

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
April 21, 2008

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, April 21, 2008, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Mayor Knol.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Knol, McShane, Wiggins, Wright.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Buck.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: City Clerk Halberstadt, City Manager Pastue.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

04-08-057 MOTION by Wright, seconded by McShane, to approve the agenda as amended removing No. 2 public comment. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

FARMINGTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Present: William Lindblad, Chairman.

Chairman Lindblad updated the Council on the Historical Commission's current projects and future plans. He stated the Commission recently completed a policy regarding structural demolition and relocation. He advised this policy was developed in response to a potential demolition in the Historic District.

Chairman Lindblad stated the Commission has completed sixty percent of a contributing structure survey and historical district database. He explained the database will include photographs of homes in the Historic District, as well as a data sheet describing the property's note-worthy historical information, such as a Michigan Historic Registry, and all renovations applied to the property.

Chairman Lindblad announced the Commission's plan to conduct workshops at the Warner Mansion on June 1, 2008 on topics such as home repair and preservation of fabrics.

Chairman Lindblad then referenced the Council's approved by-law changes allowing the Commission to appoint a sub-committee relative to overseeing future plans or a Master Plan for the Warner Mansion.

Councilmember Wright inquired how a Historic District designation might bring tax relief to district homeowners. Chairman Lindblad answered there are potential tax implications depending on how a Historic District is constituted in terms of its government and how it relates to certain state and federal policies. He noted the

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Farmington Historic District does not meet the requirements for homeowners to gain tax credits on home improvements.

Councilmember Wright asked specifically what tax benefits would be applied with a certified state approved district. Chairman Lindblad answered state tax credits are available in appropriately constituted Historic Districts.

Wright then asked about a federal tax credit. Lindblad responded it would not be a residential credit, but possibly a commercial credit.

Mayor Knol advised the tax benefit of a State approved Historic District is 25% of renovation expenditure and is retroactive for 5 years. She reminded the Council of two prior visits by a member of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHIPA website) explaining the certification program.

Councilmember McShane noted Council's work on an Historic District ordinance relating to this very topic. She noted homeowners can replace a roof, paint the exterior, replace windows etc., and receive a 25% tax credit on the expenditures. She expressed concern regarding the City's inability to provide incentives to encourage or support homeowners who might wish to renovate their historic homes.

Lindblad explained the process includes submitting an application to the Historical Commission and upon approval the application is forwarded to the State for their approval.

Councilmember McShane felt State approval would not be difficult to obtain and would provide a helpful guideline. She then voiced her concern regarding the possibility of losing the Historic district due to teardowns and how the Historical Commission is unable to stop the process.

Lindblad concurred with McShane, stating the Commission can delay the process or use publicity as a deterrent, but cannot stop a teardown or renovation. He noted the Historical Commission advises the Planning Commission as to the historical appropriateness of a renovation and leaves approval to them.

McShane shared how cities with strong Historic Districts such as Northville and Birmingham have a historic ordinance that allows a longer period of time to renovate and provides tax credits & guidance to homeowners that wish to renovate historic homes.

McShane noted Oakland County has money available for home renovation at a low interest rate. She emphasized the importance of blending "green" efforts with historic efforts by using "green" historical products. She suggested the Historical Commission address these issues by educating residents regarding this information.

McShane thanked the Historical Commission and praised them on a job well done. She encouraged everyone to visit and experience the beauty found at the Warner Mansion.

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Responding to a question from Councilmember Wright, Lindbland explained flyers would be distributed to homeowners of the historic district, but everyone was welcome to attend the June 1st workshop.

In conclusion, Dick Carvell shared planned activities for the Warner Mansion:

- May 29th. Multi-Racial Multi-Cultural Porch Party
- June 29th. Unveiling of the Warner Mansion Statue
- Founder's Festival Mini Farmer's Market
- September Classical Brunch
- Oakland County Historic Commission Fall Seminar

OTHER BUSINESS

None were heard.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hank Borgman, 34011 Grand River Ave., expressed confusion and concern regarding tax advantages applied to the homes in the Historic District.

COUNCIL COMMENT

None were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

04-08-058 MOTION by McShane, seconded by Wiggins, to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Valerie S. Knol, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

Susan Pohto, Recording Secretary

APPROVED: May 19, 2008