

FARMINGTON HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
31555 WEST ELEVEN MILE ROAD
FARMINGTON HILLS, MI 48336
SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

CALLED TO ORDER BY: CHAIR TULAS AT 6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: TULAS, KLEMMER, TRAFELET, PAULSON, THOMSON, OLSON.

MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kris Canty (Planning Department Liaison); Valerie Knol (City Council Liaison); Leslie Pielack (Museum Director in Birmingham); Leslie Pielack (Museum Director in Birmingham); and Frank Murray (Director Facilities Management for Corewell Health – Botsford Inn).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Trafelet, support by Klemmer.

Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion to amend agenda to bring forward Freedom Acres Project.

Motion by Tulas, support by Olson.

Motion carried unanimously.

A. Freedom Acres Project – Leslie Pielack

Leslie provided an update on Underground Railroad Project in Oakland County. The National Park Service (NPS) has a program to recognize Underground Railroad sites. The current project is a multi-community project to study and acquire primary source material to support Underground Railroad in Southern Oakland County Project (Funded in part by the Michigan Humanities Council). The project's focus is on both abolitionists and freedom seekers. The project will culminate in a 3-year travelling exhibit and construction of an educational interactive website. Farmington Hills would have a chance to host the exhibit. You can look at the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site for information on sites locally and the site is a model for the current project. There exists the possibility for Wilson House (Freedom Acres) designation. Leslie is willing to assist and edit the application.

B. New 2023-2024 Budget

The City Council has added \$10,000 to the HDC budget for 2023-24. The new budget total is \$12,500. We will work with contractor to repair (epoxy) additional headstones.

Motion to allocate \$6,000 of the budget for tombstone repairs via contractor. Public works and city officials will work with contractors and HDC to determine sites for repair, work to be done and costs.

Motion by Olson, support by Trafelet.
Motion carried unanimously.

C. New Tombstone Repair

Discussion on this subject was undertaken in previous New Business section. Commissioner Trafelet mentioned that he met with Emily Howard at the West Cemetery. She has family buried in the cemetery and has an interest serving on the Historic District Commission.

OLD BUSINESS:

No Old Business.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

A. Farmington Hills Master Plan Update

Kris Canty indicated that work on it was expected to be done by early 2024. They are currently in the engagement phase and the city is meeting with all the commissions and councils. The last Master Plan was completed in 2009. There is a chance to add a Historic District Section to the Master Plan to promote awareness and visibility of the Historic Districts. Kris asked for the committee to submit a minimum of 10 things the HDC wanted included on the Master Plan. Submit this after the next HDC (October 2023) meeting.

Motion to host a special session of the HDC to meet and generate ideas for inclusion in the Master Plan. The meeting will be held on October 4th at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Motion by Thomson, support by Klemmer.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. West Cemetery Restoration Update

There will be a cemetery cleanup at West on October 28, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

C. Botsford Update

Frank Murray provided an update on work at Botsford Inn. All work has been completed with the last item to be installed is a deadbolt on the door. This has been ordered and will be installed shortly. Frank shared a picture of the property from 1921. The Commission requested receiving a copy of the picture for the city files. Commissioner Tulas expressed the commission's happiness with the work that was done.

Motion to approve the work done at the Botsford Inn as fulfilling the requirements of the COA.

Motion by Trafelet, support by Paulson.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Mid-Century Modern Designation Update

The subcommittee will be meeting with Katie Kolokithas (Historic Resources Survey Coordinator) from Michigan SHPO to look at Holly Hill Farms on September 15, 2023. Katie will offer her assessment of the area to suggest possible designations for consideration as entire unit or individual properties.

CORRESPONDENCE:

No Correspondence.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No Public Comments.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Olson expressed his appreciation for the presentation by Leslie Pielack.

Commissioner Thomson reported that his history class at Schoolcraft College has been on site at the West Cemetery conducting a class project to catalog and document the gravesites at the cemetery. They will be there on site throughout September and October.

Commissioner Trafelet reported that he and Commissioner Tulas met the owner of North Farmington Cemetery at a conference.

Commissioner Paulson inquired about the upkeep and maintenance at the Sarah Fisher property. There is a current issue surrounding the current sewer infrastructure's ability to support the proposed development.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – (June 14, 2023)

Motion made to approve the minutes.
Motion by Olson, supported by Trafelet.
Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Unanimous proclamation at 8:55 PM

Submitted by Kris Canty (09/14/2023)