



# Royal Oak

## Agenda

### Royal Oak Historic District Study Committee Meeting

Thursday, October 17, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

City Hall Conference Room 116

203 South Troy Street

Royal Oak, MI 48067

Anyone planning to attend the meeting who has need of special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is asked to contact the city clerk's office at 248-246-3050 at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting.

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	a.    Website Updates	
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	Jeff Ridley and Chris Kraska	
	b.    Potential New Work	
	a.    WPA Murals at Dondero Middle School	
	Patrick Andras	

- b. Hartle Property on Sunnybrook  
Chris Kraska
  - c. Frederick Madison (architect) House  
Patrick Andras
  - d. New Candidates from Historic Context Study
- c. Ordinance and Bylaws

11. New Business

12. Committee Member Comments

- a. Historic Group Reports
  - a. Vinsetta Bridges Task Force
  - b. Historical Commission
  - c. Historic District Commission

13. Adjournment



# Royal Oak

Minutes

## Royal Oak Historic District Study Committee Meeting

June 20, 2024, 7:00 p.m.  
City Hall Conference Room 116  
203 South Troy Street  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Present: Chairperson Tammis Donaldson  
Patrick Andras  
Chris Kraska  
Jeffrey Ridley  
Eric Romain  
Leslie Snow  
Leo Derdelakos

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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tammis Donaldson at 7:05 pm.

### 2. Roll Call

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Eric Romain

Seconded by: Chris Kraska

Motion to approve the June 20, 2024 historic district study committee agenda approved.

Motion Adopted

### 4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: Chris Kraska

Seconded by: Eric Romain

Motion to approve the April 18 and May 16, 2024 historic district study committee meetings minutes approved.

Motion Adopted

### 5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

## **6. Historic Preservation Observations in Royal Oak**

### **6.a Lost**

#### **6.a.1 Forest Avenue Presentation by Eric Romain**

Thirty-three percent of houses have been demolished in the past twenty years. Feel it is time to begin to document all the houses photographically. The HDSC will also begin to include a "Documentation" category for future meeting

### **6.b Threatened**

#### **6.b.1 Forest Avenue Presentation by Eric Romain**

## **7. Unfinished Business**

### **7.a Historic Context Report: Review Period**

Chair Tammis Donaldson reported she had read the report and from her own family history she observed that women are underrepresented. This led her to propose a category "pioneering families" and get more of the underrepresented populations (such as the Hamer family). Chris Kraska noted that those who were "ordinary" people often have less of a record because they did not own property, yet still contributed. He also noted that minimal traditional Mid Century homes should be included. Members must send feedback to the Tammis Donaldson by Monday, July 15.

## **8. New Business**

### **8.a Marketing Preservation**

#### **8.a.1 City Website Updates, Corrections, and Additions**

Began correcting some inaccuracies. SL Schwanger was unable to update pictures; she will require more permissions and training.

#### **8.a.1.1 May 20th Work Session of the Marketing Group**

Leslie Snow will update the language on the FAQ sheet and make it more readable. A section for a checklist will be added.

#### **8.a.2 Clio Software and Royal Oak Minutes**

Tabled

### **8.b Potential New Work**

#### **8.b.1 WPA Murals at Dondero**

The process needs to be studied because the WPA Murals all belong to the federal government. Would like to study one that has already

been designated. Patrick Andras will call Gary Briggs to ask if he knows of any that have been designated. He will also ask Mr. Briggs about acquiring DVDs of the entire process of the restoration.

**8.b.2 Hartle Property on Sunnybrook**

On pause as HDSC is quite busy right now. Chair Donaldson requested Secretary Leslie Snow send a letter to the property owner. The HDSC will set up a site visit in the fall.

**8.b.3 Frederick Madison (architect) House**

Still no response from the property owner.

**8.b.4 Lockwood Presentation by Eric Romain**

Block has not had homes demolished, speculation would be because of the lot size. 28 homes on what's now known as Lockwood (formerly Guthrie). Built by Johnston-Brommell, Inc. (Dearborn or Detroit), 1926. Builder specialized in these types of all in one developments. All 28 still stand. 2 story frame construction. 4 distinct styles: Tudor-y gables with the chimney varying in placement due to what side of the street and how much sunlight the home would receive, therefore keeping sun out of bedrooms; bungalow style; Dutch colonial; side gable with attached porch.

**8.c Vinsetta Bridges Task Force**

**8.c.1 Documenting Existing Bridges**

**8.c.1.1 Laser Scan and As-build CAD Drawings by RAW3D**

Laser Scan will take place on Thursday June 26 at 10:00a.m. (June 27th is the rain date). All members are invited to attend and observe as the scan takes place.

SL Schwanger reported on grant application which would cover \$2000 or the \$2950 fee from the Civic Foundation. No word on if we received it yet. She will keep the HDSC members update.

**8.c.2 Treatment Program: Investigation in Progress**

**8.c.3 Town Hall Meeting July 31, 2024 and On-site Event**

Consideration will need to have an alternate site in case of weather issues. Time to start. How compact should the compact report be.

**9. Draft Bylaws with Ordinance Incorporated**

SL Schwanger is working through section 6. Members should review and provide feedback.

**10. Summer Schedule July and August Work Sessions**

July 18 and August 15, 7 pm, City Hall Room 116

**11. Historic Group Reports**

**11.a Historic District Commission**

**11.b Historical Commission**

Patrick Andras reported Civil War Day was great success. Excellent weather led to large attendance.

HC is planning 180th Year Celebration. Merger with HC and historical society (HS) is on hold as neither group wanted to do the merger, especially the HS who would have to really increase their fundraising to pay for maintenance of both properties.

The fence was recently repainted by the Eagle Scouts and the roof needs some repairs.

**12. Committee Member Comments**

Chris Kraska reported he went on tours of Frank Lloyd Wrights office in Oak Park, took river tour, park tour.

**13. Adjournment**

Moved by: Patrick Andras

Seconded by: Leslie Snow

Motion to adjourn at 9:04p.m. approved.

Motion Adopted



# Royal Oak

Minutes

## Royal Oak Historic District Study Committee Meeting

September 17, 2024, 7:00 p.m.  
City Hall Conference Room 116  
203 South Troy Street  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Present: Chairperson Tammis Donaldson  
Patrick Andras  
Chris Kraska  
Jeffrey Ridley  
Eric Romain  
Leslie Snow  
Leo Derdelakos

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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

### 2. Roll Call

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Chairperson Donaldson  
Seconded by: Patrick Andras

Motion to amend the September 17 2024 Historic District Study Committee Meeting agenda to table all matters with the exception of the discussion of the Historic Context Report approved.

### 4. Approval of Minutes

Tabled

### 5. Public Comment

There was no public comment

### 6. Review and Discussion of the Historic Context Study

John Schuttler from Chronicle Heritage was present to discuss and update the historic context report. Mr. Schuttler said he was hired by Chronicle shortly after on June 1 he was assigned the Royal Oak account. He gave his background which after receiving both a BA and MA from the University of Montana includes

33 years of experience of working on historic designation and reports including national designations and environmental litigation matters at historic sites. He is familiar with Royal Oka as his wife of 33 years is from RO and he has seen the growth of the community over those years.

The report as it stands now has done an adequate job of listing historic resources but in his opinion it lacks context. The context should explain how and why the City, as a whole, or an area whether geographic area, like a neighborhood or industrial park, or an individual resource came to be and how it fits into the context of Royal Oak. Not faulting the researchers who began the report, as they did a good job of expanding the listing of the historic resources, but he felt with the loss of our original Chronicle employee Elaine Robinson, it stopped at the research and failed to tie the resources together and this has left gaps. It is important to have the context to measure the resources against.

His plan will be to reassess the resources, explore and expand the context, and then refit the resources where they belong into the "story of Royal Oak". His plan resonated with all the members of the historic district study committee who want a comprehensive and well done report and not finished quickly but correctly.

Both Mr. Schuttler and the committee also agreed a large problem after Ms. Robinson's death was the lack of communication from Chronicle. That he will fix immediately with monthly progress reports beginning with the Oct 17 HDSC meeting. This update will start each meeting and be provided via Teams. The first order will be to provide an updated timeline of when we will receive a draft of the updated report; time Royal Oak will have for review and community engagement; and delivery of final report. He expects an updated report to be provided to Royal Oak in March of 2025.

## **7. Historic Preservation Observations in Royal Oak**

Tabled

### **7.a Endangered**

### **7.b Lost**

## **8. Historic Group Reports**

Tabled

### **8.a Historic District Commission**

### **8.b Historical Commission**

## **9. Unfinished Business**

Tabled

### **9.a Marketing Initiatives**

**9.b Potential New Work**

- 9.b.1 WPA Murals at Dondero
- 9.b.2 Hartle Property on Sunnybrook
- 9.b.3 Frederick Madison House
- 9.b.4 Lockwood Neighborhood

**9.c Vinsetta Bridges Task Force**

**9.d Bylaws**

**10. New Business**

There was no new business.

**11. Committee Member Comments**

Tabled

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24pm.

Oct 2024  
Lost

517 De Villen Blvd  
b.1917, but is it  
Earlier?



2303 Ferncliff  
Northwood Sub  
b. 1927



3328 Starr  
b.1950



3503 Woodland  
b.1949



3815 Kent  
b.1950



# Threatened

713 W. Farnum  
Overlooking Meininger Park  
b. 1924



Farhat Homes website

Description

# Starr Presbyterian Church -



Royal Oak Residents For Royal Oak

Stephanie Granny Smith · Sep 30 ·

...

## What is to become of Starr Church Part I

A few posts have speculated on what is to become of Starr Presbyterian Church, the church on the corner of 13 Mile and Crooks. It is true, our church is closing. We have been preparing for this for the last three years. Our congregation looked at all kinds of different options. Ultimately, we decided to join another church (more on that in Part II).

When a local Presbyterian church closes, the property is typically controlled by the Presbytery of Detroit (similar to the Archdiocese for Catholics). The property is then often sold. Our congregation did not want that to happen. We know the property's worth and have had it appraised. The most likely result would be to sell the property and then see it turned into more high-end housing. After 174 years, our congregation wanted the Lord's work to continue at 13 Mile and Crooks. To that end, the building will remain open to host its current and future tenants that support the ongoing mission.

Our church currently rents space to many tenants, including Song and Spirit Institute for Peace and the Taiwanese Presbyterian Fellowship, both religious organizations that will continue to worship in the building. One of our other tenants is South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless (SOCH) which operates the Welcome Inn Day Center.

The Welcome Inn provides homeless day center services and meals from 7 am to 7 pm during the winter months for approximately 30 guests. SOCH also organizes a rotation of seven to nine churches that provide overnight accommodations for the homeless during the winter months. This past summer, The Welcome Inn was also able to provide day center services and meals four days a week thanks to a one-time grant of \$50,000 from the City of Royal Oak.

Many smaller renters will continue to use the facility including several Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon groups. On occasion, the site also hosts various community groups in need of a place to meet.

The members of Starr Church have spent the last year working out a lease agreement where the property will remain owned by the Presbytery of Detroit while giving SOCH a ground lease for the next 20 years for \$1 per year. SOCH will take over control of the building and continue to rent to our current tenants. This will allow SOCH to extend their current homeless assistance services, such as adding showers, a laundry facility, and possibly a few apartments for transitional housing. The attorneys finalized the contracts this past week and the SOCH lease has been signed!

Everyone at Starr Church is beyond excited. We hope this will serve as a model for other churches who are in a similar position. The goal is to provide more localized services for our homeless neighbors and reduce some of the stigma associated with large shelters.

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In a recent post, there was some speculation on what was going to become of our church. Someone commented that if it became a year-round shelter, they would be there every day to help. Well, SOCH needs your help now. Unless they find replacement funds for the City's one-time grant, they will not be able to fully operate the day center next summer.

How can you help? Sign-up to volunteer at The Welcome Inn Volunteer | SOCHhomeless ([sochwi.org](http://sochwi.org)), or [donate](#) to SOCH at [Donate | Welcome Inn Day Center](#) ([sochwi.org](http://sochwi.org)). Funds are always needed given the ongoing uncertainty of government funding. They are still looking for a few additional churches to sponsor a week of overnight accommodations this coming winter.

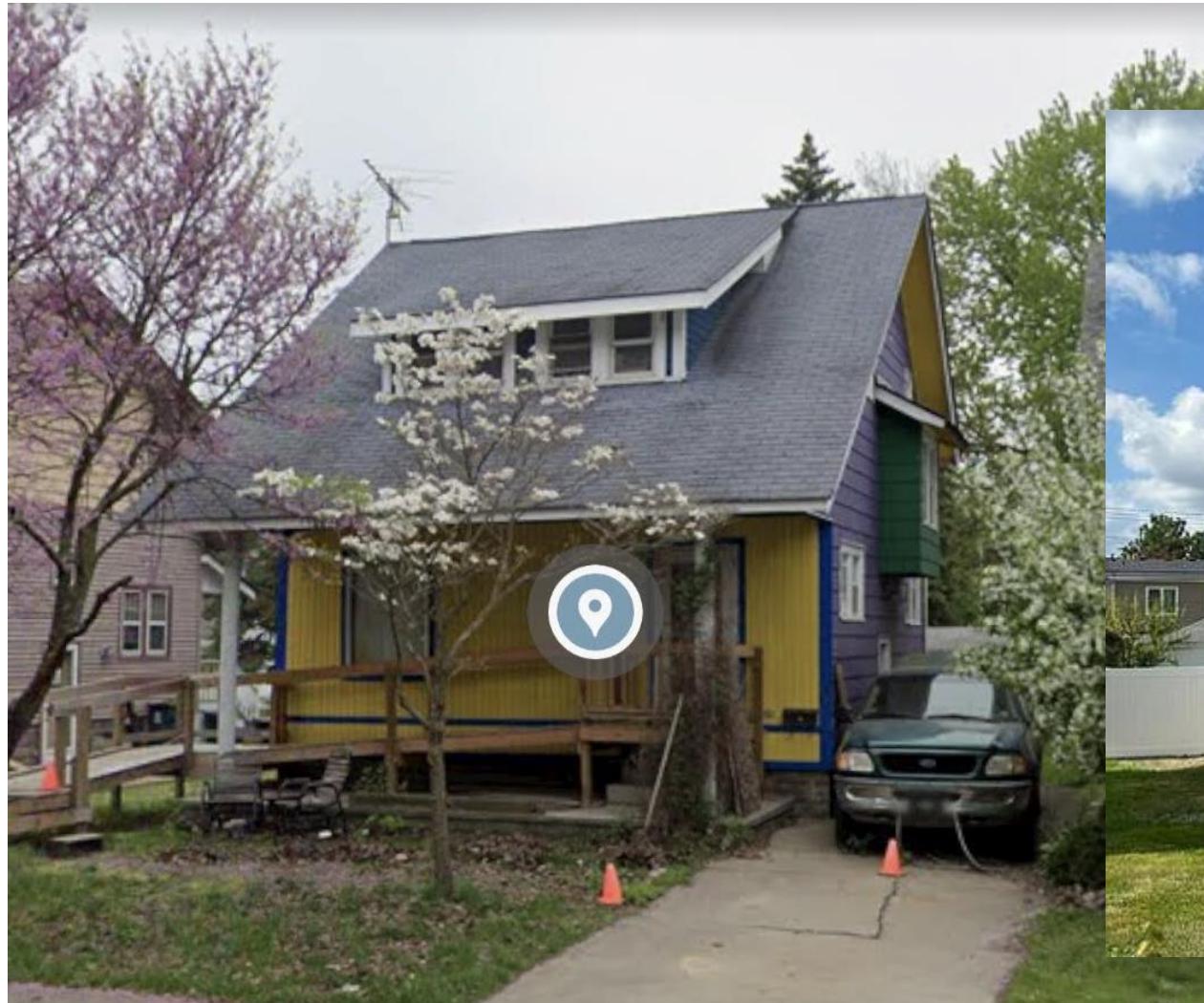
Come join us at Starr Church for our final worship service on Sunday, October 13th at 1:30pm. The final offering collection will be donated to SOCH. There will be representatives from SOCH present to answer your questions. If you plan to attend, please let our church office know at [office@starrchurch.org](mailto:office@starrchurch.org) so we can plan for refreshments. We hope to see you on the 13th. For those who are currently looking for a church to join, we will share where we decided to go and why in Part II.



# Saved – Good observations

314 S. Laurel

Nice masonry porch detail reconstruction



1123 N Pleasant  
Nice new paint

