



## Minutes

### Royal Oak Historic District Study Committee Meeting

May 16, 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 Chair Tammis Donaldson at 7:06 p.m.

#### 2. Roll Call

#### 3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Leslie Snow

Seconded by: Jeffrey Ridley

Motion to approve the May 16 2024 Historic District Study Committee meeting agenda with the following changes: Potential New work WPA Murals moves before Approval of Minutes for special guest Gary Briggs to present; Approval of Minutes Tabled; Historic Preservation Observations Tabled; Potential New Work Lockwood Neighborhood Tabled; was approved.

#### 4. WPA Murals at Dondero

Gary Briggs former Royal Oak School District Board of Education President and Member. Mr. Briggs was serving as president and part of the leadership to Save the Murals. Mr. Briggs detailed the timeline and process for the restoration and installation of the murals in the auditorium at Royal Oak Middle School (then Dondero High School) between 2003-2005.

#### 5. Approval of Minutes

Tabled during Approval of Agenda.

**6. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

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

Tabled during Approval of Agenda.

**7.a Lost**

7.a.1 Forest Avenue Presentation by Eric Romain

**7.b Endangered**

7.b.1 Forest Avenue Presentation by Eric Romain

**8. Unfinished Business**

**8.a Historic Context Report Status**

Staff Liaison Schwanger read emails received from Chronicle stating they would deliver the Historic Context Report on Friday May 17, 2024. This is not the first date the City has received for the delivery of the HCR and SL Schwanger and Chair Donaldson will keep HDSC members updated.

**9. New Business**

**9.a Marketing Preservation**

9.a.1 City Website Updates, Corrections, and Additions

9.a.1.1 May 20th Work Session

Work session will begin at 5pm in conference room 116. SL Schwanger let members know she will be there at 5pm and stay as long as members want to continue to work. HDSC members can arrive later if they need. She will have her laptop. Chair Donaldson suggested to members if they have laptops to bring as well.

9.a.2 HDSC Google Drive Review: Single Sign Up

No progress to report. Will be part of the Monday May 20th work session - Leslie Snow will be available to address this at the WS.

9.a.3 Clio Software and Royal Oak Minute

Jeff Ridley presented the work he has done on the Clio Website Software. It is a free third-party website software which we could link to the city's website on the historic pages. Jeff had prepared a page using the Orson Starr House Museum Historic District. The page displays a picture, short description, map and has ability to create and track attendance at events, especially helpful as the OSHM hosts events conducted by the Historical Commission including Sunday

Open Houses; Civil War Day; Holiday Open House; and Ghost Tours. The HDSC can utilize this site to better share and showcase our historic properties via social media. Jeff also shared a sample "Royal Oak Minute." Members gave feedback to tweak for next time.

## **9.b Potential New Work**

### **9.b.1 Hartle Property on Sunnybrook**

Nothing further to report as no progress has been made on the research for this property or adjoined in a historic district with surrounding properties to meet the criteria for designation. A site visit will be scheduled for the summer or early fall.

### **9.b.2 Oakwood School**

The school district seems to be conducting their own celebrations for the school and has not sought the input of the HDSC.

### **9.b.3 Architect Frederick Madison House on Woodcrest**

No progress as the property owner has not reached out after the letter was personally delivered. Patrick Andras will follow up.

### **9.b.4 Lockwood Neighborhood**

Tabled as Eric Romain had to leave the meeting early.

#### **9.b.4.1 Presentation by Eric Romain**

## **9.c Vinsetta Bridges Historic District Task Force**

### **9.c.1 Treatment Program Update of Investigation and Process**

SL Schwanger reported she has the invoice approved to have RAW 3D conduct the study which will include: 3D laser scanning, scan registration set-up, and 2 D Auto CAD drafting for all four bridges. The RO Civic Foundation is offering \$2000 grants (the study cost is \$2950) and SL Schwanger will be applying to recover the majority of the costs if the grant application is successful.

Chair Donaldson gave a summary on the task force May 7th visit to the bridges which the study was discussed and follow-up will include a town hall meeting with the neighborhood once the study is completed. Many neighbors stopped to ask why the group was at the sites and offered support for the bridges. Historic District Commission member Paul Bastian uses software to generate mailing lists and will create the list for the town hall meeting. The Task Force would like to have an event at one of the bridges, possibly including an historic vehicle, some time this summer. Leslie Snow will prepare a draft of a compact designation report to be shared with attendees or those interested in the rehabilitation.

**9.d Michigan World War II Memorial Historic Trail**

SL Schwanger showed an example of the Farmington plaque that has been presented. She asked Chair Donaldson to have the group research sites in Royal Oak which would qualify. This may include manufacturing plant sites; or significant events such as celebrities doing War Bond Drives; prominent government programs.

**10. Historic District Study Committee Ordinance and Bylaws**

SL Schwanger will prepare a draft of the model bylaws approved by the city commission and provide to HDSC members via email to discuss at the June meeting. Many of the provisions called for in the model bylaws are already in place in Municipal Code Chapter 82 Historic Preservation.

**11. Summer Meeting Schedule**

Discussed conducting meetings or work sessions or combination of both over the summer months. Currently three meetings are scheduled: June 20; July 18; and August 15. The schedule will stand as it is and meetings will change to work sessions as needed.

**12. Historic Group Reports**

**12.a Historic District Commission**

Chair Donaldson reported earlier regarding the Vinsetta Bridges Historic District Task Force which is comprised of three members of the HDC and three members of the HDSC. She and Chris Kraska attended the April 18th HDC meeting to discuss the task force objects.

**12.b Historical Commission**

Patrick Andras invited everyone to attend Civil War Day on Saturday May 18th at the Orson Starr House Museum. There will be reenactors; two Civil War era cannons on the display; band will play from 1 to 3pm. Members of the historical commission and historical society working group will meet with Susan Barkman, assistant to the city manager, regarding the potential merger of the two groups. The HC would be dissolved with the HS managing both properties as a private 501(c) 3. Many topics to discuss with the primary concerns of both groups being funding and personnel to maintain the properties.

**13. Committee Member Comments**

**13.a Michigan Historic Preservation Network 2024 Annual Conference**

**14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32p.m.

Moved by: Leslie Snow

Seconded by: Chris Kraska

Motion to adjourn at 9:32p.m. approved.

Motion Adopted