

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
MAY 8, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.**

The Farmington Hills Historic District Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Tulas at 6:30pm.

Members Present: Tulas, Thomson, Howard, Trafelet, Olson, Paulson

Members Absent: Klemmer

Others Present: Kris Canty (Planning & Community Development Department)
Carl & Marjorie Censoni (Owners of the Drake House)
Kim Sivakumar (Owner of the Lawrence Simmons House)
Christopher Newman (Owner of the Lone Ranger House)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Olson, support by Trafelet.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

NEW BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness 24-2

Historic District Site: HD#301 – Lawrence Simmons House
Location: 33742 Twelve Mile Road
Applicant: Paramount Fence Company
Owner: Sivakumar Properties
Proposal: Installing 321 feet of a six (6)-foot tan vinyl privacy fence.
Removing the existing wood fence in same location.

Kim Sivakumar (property owner) described the fence and the scope of the project. This involves the removal of an existing fence and replacement. The existing fence is in very bad shape. The existing property is being used as a business (offices) and the fence is to provide buffer to neighbors. The property owner stated that the neighbors supported the installation of the new fence. The property to the east will have the fence on the neighbor's property and as such the two parties have entered into a written agreement over fence ownership and costs.

Chair Tulas expressed that she found the choice of materials (vinyl) unappealing.

Motion by Olson to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness (24-2), as it is supported by Secretary of Interior standards #9 and #10, support by Trafelet.

Motion CARRIED 5 – 1

B. Certification of Appropriateness 24-3

Historic District Site: HD#17 – Lone Ranger House
Location: 24105 Locust Street
Applicant: Christopher Newman
Owner: Christopher Newman
Proposal: Installing sixteen (16) new windows on the second story.

Chris Newman (property owner) described the installation of new windows on the 2nd story on the house. The intent is to replace the windows and use the sashes from upstairs to restore the lower windows to their original condition. There are 62 windows in the house and only approximately 10 are working. The original portion of the house was built in 1850. The most recent additions are from the 1930s. He has future plans to fix the sinking front porch. The house is sided in wood and the new windows will be trimmed in wood too; the windows should slide into the existing trim slots.

Motion by Olson to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness (24-3), as it is supported by Secretary of Interior standards #5, #6, #9, and #10, support by Paulson.

Motion carried 6 – 0

C. Approval of 2024-2025 Budget Requests

The Budget Request for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 as submitted by the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission focuses on two areas of interest and concern to the Commission:

- \$10,000 – Cemetery Preservation and Repair. Efforts to continue in the two city owned cemeteries with concentration focused in the Utley (East) Cemetery (HD #900) where over 40 markers are either broken or show improper earlier repairs using iron braces.
- \$4500 – Spicer House at Heritage Park Preservation Plan. Development of a

comprehensive Preservation Plan for the long-term maintenance of the Spicer House (HD #508) in Heritage Park. The detailed plan to be developed by an accredited, professional with experience with historic structures, detailing both structural and cosmetic needs.

The Commission expressed its continued concern over the integrity of the Nehemiah Hoyt house. The home needs immediate remediation (tarping) to protect the existing structure from further deterioration. However, the ambiguity over the current ownership of the property renders the Commission with little recourse. The city is encouraged to continue pursuing action on this matter to ensure that this historic property is not lost through neglect.

Motion by Paulson, to approve the amended 2024-25 Budget request, supported by Olson.

Motion carried 6 – 0.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business to address.

POINTS OF INTEREST/UPDATES

Nehemiah Hoyt House Update

The HDC is asking the city to continue working on establishing clear ownership of the property and push forward with steps to preserve the integrity of the home. See the note above in the new business section entitled “2024-2025 Budget Request”.

Spicer House Update

Ken Klemmer can provide an update on this property at the next HDC meeting. Kris presented a copy of the city sponsored report (Adaptive Re-use Survey) created in 1987 by J. Michael Kirk that he located.

HDC Conditions Tracking

Commission members should report their property updates to Steve Olson so he can track their observations. Steve Olson suggested standardizing review language that members can use to record various property status updates to the group. Steve will send out a draft on this language to the Commission members.

Cemetery Work Update and Work Dates

Trafelet presented an update on the restoration work that David Carter has started at the West Cemetery. Pictures of the progress were shared with the commissioners. Payment for the work will be made after inspections by Trafelet and Olson. On April 20th a work session was conducted at the East Cemetery which included the unveiling of the new signage, by Mayor Rich, thanking those who have done the work at the site.

Olson reported that they had met last week with the city to address estimates submitted for restoration work at Utley including those from Loving Legacy (out of Flint). These bids are being shared with the Purchasing Department. There is \$4100 left in the budget and the Commission should consider spending of this money for restoration work at Utley pending the outcome of discussions with the Purchasing Department.

Motion by Olson, to approve the spending of the remaining \$4100 in the current budget to undertake restoration work at Utley Cemetery pending approval of Loving Legacy as a vendor, support by Paulson.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

Plans are being put in motion to fix the shed roof at West Cemetery. The cedar shake roof on the shed at Utley needs to be cleaned.

Howard presented an idea for hosting an event at the West Cemetery around Halloween (maybe October 27th) to spark interest and educate the public about the history of the cemetery and burials in general.

CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marjorie Censoni inquired about the need to secure a certificate of appropriateness to paint their home. Steve Olson informed her that this would be considered maintenance and does not require a certificate of appropriateness.

Carl Censoni indicated that they had a company coming out to look at the barn on the property to recommend steps to preserve the structure. They are considering their options to fix some of the fence and install landscape screening.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

TULAS: None.

KLEMMER: None.

THOMSON: None.

PAULSON: Paulson reported receiving a phone call from a homeowner in Holly Hills whose house was under consideration for possible historic designation. They were still interested in discussing a possible designation.

TRAFELET: Trafelet reported that he and Steve Olson were discussing the possibility of adding park benches and possible era appropriate landscaping to the cemeteries.

OLSON: None.

HOWARD: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – (APRIL 10, 2024)

Motion to approve minutes made by Trafelet, supported by Olson.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Paulson, support by Trafelet.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

8:00 PM

Submitted by Alec Thomson (May 8, 2024)