

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
ANN ARBOR
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
TO THE ANN ARBOR CITY COUNCIL
FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2025**



Introduction

In accordance with the bylaws of the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission (HDC), an annual report is to be prepared by staff, approved by the Commission, and presented to City Council each year outlining the activities of the Historic District Commission for the previous year.

Annual Retreat

A Historic District Commissioner retreat was held on Thursday, November 13, 2025. The retreat agenda included review and discussion of:

- Annual By-Law Review
- Review of projects built in the last year
- Commissioner commentary

Meetings

All HDC meetings in 2025 were held in person in City Hall. Applicants were allowed to attend virtually via Zoom. Public commentary was accepted by calling in to the meeting or by attending in person.

Certificates of Appropriateness

A total of 179 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness were issued in 2025. The Historic District Commission has delegated a number of minor activities to staff to approve on their behalf, and of the 179 applications, 150 (or 84%) applications submitted were approved by staff. 2025 examples of the most frequent of the 40 types of work that may be approved of by staff include:

- Installation of air conditioning condensers or mini splits
- Installation of radon reduction systems
- New business signs
- Changes to non-original windows and doors

The Commission held hearings on the remaining 29 applications during their regular monthly meetings. All but one were approved, some with conditions, and those approved were granted Certificates of Appropriateness. Each site was visited prior to its public hearing by the HDC Review Committee, which consists of a minimum of two Commissioners and staff.

Examples of applications receiving Certificates of Appropriateness included:

- 7 residential and commercial additions
- 3 applications to add dormers and/or egress windows in attics
- 2 accessory dwelling units in new or converted structures

Historic Preservation Awards

Each year, the Historic District Commission presents Historic Preservation Awards to property owners who have shown dedication to preservation by rehabilitating or maintaining their historic property. The Ann Arbor Historic District Commission's 2025 awards were presented during the June 2, 2025 City Council meeting to fourteen award recipients in the categories of Preservation, Rehabilitation, Special Merit, and one Centennial Award. A reception for award recipients was held at the Judge Robert Wilson (Wilson-Wahr) House at 126 N Division Street following the ceremony at City Hall.

Preservation Awards



520 North State Street – This Tudor Revival style house was built in 1932 and first occupied by Dean E. Hobart, an assistant professor at the University of Michigan, along with his wife Arletta. It became a rental in the 1950s and has been owner occupied since the late 1980s. Its two steep gables and half-timber designs are classic features of this style. The property also includes a garage in the same style. The current owners have owned this property for 35 years and have maintained it in beautiful condition. It is located in the Old Fourth Ward

Historic District. This award is presented to Walter Hogan and Wendy Woodworth.



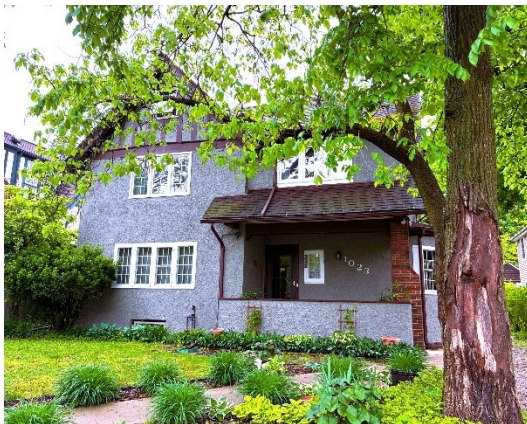
Huron Hills Golf Course Clubhouse, 3465 East Huron River Drive – Huron Hills Golf Course is a beautiful par 67, 18-hole course located along Huron Parkway, adjacent to Gallup Park. Established in 1922, this historic course is noted for its dramatic elevation changes and views of the Huron River. The current clubhouse was built in 1962 in a modern style and designed by the local firm of Kainlauri, McMullan, Millman Associates. It cost \$37,000 “equipped.” The 63-year old clubhouse – a simple design with roofs that float and undulate in a style resembling an

Asian pagoda – adds to the course’s charm. This award is presented to the City of Ann Arbor Department of Parks and Recreation.



Phi Delta Phi Law Fraternity, 502 East Madison Street — This Georgian style building was built for the Phi Delta Phi Law Fraternity in 1916, and it is one of a handful of fraternities still occupying their original building on the U of M campus. Phi Delta Phi was founded in Ann Arbor in 1869 and is the oldest legal fraternity in the United States. Its chapters have produced five presidents, and 14 Supreme Court justices. In 2012 it was designated as a legal honor society.

The house is a cross between a fraternity and a cooperative, with chores for its 25 residents. It is a thriving residential community of law students and has been for over 150 years. Photos taken in 1919 by local photographer George Swain show both the exterior and interior and only minor changes have occurred since then. The Phi Delta Phi Law Fraternity received a Rehabilitation Award in 2009 and are now being presented with a Preservation Award for Continuing to maintain their clubhouse in a beautiful manner.



Drake House, 1023 South Forest Avenue — This Arts and Crafts stuccoed house with traces of Tudor style in the half timbering on the gable first appears in the 1916 City Directory as the home of Rollin E. Drake and wife Rose, with child Rollin V. Drake, Jr. In 1939 it became the home of Emil Lorch, Professor of Architecture and Director of the College of Architecture at the University of Michigan, when his home on Church St. was demolished to make way for East Quad. Lorch Hall is named after him. His wife Jemima lived in the house until 1951. Lorch lived

here until he died in 1963. This award is presented to the Morton and Raya Brown Trust.

Rehabilitation Awards



Arthur Brown House, 119 North Thayer Street

— Over a period of five years, the current owners removed asbestos shingle siding from this house and repaired the wood siding and painting it in true Victorian colors. Thanks go to the painter Mike Brown and his crew from Saline. This Queen Anne house was built in 1894 for Arthur Brown, a local attorney, Washtenaw County Clerk, and Secretary and Treasurer of the Washtenaw Abstract Company. From 1898-1905 Gertrude and Ervin Brooks, an “occulist and aurist” (eye and ear doctor) lived here. It changed hands frequently until Minnie and Edwin Kleinschmidt and their son Early moved in during the late 1920s. The family rented rooms, especially to nurses. The house was converted to apartments in the 1940s. It is located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District. This award is presented to Lars Bjorn and Susan Wineberg.



Sage House, 325 Catherine Street

— The current owners have removed inappropriate siding to reveal the original clapboard of their house. They had special wooden storm windows created and replaced broken or missing parts. The house is in the Colonial Revival Style and was built on the site of a much older house dating to the mid-nineteenth century. A twin of this house was created at the same time at 329 East Catherine Street next door. The first occupant of the house was J. Royal Sage, a mail carrier, and his wife Maude, their daughter Margaret, and his mother and father-in-law as well.

It is located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District. This award is presented to Peter Osler and Elizabeth (Betsy) Williams.



August and Caroline Fruhauf House, 1622

Pontiac Trail — This elaborate Queen Anne cottage displays features of many of the Revival styles of the nineteenth century including Gothic Revival with its steeply pitched rooflines, pointed vertical siding in the gables and front façade, to the intricately carved ornamental trusses and Eastlake-inspired window trim of the Stick Style. It also has sunbursts, a popular Queen Anne feature, in three of its gables. The current owner, who has lived here since 1991, has done a magnificent job in restoring the woodwork and siding, and has painted it in glorious colors that

no passerby can miss. The house was built for Augustus Fruhauf and his wife and his occupation as a carpenter explains the elaborate detailing on such a small house. This award is presented to David Michener.



Sylvina Cowles House, 321 East Ann Street

— This vernacular Italianate house was built by widow Sylvina Cowles in 1878. She and her husband Martin, a physician and surgeon, lived in Lower Town on Broadway. They were early pioneers and emigrants from upstate New York in the 1830s. Martin was the first physician to practice in Ann Arbor. Cowles's only son died in the Civil war and her husband died shortly thereafter. She died in 1891, willing her house to the First Baptist Church. It was used as a parsonage until the 1920s, then converted to apartments in the late 1930s. The current

owner has removed an inappropriate concrete porch and replaced it with an appropriate nineteenth century design in wood. We would also like to recognize Mr. Rubin's great preservation work on his other properties in the neighborhood. He is truly a model of the conscientious landlord. The house is located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, and this award is presented to Robert Rubin.



100 Huronview Boulevard — The builder of this wonderful brick Gothic Revival house, now used as office space, is unknown. It was originally a German farm house, per the owner, and prior to the construction of Huronview Boulevard it enjoyed a Main Street address. The porch was recently repaired and repainted. The double gables on the front elevation with gingerbread trim are unusual for Ann Arbor. We like to give a shout out to

buildings off the beaten track, and this is a lovely one. This award is presented to Milliken Realty Company.

Special Merit Award



Jeff and Christine Crockett, Old Fourth Ward Association — The Old Fourth Ward Association is being recognized by our city after being recognized last year as a model community group by the Michigan Historic Preservation Association (MHPN) with their Community Award. The Association has, since 1984, held meetings several times a year on topics of interest to the neighborhood and the community at large. These can range from

pedestrian safety, to signage, garbage, parking, zoning, and gardens. It publishes a newsletter twice a year and has an outdoor party in the summer for its members. Much of the credit for this goes to Jeff and Chris Crockett, who are tireless in their work for the association and for the City of Ann Arbor Bicentennial last year. They organized a quiz with 200 questions; a birthday party for the city at Liberty Plaza; researched and wrote up a timeline for every year Ann Arbor has been in existence; all while keeping their beautiful Queen Anne house in tiptop shape. We tip our hats to Jeff and Chris and their energy and commitment to the neighborhood and the entire city.

Anniversary Awards



Hildene Manor, 2220 Washtenaw Avenue, 100 years — This Tudor Revival building resembles an English country estate but holds eight six-room condominiums (formerly apartments). When built in 1925 they were the epitome of apartment living with large roomy spaces, air conditioning, and maid's quarters. Apartment living was just beginning to appeal to the wealthy. The building was designed by the Detroit architecture firm of McGrath, Dohmen, and Page. The half-timbering on the front façade

with symmetrical stone Tudor arch entries appealed to this group. Other design features included a steeply pitched roof punctuated by chimneys and groups of double hung nine-over-nine and six-over-six windows. Since it was a cooperative, owners shared responsibility for the grounds, the exterior, water and heating. They received a Preservation Award in 1990 and are now being honored on their Centennial.



Burns Park Elementary School, 1414 Wells Street, 100 years — This year marks the 100th anniversary of the opening of Burns Park School. Construction of the school began in 1923 on the western edge of Burns Park, which itself grew out of the former Washtenaw County Fairgrounds and Racetrack. It is named after George P. Burns, a Professor of Botany, who was the first commissioner of the Ann Arbor

Parks Commission in 1905. The school was originally named for the nineteenth century University of Michigan President Henry P. Tappan but the name was changed when another Tappan school opened on Stadium Boulevard in 1951. The building's Colonial Style was a nod to Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The architects were Bates and Gamble of Toledo, Ohio.

The community celebrated the school's centennial in April of 2025 with 1920s jazz performed by musicians from Community High School, a scale model of the school rendered in cake, and the Burns Park PTO's presentation of a bronze Centennial Bell, which originally graced a 19th century logging locomotive.

"In an age when so much is digital and ephemeral, we wanted to give the school an enduring gift that will ring for another 100 years," said John Pollack, a PTO volunteer who helped organize the centennial celebration. The festivities included remarks by Burns Park Principal Leslee Bullock, K-5 students, local and state politicians, and Mort Hirshman, who is one of the school's oldest living alumni. The school is scheduled for a major renovation in 2027, to be led by Quinn Evans Architects, a firm known for its

innovative and sensitive work in historic preservation.



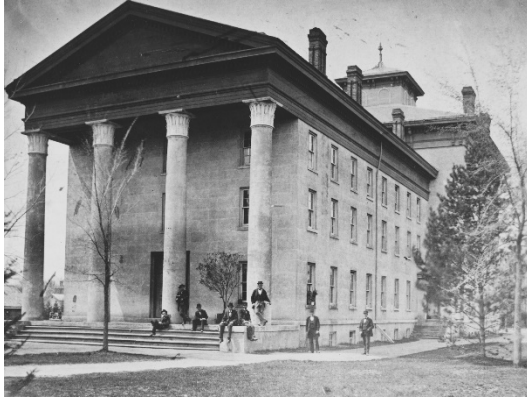
St. Mary Student Chapel, 331 Thompson, 100 years -- Designed by UM Professor of Architecture Albert J.J. Rousseau, this unusual Art Deco Roman Catholic church was dedicated in 1925 to serve students at the University of Michigan. Despite being trained in France in the Beaux-Arts style, Rousseau had a modernist streak. The sculpted stone crosses on the exterior are a good example of the Art Deco touch. The theme of the parish's Centennial Celebration is, "100 Years of Faith: Celebrating our Past, Embracing our Future - We are the Church: All are welcome, All belong!" The cornerstone of the church was laid on April 6,

1924, in which was placed a time capsule. This time capsule was opened for the Centennial Celebration with historical items in remarkably good condition. New items representative of the current parish community were added to the capsule, which was then replaced on April 6, 2025. For more than 100 years, St. Mary Student Parish has been a vital spiritual home for Catholics at the University of Michigan and throughout the Ann Arbor area.



University of Michigan School of Dentistry, 150 years — U-M played a pioneering role in dental education as this country's first public university to start a School of Dentistry, and the second university overall (after Harvard). Established in 1875 and originally called the College of Dental Surgery, the school was a leader in transforming dentistry from a craft to a profession based on science, research and best practices. Since then, it has gained global recognition, drawing students, faculty and

researchers from around the world. Its rigorous curriculum and groundbreaking research have produced many contributions to public health and the profession of dentistry. Today, the U-M School of Dentistry remains at the forefront of dental education. You can experience this yourself by visiting the Sindecuse Museum of Dentistry on the ground floor of the dental school at Fletcher and North University. The school is planning a sesquicentennial symposium June 12-13 with speakers from the school and around the country speaking on both 150 years of innovation in the Oral Health Sciences and what lies ahead in the future of the profession.



University of Michigan Medical School, 175 years — In 1850, a newly opened Greek Revival Building with massive columns greeted the first medical class of 95 students and 5 faculty. No one could imagine what they were embarking on in Ann Arbor, a small backwater in the higher education universe (Ann Arbor was founded in 1824 and the University opened in 1841). From this single building on the eastern side of the Diag was born a statewide academic health system now known as Michigan Medicine, which

recently embarked on a yearlong celebration for this milestone. What followed were U-M laboratories, classrooms, hospitals and clinics that transformed U-M into one of the world's most respected centers of biomedical education, research and advanced clinical training---and one of the largest and highest-ranked health care systems in the country. This celebration also marks a second milestone-the centennial of the opening of the Albert Kahn designed University Hospital on E. Ann St. that came to be known as "Old Main." It served the community and the school from 1925-1986. Marschall Runge, the Dean of the Medical School and CEO of Michigan Medicine notes that "sharing and learning from our history can inspire us all, including a new generation of innovators, scholars and medical professionals."

The Medical School maintains the Simpson Memorial Institute on Observatory Street, which had its groundbreaking in 1925 and served as a clinical research facility for blood disorders until the 1950s, when it was converted for educational and office use including a medical history center. Michigan Medicine will put artifacts, images and maps from its history on display for the public beginning this fall through a special exhibition at the Museum on Main Street of the Washtenaw Historical Society. Several public lectures are also planned.

Additional Activities

Old Fourth Ward Survey

The City of Ann Arbor received a Certified Local Government grant in 2021 to resurvey the Old Fourth Ward Historic District's 372 properties. Original survey information from 1982 was very incomplete. A consultant was hired and a kickoff meeting was held in 2023. Survey work and report writing was completed in 2024 (with minor editing continuing into 2025). The completed survey information is available on the city website at www.a2gov.org/hdc under *Surveys and Reports*.

For More Information

For more information about the Historic District Commission or its activities, please contact Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator, at (734) 794-6265 x42608 or email jthacher@a2gov.org.