Call to Order

- Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission meeting to order at 5:30 PM

Roll Call

- Secretary Smith conducted roll call:
  - Commissioners present: Alec Jerome, James Mann, Alice Ralph, Patti Smith, Katie Remensyder, Peter Kelley, Blake Swihart
  - Commissioners absent with notice: Leslie Pinney, Matthew Cook
  - Staff present: Melinda Schmidt

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:
Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Staff noted the Thornoaks empty lot construction proposal would not take place. Chair Ralph struck it from the agenda. Chair Ralph also moved to review the COA Application before Citizen Participation, since Hopkins Burns had not yet arrived to present on Gordon Hall. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. The agenda as offered passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting: March 7, 2019:
Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. With none, the minutes stand approved.

Application Reviews:
Chair Ralph called the 4101 Thornoaks Drive Application hearing to order. Tom Meadows from Neighborhood Roofing was in attendance to represent the property owner.

- Staff presentation: Staff reviewed the application packet and the history of 4101 Thornoaks Drive. Staff summarized the roof replacement would include installing a white membrane roof and cutting back damaged soffit at the side elevations. Staff explained that though cutting back the soffit would affect a character defining feature, the proposed alternative would be to replace the Douglass fir boards, which run through the entire house. There is no way to simply cut back the soffit boards and replace them, because there is nowhere to anchor the new boards.

- Applicant’s presentation: The applicant summarized the current construction, including the 1.5” tongue and groove Doulas fir beams that create the soffit and interior ceiling; and the built-up asphalt roof still under the current roof system that should be removed when the new roof is installed. This roof system is directly on the roof and is allowing water damage. The asphalt would be removed and insulation installed. The applicant also stated that the property owner is out of the country with no intention to return, and will put the house on the market soon.

- Commissioner feedback:
  - Commissioner Ralph clarified the roof boards run throughout the home. The applicant confirmed, and stated replacement of the entire roof/ceiling system would be necessary to maintain the 2 foot overhang. Chair Ralph expressed concern over the significant change from a 2 foot to 1 foot overhang.
Commissioner Swihart asked if the property owner got a second quote. The applicant stated two people from Neighborhood Roofing had evaluated the property and come to similar conclusions, but no other companies had been consulted.

Commissioner Smith clarified that replacement to maintain the 2 foot overhang would get rid of remaining original materials. The applicant confirmed.

Commissioner Jerome agreed the change in appearance is not insignificant. He asked if it could be cut back less, and new board added in a few places. The applicant agreed this may be possible. Commissioner Jerome suggested adding this language to any proposed motion.

Commissioner Swihart expressed concern about changing a character defining feature, as precedent.

Commissioner Ralph recognized the deep overhangs on main facade and rear elevation would remain intact, and this change would affect the side elevations.

Commissioner Jerome asked the applicant about the kick in the new edge metal and the replacement skylights. The applicant noted the kick is shown in the submitted pictures and would help the water drip off and safeguard the existing materials. The skylights would be replaced with glass lights of the same size to prevent leakage.

Chair Ralph reviewed the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and commissioners agreed Standards 2 and 6 applied to the application.

Staff summarized the conversation, stating that in order to preserve intact original materials, the deteriorated portions of the soffit overhang on the southwest and northeast elevations must be cut back. Staff stressed the motion should clarify that the portion cut back should be kept to minimum, between 6" and 12", and any additional rotted wood that must be removed requires replacement with new Douglas fir.

Commissioner Jerome moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for a roof replacement at 4101 Thornoaks Drive as submitted with pictures, which includes installing 2" rigid insulation over roof boards, installing White 060 mil thick TPO roof system and installing two new skylights; and cutting back damaged soffit (not to exceed 12" to maximize the depth of the overhang on the southwest and northeast elevations), and installing replacement-in-kind Douglas fir where needed and replacement-in-kind edge metal of the same color as the original edge metal; citing the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties 2 and 6.

Commissioner Ralph seconded the motion. Commissioner Jerome discussed the need to emphasize minimal change to the soffit overhang while preserving remaining original materials. He also emphasized any replacement boards should be Douglass fir. With no further discussion, Chair Ralph called a vote. The motion passed unanimously and the Certificate of Appropriateness application for a roof replacement at 4101 Thornoaks Drive was approved as stated above.

Citizen Participation: Hopkins Burns presented on behalf of Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS) regarding the Interior Rehabilitation plans for Gordon Hall.

- Staff introduction: Staff introduced architects Jessica Quijano and Gene Hopkins from Hopkins Burns and reviewed the intent of the Interior Rehabilitation Plans for Gordon Hall. Staff noted Hopkins Burns would present on interior renovations that would affect the exterior of Gordon Hall and require an application to the HDC. Hopkins Burns is looking for feedback on the plans now in order to adjust to HDC requirements.
- Citizen presentation: Gene Hopkins gave an introduction to the project and Hopkins Burn’s history with Gordon Hall and DAHS. Jessica Quijano reviewed the proposed plans and highlighted the ensuing exterior changes, including reconstruction of two original chimneys; the removal of non-original doors, windows and dormers; and an added accessibility door to the wing.

Commissioner follow-up to citizen participation: Commissioners expressed appreciation for the presentation and the stewardship of Gordon Hall by DAHS. The commissioners voiced no concerns regarding the presentation.
Business and Reports:

Staff Report:
Due to limited time, staff requested commissioners review the staff report on their own and bring comments to the next meeting. Items for commissioner review and input will be discussed at the next HDC meeting. Staff highlighted a few time-sensitive items:

- Programming and Promotional Updates
  - MHPN will host an HDC workshop on May 6. Staff encouraged commissioners to attend.
- Historic Markers Updates
  - St. John the Baptist Evangelical Lutheran Church will install their replacement Washtenaw County historical marker as part of their 140th anniversary celebrations on June 2, commissioners are welcome to attend.

Treasurer Report: none

Adjournment: Chair Ralph motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:18pm. Commissioner Jerome seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at Eastern County Government Center Office of Community & Economic Development 2nd floor 415 W. Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti, MI