

Oakland County Historical Commission Minutes

7:00 pm, April 8, 2024

BOC Conference Room

- I. **Roll call** – Present: Egbo, Milne, Mutch, Arwady, Richardson, Murphy. Absent: Decker, Walls.
- II. **Additions/changes to this agenda; acceptance of the agenda** – will address items that were tabled last month
- III. **Approve Minutes from March 11, 2024** – Move Richardson, Second Murphy, motion carries, minutes approved.
- IV. **Report on 3/14/24 BOC Presentation (Egbo)** – Went well, Decker did a great job streamlining slides and reiterating how we can help the BOC. Question asked re: Roosevelt School. Gwen Markham complimented OCHC and recommended BOC listen to Egbo's Fireside Chats. Decker's presentation was well-received. **Decker to give a report on this next month.**
- V. **Report on HSM Local History Conference:** Egbo, Richardson, Decker, and Stamps attended; during this year's conference, Richardson and Decker discussed submitting a presentation on Wisner House and OCPHS's work there for next year. Richardson collected materials from vendors and ideas for resources OCHC can link to/provide on our website. Egbo reported OCHC table was in a good location.
 - a. Mutch suggested someone from OCHC join the planning committee to ensure that Oakland County history commission/historical societies are represented as speakers/presentation proposals are selected. **Table further discussion for next meeting.**
- VI. **Old Business**
 - a. Potential new commission members: Decker and Egbo have reached out to Ron Campbell and believe he will apply. Milne has a former student who could also be a good fit (when looking to fill future vacancies on commission). Mutch suggested inviting OU upper-division History students to attend OCHC meeting(s) to see what we're about. Milne suggested Murphy help vet them. **Continue discussion next month.**
 - b. Funding request
 - c. Time Capsule update (Richardson) – Richardson will discuss expectations for the project with Tracie Teasley, Partnership Agreement Liaison State of MI. Egbo suggested bumping this in to 2026, to go with the American Semiquincentennial 250th anniversary.
 - d. Certificate of thanks to Jim Craft – Decker to send to JoAnn for Coulter's signature.
- VII. **Committee Reports**
 - a. History Coalition (Egbo) – 4/24/24 at 1pm-3pm Bowers Farm in Bloomfield, theme of preserving and maintaining historical structures.
 - b. Cemetery Coalition (Egbo) – 4/11/24 1pm-3pm at Waterford Oaks Activity Center and North Farmington Cemetery will discuss recruiting and training volunteers, new techniques for repairing stones.
 - c. At-Risk Properties
 - i. Rochester High School (Murphy) – City of Rochester had presented a plan to the school board to move their offices into the building; will be voted on by the community in November
 - ii. Roosevelt Elementary School (Egbo) – school board voted to demolish; injunction has been brought forth which may delay demolition for now

- iii. Milne – could OCHC use Google Forms or similar to start an At-Risk Properties list to keep updated information in a consistent way (perhaps Decker could set up this database). Local historical societies and historic districts (likely through the Coalition) could provide information about their at-risk properties, and we could house it centrally in our database. Egbo suggested that people can email the commission and Milne suggested giving a link to a Google Form so people could submit this information. Commissioners can be contacted and made aware of endangered historic structures in their area. **Egbo will put this on Coalition agenda, to see if members are interested and willing to contribute to the database. Continue discussion next month.**
- d. 1857 Map Digitization – this item is complete, take off agenda for next month
- e. Local history as a subset of American History – this is the Poster Project, see below
- f. African American History (Egbo) – Phase 2 of UGRR grant; Commerce, White Lake, Oxford/Orion, and Avon have been added. Display is scheduled through 2024.
- g. Poster Project
 - i. The Great Migration poster Milne and Richardson is ready for County to update within their style guidelines (Decker was to let County know and get the ball rolling); Egbo said Milne and Richardson can give some input on design.
 - 1. Egbo suggested launching this poster in conjunction with Juneteenth at Oakland History Center, with press conference, etc. This will give libraries something cool to post for Juneteenth.
 - ii. Mutch asked about posters in libraries – some have swapped out first poster with second (that was the original idea), but others have displayed both side by side. Mutch suggested making the posters available digitally, regardless of what the libraries do with their physical copies. They are currently on the OCHC site.
 - iii. Starting with the Great Migration poster, this is basically a re-launch of the poster project idea. Can Decker to reach out to Pam Tremble’s replacement to arrange County involvement in printing new series of posters?
- h. Essay Contest – didn’t happen, remove from agenda
- i. Time Capsule – see discussion above (Old Business)
- j. Website
 - i. Poster project PDFs are available on our site at:
<https://www.oakgov.com/government/historical-commission/poster-project>
 - ii. Mutch and Egbo pointed out that sites put on the National Register of Historic Places website stay there – even if they’re demolished! Could we pull Oakland County properties from National Register and/or use their structure for our database? Egbo noted that we could at least use their form questions. Milne wants their data. **Milne will check and see what is available.**
- k. Preservation – Workshop, Historic House Preservation Guide. MHPN, Dept. of Interior, etc. have one; Egbo suggested putting links to these on our website, rather than creating our own resources, getting them vetted, etc. **OCHC Members to look for these and get links.**

VIII. Tabled/Further Discussion Points:

- a. Archives – Mutch wondered if someone could come and tell OCHC about the Archives. Stamps had previously recommended going to the Archives with a list of what we’re looking for; **can a small group of us go to the Archives? Maybe with an intern.**
- b. 1820 Proclamation – plan is still to put it in Dave Coulter’s office; **tabled.**

- c. Finding Guide – Decker is working on this, it's an ongoing project. **Decker to report on this at next meeting.**
- d. Tax Millage – no updates, **tabled.**

IX. Upcoming Events/Announcements

- a. Juneteenth – large Oakland County event. Egbo suggested OCHC be a co-sponsor (includes name recognition in the program), Richardson suggested we have a table, too. Event will take place on 6/19/24, last year it was morning – afternoon. Takes place on County campus. Milne to try to get it listed on Oakland University calendar.

- X. Meeting adjourned: Richardson moved to adjourn, seconded by Mutch, approved and meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.