



Historic District Commission Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 6:00 PM
27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

1. Call to Order

The meeting called to order at 6:05 PM

2. Roll Call

Present: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

Absent: N/A

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Warner, seconded by Roberts to approve the agenda as presented.

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. 12-12-24 - HDC Minutes

Moved by Roberts, seconded by Kenez to approve the minutes with the following amendments:

- Change Addison to Anderson under the second public comment
- Reorder the action items to reflect the City Hall Meter Tower first and the Annie Lathrup School proposal second

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

5. Public Comment on Agenda Items (limited to 3 minutes)

Diane Anderson – Lathrup Village Historical Society was created for historical preservation, and money was allegedly accepted from the Surnow Company for archival purposes. The Historical Society should never accept money from the Surnows.

6. Old Business

A. Request to Approve 27700 Southfield Road - Annie Lathrup School Partial Demolition & Rehabilitation

- Jill Bahm – Giffels Webster – Provided a presentation on the City's history with the master plan and how the Village Center district was created.

- HDC Members asked clarifying questions to Ms. Bahm, which included Village Center setback requirements, Southfield Road Boulevard redevelopment, Master Planning, and Historic District Ordinance involvement in the Master Plan.
- Surnow Company & Biddison Architecture – Presented an updated plan to the HDC for the 27700 Southfield Road Partial Demolition & Rehabilitation project.
 - Surnow provided some history of previous developments the company undertook within Lathrup Village and shared why they have settled on this current site plan rendition.
 - Kevin (Biddison) shared some of the changes that have been made to the plan versus the last version that was presented to the HDC.

Moved by Warner, seconded by Johnson to approve the 27700 Southfield Road – Annie Lathrup School partial Demolition & Rehabilitation proposal.

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

An additional discussion took place between the HDC members and the Surnow Company about the site and potential layouts and what additional modifications could be made to meet the HDC Ordinance.

Moved by Roberts, seconded by Johnson to approve the 27700 Southfield Road – Annie Lathrup School partial Demolition & Rehabilitation plan.

- Johnson – torn by the decision. On one hand, the historical original school is being saved, but the additional mass of new structures due to the economics of the project is worrisome.
- Roberts – modifications Surnow made have made improvements to the plan. However, the massing/position of the building still does not appear to comply.
- Warner – Surnow has made a lot of the requested HDC changes based on the last meeting.

Moved by Kenez, seconded by Johnson to table the initial motion until after an additional public comment period.

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

Moved by Khamo, seconded Roberts, to amend the agenda to allow public comment before official action.

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

Public Comment

- Jonathan Terra – Is underground parking practical at this site? Could the site be turned 90 degrees to fit the site?
- Diane Anderson – Are the chimneys being saved? Has Surnow applied for historic grants to maintain the building? Has the Historical Society taken money from the Surnow company? Comments on Jeffrey Surnow and how he treated members of the public like “garbage” in the past.
- Lauren Bares – It's terrible that Surnow's deceased father was brought up during the meeting. Has seen what Surnow Company has done with other historic buildings in neighboring communities and hopes the HDC considers their vote carefully.
- Tim Hillman – Thank you for the input this evening. Hopes HDC members share additional information on why they vote a certain way.

- Autumn Sousanis – HDC Ordinance Section 40-29(e)(8). It's a looming structure against the road. This project will dominate the feel of the City and the historic district.
- Bob Beras – The community can keep fighting but the Surnow Company must make some money on this project. The charm of Lathrup Village is the neighborhood, not the current state of the school. There is a vocal minority that is making a lot of complaints regarding this project.

Moved by Warner, seconded by Johnson to take the vote off the table

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

Moved by Roberts, seconded by Johnson to approve the 27700 Southfield Road – Annie Lathrup School partial Demolition & Rehabilitation plan.

Warner – While Section 40-29(e)(8) remains a concern, when only one item does not meet the ordinance requirements, it shows the developer is making an effort. This is a rare project and if the project saves the truly historical portion of the site, then it should continue to move forward.

Khamo – The ultimate concern is the building being torn down and that may be a possibility. The size (Section 40-29(e)(8)) is still a concern.

Johnson – Believes the petitioners have acted in good faith and the true historical building stays intact. To achieve 9 out of 10 elements of compliance is an achievement. The HDC must stop the potential of the building being demolished.

Roberts – 9 out of 10 elements appear to be met. The economics make sense, and the original school stays intact.

Kenez – The preservation of the building was a major concern. Maintaining the integrity of the area will be needed to showcase the property. Wants to see the relationship in the Village Center district expand if this project proceeds.

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried

8. **Other Matters for Discussion – N/A**

9. **Adjournment**

Moved by Kenez, seconded by Roberts to adjourn at 8:09 PM.

Yes: Johnson, Roberts, Warner, Kenez, Khamo

No: N/A

Motion Carried