

Minutes
Farmington Hills Historic District Commission
City of Farmington Hills
November 8, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.
Farmington Hills City Hall – Community Room
31555 W. Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills MI 48336
Website: www.fhgov.com : Phone (248)871-2540

1. Meeting called to order by Chairperson Tulas at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Alec Thomson, John Trafelet, Marleen Tulas, Steve Olson

Members Absent: Jim Paulson, Ken Klemmer

Others Present: Duncan Thomson (Resident), Kris Canty (Planning & Community Development Department), Emily and Colin Howard (Residents)

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by John Trafelet, support by Steve Olson.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. New Business

A. Board and Commission 2024 Meeting Dates/Location Submission

Kris supplied possible dates (see below) for 2024 meetings.

Motion by John Trafelet to approve the following meeting dates and times for the commission to meet in 2024. Support by Steve Olson.

Motion carried unanimously.

2024 HDC Meeting Dates

1. January 10 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
2. February 14 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
3. March 13 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
4. April 10 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
5. May 8 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
6. June 12 (6:30 p.m. @ TBD)
7. July 10 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
8. August 14 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
9. September 11 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
10. October 9 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
11. November 13 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)
12. December 11 (6:30 p.m. @ City Hall)

B. Historic District Proposed Blue Book Edits

Duncan Thomson presented the Commission with the results of his work in editing the Historic District Blue to provide updates to the entries. Specifically, this includes properties #501 – 520. To complete this work Duncan visited all the sites and conducted detailed research in city records to verify and update the entries.

The Commission expressed its appreciation for the work and effort Duncan undertook to improve the entries.

Motion by John Trafelet to continue this discussion in the December meeting.
Support by Steve Olson.
Motion carried unanimously.

5. Old Business

A. Master Plan Update

Chairperson Tulas will be attending the Master Plan meeting on November 16th at the Hawk (9:30am) to communicate the perspective of the HDC.

B. Cemetery Plan Update

Steve Olson and John Trafelet presented updates on the restoration work that was recently undertaken at the Farmington West Cemetery. David Carter repaired approximately 9 headstones. They also highlighted headstones that are lined up for repair in 2024 when the weather is more suitable for the epoxy work. The hope is that estimates for this new work will be submitted shortly.

Steve and John met with DPW to discuss the damage caused by current lawn cutting efforts to the headstones. Work will continue to find new approaches to making the maintenance less damaging.

The meeting with DPW also involved a discussion about developing signage for the cemetery to document restoration work being done at both West and Utley cemeteries.

Motion by Alec Thomson to have DPW produce two signs (one for each cemetery) that carries the design and message submitted by Steve and John. Support by Steve Olson.
Motion carried unanimously.

Alec Thomson reported on the continued work from his history class (Schoolcraft College) at Farmington West. The class has made several field trips to the site and has been collecting headstone data for upload to the Internet. This work is being done in conjunction with Matt Malone.

C. Nehemiah Hoyt House (36668 Howard) Update

Chairperson Tulas reported that the City went to court to have the current owners (HUD) address needed repairs to the property. Neither HUD nor the current management (BLM Co. LLC) company showed up at the hearing. Chairperson Tulas asserted that this is a case of demolition by neglect. Commissioner Olson reported that the best hope here is for the house to be placed on the market for a new homeowner to take it over and get it restored. He is going to call the phone number posted on the building to get information about its status.

D. Mid-Century Modern Project

Chairperson Tulas reported that she met with Jim Paulson and Alec Thomson on the work being undertaken regarding identifying historic properties for preservation in the Holly Hill Farms subdivision. Rather than try and designate the entire subdivision as a historic district, work should be done to identify specific homes for designation. As such, there are several properties that would be strong candidates for possible designation. The subcommittee is going to undertake some survey work on these properties in anticipation of hearing back from the property owners.

A suggestion has been made to create a sign for the Holly Hill subdivision highlighting the significance of the housing development. This could be placed at the entrance to the subdivision. This would be something that falls under the purview of the Historical Commission.

6. Points of Interest/Updates

7. Correspondence

None received.

8. Public Comment

None

9. Commissioner Comments

Chairperson Tulas invited Emily Howard to join the Commission. Emily expressed her interest and willingness to serve. Emily will send a letter of interest to the city (Kris Canty).

10. Approval of Minutes – October 11, 2023

Motion to approve minutes made by Steve Olson with correction on page #2 to change Spicer House reference to Longacre House, supported by John Trafelet.
Motion carried unanimously.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Chairperson Tulas, supported by Steve Olson.
Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment at 8:12 pm