

## CANTON TOWNSHIP HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### MISSION STATEMENT AND DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Historic District Commission is to enhance the quality of the Township's environment and to preserve the historic characteristics of the community. The Commission will pursue this mission through the following priorities:

- Safeguard the heritage of the Township by preserving areas which reflect elements of the cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political, educational, engineering or architectural history.
- Stabilize and improve property values in such areas.
- Foster civic beauty and community pride.
- Strengthen the local economy.
- Promote the use of Historic Sites and Districts for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the Township.

#### DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

The Commission's duties include:

- To conduct an ongoing survey (using the Michigan Historical Site Survey forms as a guide) to identify properties, structures, and areas that exemplify the cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political, educational, engineering or architectural history of the nation, state, county or township.
- To maintain a current listing of potential Historic Sites and Districts and a brief statement of significance for each. The listing shall be made available to all Township Departments for consideration relative to the Master Plan.
- To investigate and recommend to the Board the adoption of ordinances designating areas as "Historic."
- To keep a register of all designated Historic Sites and Districts, including all information required for each designation.
- To determine an appropriate system of markers and to confer recognition upon the owners of Historic Sites or Districts by means of certificates, plaques, or markers.
- To nominate Historic Sites and Districts to the State and National Register of Historic Places and to review and comment on any nominations submitted to the Commission.
- To advise and assist owners of property on physical and financial aspects of preservation.

- To inform and educate the citizens of Canton concerning the historic and architectural heritage of the Township by publishing appropriate maps, newsletters, brochures, and pamphlets and by holding programs and seminars.
- To review applications for work affecting proposed or designated Historic Sites or Districts and issue or deny Certificates of Appropriateness.
- To consider applications for Certificates of Economic Hardship that would allow the performance of work for which a Certificate of Appropriateness has been denied.
- To develop specific guidelines for work within Historic Sites and Districts including documentation requirements.
- To review proposed zoning amendments, applications for special use permits, or applications for zoning variances that affect proposed or designated Historic Sites or Districts. The Director of the department shall send applications for special use of zoning variances to the Commission and Planning Commission for comment prior to the date of the hearing by the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- To administer on behalf of the Township any property or full or partial interest in real property, including easements, that the Township may have or accepted as a gift or otherwise, upon authorization and approval by the Board.
- To accept and administer on behalf of the Township such gifts, grants, and money as may be appropriate for the purpose of this chapter. Such funds may be administered in accordance with the Charter of the Township, but a separate accounting shall be made of them and a copy of such accounting given to the Commission at least quarterly.
- To call upon available staff members as well as other experts for technical advice.
- To testify before all boards and commissions on any matter affecting historically and architecturally significant property, structures and areas.
- To investigate and recommend incentive programs to encourage historic preservation.
- To review all Township licensed or funded physical development projects affecting designated or proposed Historic Sites or Districts, or which may have demonstrable effects on designated or proposed Historical Sites or Districts.
- To oversee periodic inspections of all designated Historic Sites or Districts for violations of this Chapter and to request that the Building Department require the correction of the violations.
- To develop a preservation component in the Master Plan of the Township of Canton and to recommend it to the Planning Commission and the Board.
- To periodically review the Zoning Ordinance and to recommend to the Planning Commission and the Board any amendments appropriate for the protection and continued use of Historic Sites and Districts.