

## **Farmington Historical Commission Annual Report**

July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

In accordance with the bylaws of the Farmington Historical Commission, this annual report is prepared by the chairperson, approved by the Commission, and presented to City Council each year outlining the activities of the Historical Commission for the previous year.

The Commission meetings held in person in the conference room at City Hall. The meetings are open to the public and agendas are posted beforehand.

The Historical Commission held only four meetings this year - September 2021, October 2021, May 2022 and June 2022. The rest were cancelled.

The purpose of the Farmington Historical Commission shall be:

1. To safeguard the heritage of the City of Farmington by preserving the cultural, social, economic, political and architectural elements having historic significance.
2. To stabilize and improve property values in such districts.
3. To foster and promote civic beautification with emphasis on historical significance.
4. To promote the use of local history for education, pleasure and the welfare of the citizens of the City.
5. To encourage the collection of records and objects which interpret the history of Farmington, and to cooperate in the establishment and operation of a museum or other appropriate center for the custody and display of such items.

### **Preservation:**

When people can meet safely in person, the Commission is planning classes for homeowners on how to research the history of their historic home.

### **Education:**

Historic Home Plaques are available to homeowners of buildings erected in 1945 or before. The cost is \$80. If the building is within the Historic District, the Commission contributes half of the cost and the homeowner pays only \$40.

The Historical Society of Michigan has a Michigan Heritage Home program for houses constructed (completed) at least 100 years ago. In June 2021 the Commission approved spending \$400 to purchase the cast-aluminum plaque. Other homes in the district should also qualify. Once the Mansion's plaque is received and installed, the Commission will promote the program to other homeowners in the city.

### **Co-operation:**

There have not been any events this past year to coordinate with the Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce or the DDA.

### **Mansion Events:**

The Mansion interior was closed for tours and events in 2021 and 2022 but several fundraising events were held outside.

In July 2021 -

The Warnerettes marched in the Founders Day Parade.

Donated vintage jewelry was sold during Founders in the Farmington Historical Society tent on the lawn at City Hall.

Laurel's Princess Parties partnered with the Mansion to hold a Princess Character Meet and Greet on the lawn. A Historical Fashion Show was held on the Mansion porch for an audience seated on the porch and the front walk.

A Stained Glass class was taught by Michelle Pieces in the carriage house.

A Fascinator making class was taught by Rachelle Willnus in the carriage house.

In August 2021 -

Ken Klemmer gave a lecture on Emily Butterfield from the Mansion porch to an audience seated on the lawn. The Loft Cigar Lounge partnered with Mansion volunteers to hold the Grand Smoke on the lawn. Funds were raised from tickets and raffles and the event attracted many new participants.

The Farmington Garden Club held their annual Beautification Awards ceremony on the lawn.

The Warnerettes held a Summer Meet and Greet on the lawn to introduce City Council candidates from Farmington and Farmington Hills. Money raised from a silent auction, bake sale, and refreshments were donated to the Mansion.

In September 2021 -

OHM sponsored an open house to gather ideas from the community about future uses for the Mansion. A community survey was available onsite, online, and mailed with the water bills.

The Friends of the Mansion held a cemetery walk with costumed presenters at the Quaker Cemetery.

In January 2022 -

Friends of the Mansion secretary Kathy Bilger presented a lecture about Fred Warner as part of the Michigan Historical Society's History Hounds series.

### **Planning:**

The Mansion interim director, Mary-Jeanne Shore, resigned as of August 31, 2021. We have been without a director while the Council determines the future use of the Mansion and no events are planned for 2022.

One new Commissioner was appointed by Council - Kevin Parkins in May 2022. Chris Schroer resigned March 2022. We're short one member.

### **Acquisitions:**

None

### **Alterations to buildings within the Historic District:**

In September 2021 we approved plans for a new masonry porch at 33309 Shiawassee.

In October 2020 we approved a plan to replace the cellar door at the Warner Mansion. Since the door is in sight of the Mansion porch, the Commission recommended a steel door clad in wood to keep up historic character of the house. As of June 2022, the new cellar door has not been installed.

In December 2020 an inappropriate railing was added to the back porch of the Warner Mansion without design review. The railing on the back porch steps was also a temporary safety measure done in August 2019. We were assured that they were a temporary fix. As of June 2022, the new railings have not been installed.

We received a \$85,000 grant from the Michigan legislature for renovations in October 2020, but the sagging front porch and leaking porch roof have not been repaired. The City recently received a cost estimate from an approved contractor and City Council approved \$100,000 for repairs to the cupola roof, second floor roof, porch roof, porch pillars, porch foundation, back steps, front step railings, and cellar door. Repairs are expected to be completed by the end of summer. The grounds will be an active work site for at least 30 days. In a meeting with the City Manager and DPW Director, we asked again to have the railings on the back porch replaced with something more appropriate and to consider installing a handicap-accessible ramp where the south porch steps are now.