



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

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 Oak 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.