

Michigan Historical Marker Application Synopses

Michigan Historical Commission Meeting

April 7, 2016

Baw Beese Lake

Applicant: Hillsdale Rotary Club

Marker Location: Lake is located at the end of Lakeview Drive in Hillsdale, Michigan. Marker would be located at Sandy Beach Park, next to the bathhouse/concession stand and a parking area.

Requested Marker Type: Large, two-post; different text on each side

Baw Beese Lake is significant as a recreation area for the Hillsdale community. The lake was named for Baw Beese, leader of a Potawatomie band that had a small village near the lake. After Baw Beese and his band were forcibly removed, the lake became a popular picnic and swimming spot for Hillsdale residents. A resort was located at the lake, near Sandy Beach, from the early 1890s to the 1910s. Volunteers constructed a bathhouse in 1955 that was renovated into a concession stand in 2011. The lake and beach continue to be used for recreational purposes to the present day.

David Whitney Building

Applicant: David Di Rita

Marker Location: Exterior of Building, at the main entrance on Grand Circus Park, 1 Park Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County.

Requested Marker Type: Large, wall-mounted

Daniel Burnham and Company designed this nineteen-story building for David Charles Whitney. It was completed in 1915. Whitney named the building for his father, David Whitney, Jr. (1830-1900), who was involved in the lumber, shipping, and real estate industries. The building had retail on the ground floor and offices on the upper levels. The Whitney family owned the structure until 1965. In 1983, the David Whitney Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Grand Circus Park Historic District. By 2000, the building was vacant. From 2012 to 2014, the building was renovated for use as apartments and a hotel. The building reopened in 2014.

Charles Brotherton House

Applicant: David Curtis

Marker Location: Front lawn of house, next to the sidewalk, at 606 Ogden Avenue, Escanaba, Delta County.

Requested Marker Type: Small, one-post; same text on each side (Note: Staff will request Sponsor upgrade to different text on each side).

This house is significant for its association with Charles Brotherton. In the 1850s, Brotherton surveyed sections of Michigan's Upper Peninsula and northern Wisconsin. In 1865, Brotherton began working for the Chicago and Northwestern Railway. The house was constructed for Brotherton in 1873, and he lived there until his death in 1908. Brotherton also served as Delta County surveyor and on the County Board of Supervisors.

Tawas Point Light Station

Applicant: Friends of Tawas Point Lighthouse and State Park

Marker Location: Near the lighthouse, on the site of a now-demolished 'Double Dwelling.' This is within the boundaries of the Tawas Point State Park, in East Tawas, Iosco County.

Requested Marker Type: Large, two-post; different text on each side

This light station was constructed in 1876 to replace an earlier station. The station's fifth order light helped ships navigate near Tawas Point and within Saginaw Bay. In 1892, the light was replaced with a fourth order Fresnel lens, which is still extant. The light was maintained by a keeper who lived on site. In 1898, an oil house was built adjacent to the light tower. The Coast Guard began to maintain the light in 1947. The Department of Natural Resources acquired the station in 2001, and it became part of Tawas Point State Park.

Edith C. Munger

Applicant: Commission-Initiated

Marker Location: To Be Decided. Will be in Silver Lake State Park or at the Hart Montague State Park Trail trailhead

Requested Marker Type: Large, two-post; different text on each side.

This marker will be part of the Michigan Conservation Heritage Trail. It commemorates the conservation work of Edith C. Munger, who was one of Michigan's early advocates for the protection of birds and other wildlife. She served as president of the Michigan Audubon Society for twenty-one years and was a leading conservation educator. In the 1920s, she made regular radio broadcasts on station WWJ in Detroit.