michigan Historic Preservation Network workshops. A generic Historic District Commissioner Training will be lead by Kristine Kidorf of Kidorf Preservation Consulting. This workshop will take place on **Saturday, September 6**, at 10:00am at the Washtenaw County Library Learning Resource Center (LLRC), located at 4135 Washtenaw Avenue near US-23.

Respectfully Submitted,

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**Melissa Milton-Pung, Principal Preservation Planner**  
**Washtenaw County Department of Planning and Environment**