

MEETING MINUTES FINAL
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
July 8, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
31555 W. ELEVEN MILE ROAD, FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN 48336
www.fhgov.com

1. Meeting called to order at 6:28 pm
2. Roll Call
 - Members Present: Ken Klemmer, Jim Paulson, Alec Thomson, John Trafelet, Marleen Tulas, Emily Howard
 - Members Absent: Steve Olson
 - Others Present: Kirsten Mellem (HDC Staff Liaison, Planning & Community Development) and Austin Banter (Homeowner of 21515 Farmington)
3. Approval of Agenda
 - Motion to approve agenda by Trafelet, supported by Klemmer. Motion carried 6-0.
4. Unfinished Business
 - None
5. New Business
 - None
6. Committees
 - A. Cemetery Restoration
 - Update at Utley:
 - Carter’s Cemetery Preservation has completed the requested repairs to 25 headstones over the course of a few weeks in June. The restoration work is as expected, and the cemetery is looking much better. HDC members are very happy with the outcomes.
 - There was discussion of repairs needed to the wrought-iron fence that surrounds one of the headstones. The type of iron and how it can be re-affixed to the stone/concrete pillars will need to be determined with further investigation.
 - \$3,697.50 was expended from the HDC budget to cover costs of the second June mobilization to repair 10 headstones. The invoice was received and sent to accounting.
 - A fall clean-up with the Scouts is anticipated, particularly to clean some of the stones of the moss/dirt.
 - There was discussion about providing a map on site of the plots and names for easy identification for visitors. A suggestion was made to get an etched metal one made.
 - B. Potential Historic Resources
 - 21515 Farmington Rd. – 1938 Brick House with Attached 2-Car Garage
 - Homeowner Austin Banter was in attendance to discuss with the Commissioners his home and why he wants to get it listed in a historic district.
 - He was advised of the process: (1) he needs to do deed research to uncover who may have lived there or who may have built it to help with determining if the property has significance. (2) Once the significance is determined, then a study committee will be created to start the research process with a site visit for documentation.

- Commissioners instructed to start with the Oakland County Recorder of Deeds, Historic Aerial imagery (which was viewed as a group), and the City’s assessing data. They also asked if he had found or was left any documents pertaining to the house, such as blueprints; he had not found anything yet.
- Banter will come back to a future meeting once he’s done some research on the property.

7. Points of Interest/Updates

A. Public Engagement Events

i. Table at Farmington Hills 250th Fireworks – June 25th

- Commissioners congratulated Commissioner Howard with a great table display at the Fireworks and were impressed/proud of the HDC showing at the event. They met with several people and had engaging conversations; however, there wasn’t a large turnout for the event as was hoped for. There were a couple of people who were interested in getting involved with the HDC.

ii. Annual Open House – TBD

Drake Barn or Spicer House

- Open house event idea is to invite historic property owners to bring in artifacts that were found in their homes. Sometime in August or September.
- Commissioner Tulas to reach out to the owners of the Drake Barn.

iii. Heritage Night – September 18th

- Staff Liaison Mellem to reach out to special services to confirm event date set.
- Event idea is to do a similar artifact open house like last year.

8. Correspondence

A. Invitation to tour the Lemuel Botsford House (24414 Farmington)

- Commissioners are interested in a tour of the house. There was discussion as to how this would be arranged and how to comply with the Open Meetings Act. Staff Liaison will investigate the proper protocol and arrange a date.

B. Miller’s Cottage 200th Anniversary

- Received email from daughter of owner of Miller’s Cottage regarding whether the city does anything to honor home milestones. Commissioners will explore the idea of a Proclamation by HDC and City Council, as well as a small plaque commemorating the milestone to be gifted to the property owner to affix near the front door.
- Staff Liaison Mellem will get a Proclamation template and coordinate with the City Manager’s Office and look into plaque options.

9. Public Comment

None

10. Commissioner Comments

- A. Howard: Simmons House weeds, windows broken on house and shutters (Haggerty and south of 9 mile). Requested a code enforcement ticket be issued since we don’t have a contact with the property owner.

11. Staff Comments

- A. Minor Classes of Work Update

None

B. Project Updates

- Demolition continues at Sarah Fisher property
- Wellspring/Boy's Republic is stalled, looking for a new buyer
- Gates House Marker, property owner is looking for assistance to get a new marker
 - Commissioners said to have the property owner file an insurance claim, which is what has been done in the past for other markers that were damaged.

12. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

June 10, 2026 – Motion by Klemmer, 2nd Trafelet, approved 6-0.

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Trafelet, 2nd Tulas. Approved 6-0. Meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.

Drafted by Kirsten Mellem, HDC Staff Liaison.