

## Oakland County Historical Commission Minutes

7pm, March 10, 2025

Oakland History Center

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- I. **Roll call:** Present: Decker, Mutch, Walls, Arwady, Campbell, Egbo; Absent: Milne, Murphy, Richardson.
- II. **Additions/changes to this agenda; acceptance of the agenda** – accepted
- III. **Approve Minutes from February 10, 2025** – approved
- IV. **New Business**

- a. Carol/Ron – Have a surprise for us...a 1945 (?) Keystone Projector!



- b. Ron – Discussion re: Historic Preservation blog and our contribution to it.
  - i. See **document** from Ron.
  - ii. Some ideas: see the EDPC's May 7 Historic Preservation blog to incentivize visitors—mention the blog, get a free admission, etc. Encourage the public to donate—money, time, artifacts—to their local preserved place. Compile a community list of restaurants, like the one in Novi. OCPHS idea for trivia night.
  - iii. Board of Commissioners could present historic preservation awards in their own districts each May, starting with this year. Awards could be for both completed and in-progress efforts, such as Byers Farm, as well as programs. Bailey House in Clarkston should be recognized. These could be Pewabic tiles, similar to Main Street, or the same oak tree style. **Ron will work on awards; we can send nominations to Carol.**
- c. May Presentation to BOC – Decker will revamp current presentation with updated accomplishments, which are limited because we've mostly been reactive. The five-year plan we're creating should help us refocus, set

attainable goals, and meet them. We can discuss this more at our April meeting.

d. Five Year Plan Discussion. Some goals:

- i. Improve connection with Commissioners. What is a good way for OCHC to interact with our Commissioners? How often, who should reach out by email, etc.?
- ii. Budget – make a better budget; treasurer to track.
- iii. Limit the number of projects. We’ve taken on a lot, how to slow it down.
- iv. Are there ways Commissioners are asking for our support? Letters of support. Walls suggests reaching out to individual Commissioners to ask what they need. Preservation award idea is another way to actively engage them.
- v. Year 1: Shrink our list. Pick off low-hanging fruit and remove items as needed. Choose one or two things each year to focus on. Set some deadlines. Try to leave room for surprise projects.
- vi. Improve our presence at community events—plan ahead to schedule OCHC members there; hand out information, be ready to give guidance to people doing research, have the rebound 1877 History out for people to thumb through and read.
- vii. Poster project – we can work with the County to redesign, print, and distribute. Bring in experts to help vet the content. Scale back the number we produce each year; maybe one or two per year, instead of four.
- viii. **Meet early next month (6pm, instead of 7pm) to define our goals for the next five years.** Aim to have two projects per year, such as the Preservation Awards. **For April meeting: develop a list of potential awards candidates.** Awards categories: Work in progress, a program, a completed preservation project, and maybe one more category TBD. Can develop some criteria as we go.

V. **Old Business**

- a. Intern – Silvia Chinen; tabled
- b. Local History Conference brochure discussion – Decker has Power Point presentation that can be converted into a brochure, to be designed by County. Won’t happen in time for local history conference this year, revisit later.
- c. Decker: 2025 budget Items not yet purchased – to be completed when Decker gets a P-card (no P-card, yet).
  - i. Flash drives replenishment

- ii. Projector – budgeting \$400 – which one? Need to pick one. Carol will check which type Oakland Twp. is using. Do we need to buy a screen? Probably not.
  - iii. Old House Journal \$25.00
  - iv. Budget request – good snacks for Oakland History Coalition meetings; Carol to fill an online cart or make a list and have JoAnne order them.
  - v. Membership renewals (OCPHS, ~~OCHR~~, HSM) \$350, minus OCHR
- d. Oakland County Historical Resources Group Update – Decker.
  - i. End goal is to dissolve OCHR and Orion Twp Public Library to shut off server as soon as possible.
  - ii. Steve Saunders and Dave Decker transferred the domain names over to the Oakland History Center.
  - iii. Decker has reached out to the six orgs with data in this server and has heard back from two so far. Website data is to be reformatted and moved to Library of Michigan for storage, where it could be made publicly accessible and added to, if requested. Orion, Clarkston, and Rochester are taking their stuff out and hosting it on their own websites.

## **VI. Committee Reports**

- a. At-Risk Properties
  - i. Rochester High School; no update
  - ii. Roosevelt School; still waiting for appeals court judgement
  - iii. Davis House; Diana Walls has responded to Decker, working to set up a time to meet
  - iv. Pickering Barn: Carol – Oakland County Parks might be moving it to Bowers Farm in Bloomfield Twp.
- b. Map Digitization
  - i. David Porath/Clarkston Historical collaboration; no update, but Decker will follow up with Porath to get it digitized
- c. Poster Project – Report from Rosie/George on content for vetting; goal to send this poster to a cultural expert to be vetted; Rosie and George planning to make some changes before
- d. Website – can do more with the website, but it's fine for now
- e. Preservation (see Ron's update above!)

## **VII. Tabled Items – remain tabled**

- a. Archive Tour
- b. Milne/Campbell: ArcGIS/County Resources for at-risk properties – any update?
- c. 1820 Proclamation
- d. Time Capsule
- e. Finding Guide

**VIII. Other Business**

- a.** 4/1/25, 10:30am-12:00pm Coalition Waterford Oaks Lookout Lodge
  - b.** Collections overview survey – Carol will try to create the survey before the April meeting: What are the best parts of your collection? How accessible is it? Etc.
- IX.** Adjournment: Campbell moves to adjourn, Egbo seconds, meeting adjourned at 9:20pm