

Oakland County Historical Commission Minutes

7:00 pm, June 12, 2023

BOC Conference Room

- I. Roll call –meeting called to order at 7:15. Present: Rosie Richardson, Jerry Murphy, Kathy Mutch, Dave Decker, Stephanie Arwady. Absent: Carol Egbo, Dave Walls, Jim Craft, George Milne.
- II. Approve Minutes from May 8, 2023 – motion made by Rosie to approve, seconded by Jerry. Minutes approved.
- III. Additions to the agenda – discuss AASLH national visitation report (Dave D); addition to agenda approved
- IV. Old Business
 - a. Preservation
 1. Preservation Committee
 - Carol – Update - tabled
 - Alternatives
 2. At Risk Properties
 - a) Rochester School – Jerry – reached out to RCSD’s PR department and Tiffany Dzurman (Rochester Avon) and learned that all developer proposals have been turned down so far; could a recent project in Grosse Pointe be a good example of keeping historical details while repurposing the building? Jerry will follow up with RAHS to see why the national historic marker designation proposal failed and offer OCHC support for a reapplication
 - b. Facebook status – Stephanie and Tec Dave – start with posts to draw traffic to the website and share events posted by local historical societies, encourage Coalition members to tag OCHC in their posts
 - c. “1857 Land ownership map”
 1. George update on copying U of M map – tabled
 - d. History Coalition Meeting – Tec Dave
 1. Next Meeting Date/Location – TBD; Royal Oak Historical Society had volunteered but had elevator trouble. Should reach out to ROHS and see if they are available for third week of the month or send a Google poll to see when majority are available to meet.
 2. Determine long term scheduling of Coalition meeting – Dave Decker would like OCHC to help find a new chair for Coalition and get it more organized. Any OCHC member can reach out to Coalition via the email list (65+ strong!), it doesn’t have to just be Dave! Coalition maybe also needs a unifying cause – 2026 is right around the corner... Goal of having Coalition meet once every other month
 3. Agenda Ideas – host society and Coalition members can add item(s) to the agenda; a lot of agenda ideas can come from OCHC – at-risk properties discussions, events calendar, etc.
 - e. 2024 Local History Conference – OCHC Presentation Ideas-continue discussion of possibilities. 2024? 2025? – Rosie suggests a session on our at-risk properties resource guide; Kathy is on HSM’s LHC conference planning committee, which will meet before the end of the year to choose speakers and general topics – can we have a few historical societies combine to give one presentation on their preservation projects, etc. Kathy will get date of planning session so that OCHC can submit proposal beforehand. OCHC members – come to next meeting with some ideas for 2024 proposal! Can also add to agenda for next Coalition meeting – what types of sessions would members like to see?
 - f. Renewal of Membership: Oakland County Historical Resource Network – vote to continue as Associate Members
 1. ~~Pass \$0~~
 2. Continue as Associate member \$50 – do this for now; consider upgrading membership in the future
 3. Become a Member \$200 (maybe in the future)
- V. Committee reports
 - a. Web site: - Tec Dave, Stephanie, Jim
 1. <https://www.oakgov.com/history>
 2. Additions:
 - a) Migration Poster QRC material link. Other additions people would like to create?
 - b) Calendar status – Steph to ask Coalition to submit short paragraph and web/FB link to events, location, date, time, fee
 - c) Research Tools status – Dave D is developing a resource guide on where people can find local historical resources, info on local historical events, points of interest in the county (i.e. Rochester Knitting Mills) and how researchers can use land records to conduct genealogy projects; Dave and Carol working on historical house research guide.

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3. More to add:
 - a) Dave's 1857 Ledger – Dave – the list of where 1857 maps list
 - b) Historic house research guide – Carol/Tec Dave; based on work Carol has done with Ron Campbell to help researchers date their historic houses based on specific features, etc.
 - c) User game: present day pictures of the 1877 lithographs?? And/or identify what's "wrong" with the lithos – train running through a backyard, croquet games on everyone's front lawn
 - d) Libraries with Local History Collections – add a tab to County History Resources section. Communication to libraries asking if they have a Local History Collection and if they would like historical talks, etc., added to the calendar??
 - e) Links??
 - i. Sanborn maps?? Dave D has all of those / links to this collection in LOC
 - ii. Historical sites in the county. Link to Michigan History Center site with all state markers.
<https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/HistoricalMarkers/>
- b. Local History as a subset of American History - Jim, Stephanie, Rosie
 1. Great Migration Poster Status– Rosie/George – in progress; Rosie found local history resources at Pontiac Public Library very useful
 2. Poster 4 – volunteers – Dave D & Rosie – "Early Oakland County" – can start working Nov/Dec on this
 3. Looking to limit text on future posters for maximum readability
- c. African American history - Rosie, Carol – will meet June 22 re: information from the grant; Rosie has material on Newman AME Church and gravesites.
- d. Essay contest and time capsule- Rosie – needs to buy a time capsule and give info to Superintendent
- VI. New Business
 - a. AASLH's 2023 National Visitation Report – Dave D. – survey of local historical societies shows trends in visitation, which was increasing before pandemic; post-pandemic, visitation is on the rise again. Good info to share with Coalition. Is OCHC an organizational/institutional member of AASLH? Discuss at next meeting.
 - b. Discussion on OCHC budget – should we ask for more? – and visibility with County Commission – can we work with Commissioners to encourage them to promote OCHC within their districts?
 - c. Other distribution locations for posters – could the two senior centers in Pontiac be added? City halls? Other places in addition to libraries?
 - d. As we distribute new set of posters to locations, take a picture of the current one and/or ask other people to take pics of the posters at their local library, etc.
- VII. Confirm action items from today's meeting – Dave will reach out to ROHS re: date for next Coalition meeting and if they're not available then he will check with Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen; Dave will look into benefits of upgrading to a full membership with OCHR to see if we want to upgrade and will follow up with JoAnne Stringfellow; Rosie will get a cost on time capsule; Steph will email Coalition and ask them for their events for the calendar; Everyone – agenda idea for Coalition, and ideas for website content including pics of local history posters in their location
- VIII. Meeting adjourned at 8:57pm.
- IX. Next meeting: July 10, 2023.