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TROY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

Troy City Hall
500 W. Big Beaver

7:30 P.M.
October 5, 1983

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Stickel, Scott, Dill, Renshaw
ABSENT: Baron, Holdburg, Miller, Fellrath

PROCEEDINGS:

Because of the lack of attendance, all regular business was suspended except for the following item.

Item #4 - Site Survey

Mrs. Scott presented a re-submittal on the Trowbridge House with new evidence supporting the designation of this home as historic:

- 1) Under new ownership by Joy J. & Lawrence Ramaeker who intend to live in it as their family home.
- 2) Mrs. Ramaeker has spoken with the neighbors and has indicated no negative response to it becoming an Historic District.

MOVED BY: Renshaw

SUPPORTED BY: Dill

RESOLVED, That the new Site Survey on the Trowbridge House, 2955 Quail Run, Troy, Michigan 48084, be submitted to the City Council for consideration as an Historic District.

Yeas: All-4

Item #9 - Adjournment

MOVED BY: Dill

SUPPORTED BY: Renshaw

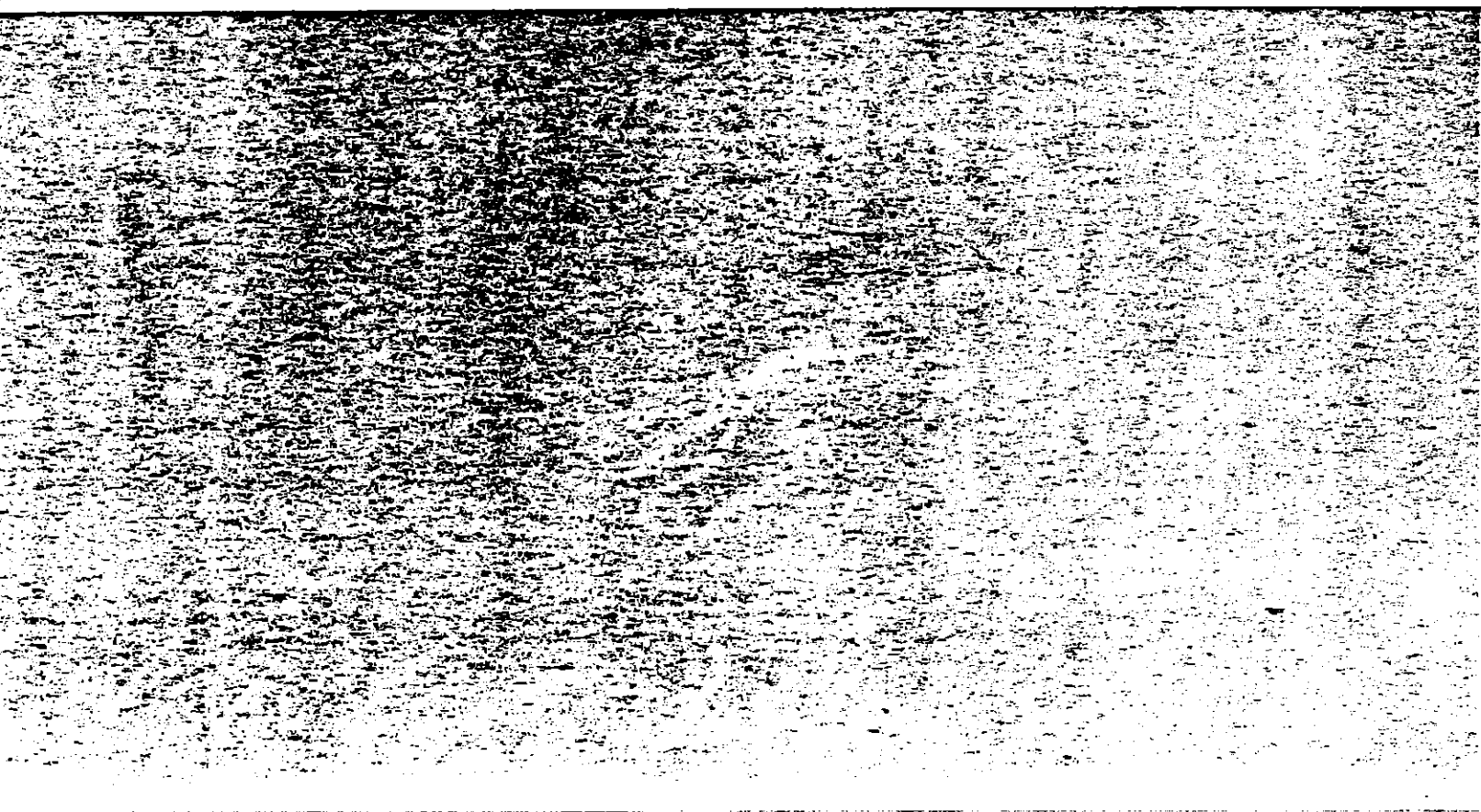
RESOLVED, That the meeting be adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

NEXT MEETING - NOVEMBER 2, 1983

Motion by:

Support by:

The Troy Historic District Commission, after research and investigation, have found that the structure located at 4800 Beach Road is an excellent example of a Grandioso Country Farm house, which was constructed circa 1826 and should be maintained as a Historic District. Further this building embodies the characteristics which are valuable for representation and designation of Historic Home. Therefore, we recommend to the City Council that it be included as an Historic District under Chapter 13 of the Troy City Codes.



BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

Michigan History Division
Michigan Department of State
Lansing, Michigan 48918

For Office Use

Theme _____

IDENTIFICATION

1. Building name Strawberry Hill Farm House
2. County Oakland Town/City Troy Village _____
3. Street Location 2955 Quail Run
4. Ownership: a. Public ☐ b. Private ☒
5. Present Owner Lawrence & Joy Ramaeker Address 2962 Orchard Trail
6. Use: Original _____ Present _____
7. Accessibility to Public: Exterior visible from public road: Yes ☒ No ☐
Interior accessible: Explain Private Home

DESCRIPTION

8. Building Material: a. clapboard ☐ b. stone ☐ c. brick ☐ d. board and batten ☐
e. cobblestone ☐ f. shingles ☐ g. stucco ☐ h. other _____
9. Structural Material: a. wood frame with interlocking joints ☐ b. wood frame with light members (balloon frame) ☒
c. masonry load-bearing walls ☐ d. iron frame ☐ e. steel frame with curtain walls ☐
f. reinforced concrete ☐ g. other _____
10. Condition: a. excellent ☒ b. good ☐ c. fair ☐ d. deteriorated ☐
11. Integrity: a. original site ☒ b. moved ☐ if so, when? about 1830
Notes on alterations and additions, with dates and architect. not known
Original owner had seven sons and four daughters. Fairly well to do settler. Therefore the house was large to start plus later owners were fair to do.
12. Related Outbuildings and Property: none
a. barn ☐ b. carriage house ☐ c. garage ☐ d. privy ☐ e. shed ☐
f. shop ☐ g. greenhouse ☐ h. landscape features ☐ i. other _____
13. Surroundings of the Building: a. open land ☐ b. woodland ☐ c. scattered outbuildings ☐ d. densely built-up ☐
e. commercial ☐ f. industrial ☐ g. residential ☒ h. other _____
14. Photo
15. Map T2 NR 11 E Sec 18
N
18 mi. Long LAKE RD
W ADAMS RD
Quail Run
STRAWBERRY DR
WATTLES
S



STRAWBERRY FARM

16. Interrelationship of Building and Surroundings

Its a large large old house surrounded by trees and bushes and surrounded by a modern subdivision

17. Other Notable Features of Building and Site

Has remained inside and outside without the redo which most people try to do when they get an old house. It has 8 large bedrooms with such things as butler pantry and maid quarters.

18. Threats to Building None at this time.

- a. none known ☐ b. zoning ☐ c. roads ☐ d. developers ☐ e. deterioration ☐
f. other _____

SIGNIFICANCE (Indicate sources of information for all statements)

19. Architectural Significance

Date of Construction about 1830 Architect Settler Steven Trowbridge

Builders, suppliers, etc. SVR Trowbridge

Notes on original plan and specifications:

Only that when SVR built his barn and had the neighbors for a barn raising, he broke a jug of water over the top and shouted "I christen you Strawberry Hill Farm".

20. Historical Significance: In that SVR was a prominent person and guide to any settler seeking help and advice. He served as Troy Supervisor and was a close friend of Governor Lewis Cass.

Both SVR and Elizabeth his wife are buried in the cemetery closeby There are many descendents still in the area.

See our copy of National Register of Historic places inventory-on file in your office.

21. Sources (for primary and secondary sources, give complete facts of publication: author, title, place of publication, date):

Oakland County Liber Books: County Bldg, Pontiac, Mich
Assessment Rolls: Troy Township, City of Troy
History of the Trowbridge family, copy in hands of descendant
Tax Records, Oakland County Records at Kresge Library U of M.

Prepared by Dorothy Scott - Troy Historic District Date October 5, 83
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Organization Troy Historic District

perance advocate, braved public opinion by declining to furnish whiskey to the neighbors who had come to help him. He went to the top of the frame carrying a bottle of water, broke the bottle, and called out, "Strawberry Hill" by which name the place was known thereafter. Built in 1830, the elegant house had twenty rooms including eight bedrooms and a large tenant house nearby. It was a structure befitting a well-to-do landowner of that period.

Stephen Van Rensselaer Trowbridge was a close friend of Michigan's Governor Lewis Cass. He was a Troy Supervisor for a number of years and a member of the Territorial Legislature. Governor Cass appointed Trowbridge to handle the annual payments which were made to the Indians. He held positions of great responsibility with the Indian Department especially with respect to treaty monies paid for the extensive domain of Michigan and Wisconsin. His treatment of the Indians was so fair and reasonable that he gained the confidence of the various Indian groups and the backing of the United States Government. Other important posts held by Trowbridge included Assessor of Oakland County and Oakland County's first Coroner.

The discovery of copper in the Lake Superior country started many new enterprises in mining. At first the U. S. Government leased the mines to companies which worked them, and then paid a royalty to the Government. Mr. Trowbridge was appointed to a leadership position in this area and spent two summers at his headquarters in Sault Saint Marie. Later, President Zachary Taylor appointed him Mineral Agent of the Lake Superior Mines.

Stephen Trowbridge was an Elder of the Presbyterian Church and a model citizen to his friends and neighbors. He was affectionately known as "Uncle Steve". People would call upon him for advice and he would often prepare last wills and testaments for his fellow citizens. Although he was known to have a quick temper, he was an outstanding community leader who earned the respect and admiration of all who knew him. Stephen Van Rensselaer Trowbridge died on March 4, 1859 at sixty-four years of age. He is buried with his wife Elizabeth at the Beach Road Cemetery. Several of their children became prominent leaders; one became a Missionary in Turkey, another a Professor at Columbia University; one was a leading merchant in Minnesota and another was elected to the U. S. Congress. Guy T. Trowbridge remained at Strawberry Hills Farm in Troy for several years, later moving to Pontiac. Descendants of Guy T. Trowbridge still reside in the Troy area.

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STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER TROWBRIDGE AND
ELIZABETH CONKLIN TROWBRIDGE

AND THEIR FAMILY - TROY, MI

Ca 1858

TROY

A Troy Family Who Conquered The Wilderness

Stephen Van-Kensselaer Trowbridge was a prominent early pioneer in the history of Troy. Born on July 4, 1774 in Albany, New York, of English ancestry, he worked as a law clerk and prepared for a career in law. When he was only eighteen years old he enlisted in the Cavalry Service and served on the Niagara Frontier during the War of 1812 as part of the New York State Militia. He was honorably discharged in December 1812. Along with his interest in law, Trowbridge had a love for farming and became an expert with the cradle and scythe. In 1815 he married Elizabeth Conklin of Horseheads in Central New York State and went to live on a farm given to his wife by her father. In 1820, Stephen received a letter from his brother Charles who had gone to Michigan the previous year. The letter described the many opportunities offered. Charles Trowbridge was later elected as Mayor of the City of Detroit and served also as a Regent of the University of Michigan. The Trowbridge name became well-known in the Detroit area.

Stephen Trowbridge decided to follow his brother out West. With \$100.00 sewn in a belt around his waist and a bag filled with pins and needles, tapes and other small articles to exchange for meals and lodging, Stephen started out for Michigan. He walked 500 miles through the dense forests of Canada and after a very lengthy journey finally reached the city of Detroit. He looked about the County of Oakland and found some rich, black soil in Troy where he decided to settle. With enough money saved from his trip, Stephen bought eighty acres of Troy land from the United States Government. He then returned east to make arrangements for

his family to join him. Subsequently, the Trowbridge family boarded a ship at Buffalo, New York, called the "Walk-in-the Water" and made their way across Lake Erie to Detroit, and then by ox team to Troy. At one point, when the ox teams were stuck in the mud, Mrs. Trowbridge descended from the wagon with a baby in her arms and walked a distance of eight miles. The land they had purchased in northwest Troy included a log house which was 14 x 14 feet in size. There they were sheltered until a more comfortable home could be built.

The Trowbridge family was surrounded by Indians and there were few white neighbors in Troy at that time. Stephen had to keep busy to clear the little farm which he later enlarged to include two hundred and ninety acres. In addition to farming, he carried on stock raising, since the range for cattle was at that time extensive and the Indians kept the underbrush well burned off. There was plenty of wild game, especially turkeys, and the Trowbridge family was well supplied with wild meat. Fishing also abounded in the area.

Many families started to re-locate in Troy, most of them coming from upstate and central New York. The more established settlers helped the new arrivals by offering their hospitality. On one occasion, in the little log cabin of the Trowbridge family, they were able to accommodate a party of sixteen men in addition to their own family. As the Trowbridge family grew in size (there were eleven children) a larger log cabin was built. It was considered quite a mansion at that time. Later, an even larger house was built for the burgeoning family on the town line which was Adams Road. It was in raising one of the earlier of these houses that Mr. Trowbridge, a Tem-

I understand that the Strawberry Hill House
resource name
located at 2955 Quail Run, within the city limits of
Troy, Michigan, County of Oakland and owned by us,

Lawrence & Joy Ramaeker, is being submitted to
the Michigan Department of State for inclusion in the state-
wide historic resource inventory and, potentially, for nomina-
tion to the State Register of Historic Sites, I am aware that
no legal restrictions or allowances are conferred to the pro-
perty should the proposed site be found eligible for State
Registration by the Michigan Historical Commission. Therefore,
We, Lawrence & Joy Ramaeker, give our consent to the above
mentioned review and potential nomination to the State Register
of Historic Sites

Signed Lawrence Ramaeker dated

Oct 5, 1983

Joy Ramaeker Oct 5, 1983