

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: De Zwaan Windmill

Other names/site number: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing:  
n/a

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: Windmill Island Gardens, 1 Lincoln Avenue

City or town: Holland State: MI County: Ottawa 139

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national   X   statewide     local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  X   A   X   B     C     D

<u>Marek J. Mue...</u>	<u>3/2/18</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>MI SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Patrick Andrews  
Signature of the Keeper

4/17/2018  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

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**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
<u>1</u>	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register n/a

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE: processing

RECREATION/CULTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE: processing

RECREATION/CULTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: 8-sided Dutch smock mill

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, wood: shake, metal: copper

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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**Summary Paragraph**

The reconstructed Dutch windmill De Zwaan has stood since 1964 at Windmill Island Gardens, a thirty-six-acre municipally-owned park on the northern edge of downtown Holland, Michigan, in the watershed region where the Black River joins Lake Macatawa. It is an eight-sided Dutch smock mill fabricated from a structure and components dating to the early 1800s. The mill was purchased by the City of Holland, disassembled, and transported to Holland, Michigan, in 1964. It is the last windmill allowed to leave the Netherlands. The wooden post and beam mill is covered in cedar shakes and sits atop a brick tower base constructed of Michigan brick. The mill is seven stories in height including its cap, which is covered with copper shingles. It is situated on land in Holland, Michigan, selected because it resembled the lowlands of the Netherlands, surrounded by canals and waterways, and also because it provided access to prevailing wind to allow the windmill to operate. It is still a working grain mill, powered by the wind. The mill received a new gallery (upper level deck) in the spring of 2012, and underwent a major restoration in the fall of 2013. The mill retains its original appearance as it was reconstructed in 1964, and choices made during the recent restoration work reflect the intent to preserve the overall integrity of the historic structure.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

Since 1964 the Dutch windmill De Zwaan has been located at Windmill Island Gardens, a thirty-six-acre, municipally-owned heritage park situated at 7th Street and Lincoln Avenue on the edge of downtown Holland, Michigan, in the watershed region where the Black River joins Lake Macatawa. The windmill is situated on a 22.7-acre island, separated from the rest of the park by the river. This parcel of land was originally selected in 1962 because of its access to wind for operating the windmill, and, as low-lying land surrounded by canals and waterways, it resembled the landscape of the Netherlands. The open, grassy fields are enclosed on the north, east, and west by mature trees that also act as a screen to the rest of the city beyond the river. Decorative trees line much of the south shore of the island along a paved pathway that circles the island. The windmill is set atop a slight rise in the land. The top of the rise is paved, while the southern edge is decorated with modern landscaping. Concrete steps separate the landscaping into two nearly symmetrical zones, and lead from the windmill to an open area to the south. A paved pathway, approximately ten-feet wide, rings the entire island near the outer edge, and two narrower paths lead from the main pathway to the windmill. Decorative trees line the north side of the pathway on the southern edge of the park, and the west path leading to the windmill. A variety of mature, deciduous trees dot the island.

### Early History

The De Zwaan windmill was originally built on Dennenlaan (Dennen Lane) in the small community of Vinkel, in the southern province of North Brabant, the Netherlands, in 1884 as a grain mill. It was built using a mill structure and specialized components from older mills dating to the early 1800s. When the mill was built by Henricus Franciscus de Vocht in 1884, its purpose was to feed a largely rural community with a population near five hundred. De Vocht ran it for two years until 1886, and then turned operations over to his new son-in-law, Piet van Schaijk, who continued the milling work until 1900 when the construction of a new church blocked the wind needed to power the windmill. The priest was unrelenting despite the miller's frustration. Van Schaijk ultimately decided to move the mill. In 1902 with the help of Evert Michels, it was moved to the east of the original location onto *Lindenlaan* (Linden Lane).

On Lindenlaan the mill was rebuilt as a *bergmolen* or *beltmolen* because it stood on a mound of land (On Dennenlaan, it was a *grondmolen*, or built level to the ground.). It was designed with a lower level underground for storage and receiving the grain, built with six-sided foundation walls made of brick. The eight-sided exposed portion of the mill was four stories tall, with its blades having a *vlucht* (flight) of 25.5 meters (83.66 feet) that reached to the ground. The body of the mill was made of wood construction and was covered on the exterior with a simple tar paper rather than the typical thatch.

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With the move of the mill, Piet van Schaijk was able to continue his work as miller, and was eventually followed by his son, Willem van Schayk,<sup>1</sup> who took over operations about 1920. Willem operated the mill by wind power with two sets of millstones until the beginning of World War II (1940). Due to significant damage during the war, wind power was no longer possible. Following the war and into the early 1960s, miller Willem van Schayk continued minimal operations using a hammer mill powered by a diesel motor.

Due to war damage and deterioration, the windmill was in dire need of restoration. Willem van Schayk made inquiries into available government subsidies following the war in 1945, and beginning in 1953 made repeated appeals to *De Hollandsche Molen* (DHM, or the Dutch Mill Society) for help to restore the mill. *De Hollandsche Molen* was founded in 1923 to help protect and preserve the remaining Dutch mills, both wind and water powered. The technical advisor of DHM, Arie de Koning, sent an architect, M.C. Aspert, to inspect the mill. Aspert provided an estimate for repair at 3,279 guilders. Additional estimates came from the millwright firm *Gebroeders Adriaens* (the Brothers Adriaens) in 1955 and 1956 ranging from 11,610 to 14,310 guilders. The millwright firm helped take up the cause for the miller and appealed to Anton Bicker Caarten, a director at the Netherlands' Ministry of Cultural Heritage. In their appeal, they proposed that the ministry pay sixty percent, the miller twenty percent, the province ten percent and the local communities directly benefitting from the windmill contribute the remaining ten percent.

In 1957 the Dutch government had agreed to fund not the requested sixty percent, but sixty-five percent of the restoration cost. Van Schayk also had his contribution ready. By 1961 the estimate for repair had risen to 19,467 guilders, and by late 1962, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences advised van Schayk that work must begin immediately or he would lose the government subsidy.

The delay in the work was due to the disagreement of the local communities. Because the mill sat in one locality, bordering four others, with the miller living away from the mill, the local governments could not agree, so none of them were willing to pay. Without community funding, the monies from the other governments could not be dispersed and the restoration of the windmill could not proceed. This was unfortunate for both van Schayk and for the village of Vinkel. With no other options, van Schayk sold the mill to *Gebroeders Adriaens* in May 1964 for 3,500 guilders.

Because of the many obstacles with restoring the mill in its existing location, it became eligible for consideration by the City of Holland for purchase. Initially the City's request in late 1961 was refused and not encouraged, because that same year a preservation law had been passed in the Netherlands called the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act of 1961, which recognized windmills as national monuments.

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<sup>1</sup> The change in spelling here reflects an evolution in Dutch spelling conventions.

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**A Mill for Bill**

Extensive negotiations took place from 1962 to 1964 between a representative for the City of Holland, Willard C. Wichers, who was the Director of the Midwest Division of the Netherlands Information Service, and The Dutch Mill Society and the Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences in the Netherlands. Ultimately the Dutch were willing to grant an exception and allow Holland, Michigan, to purchase what became the last windmill allowed to leave the Netherlands, believing that the town was a fitting place for a monument to Dutch culture in America due to it being the epi-center of mid-nineteenth-century migration of Dutch people to America and because of the continuing interest and presence of Dutch culture in the city.

The sale was completed in June 1964, and the dismantling of De Zwaan began, undertaken by Dutch millwright, Jan Diederik (Diek) Medendorp. Diek found the overall condition of the mill to be worse than he was hoping. Of the main support beams making up the eight-sided structure, he found only five were usable and three had to be replaced. The spur wheel and stone gears had also deteriorated and would have to be replaced or rebuilt. However, Medendorp did try to retain as much as possible of the original mill so that it could be shipped over and reused. Some of the larger and identifiable parts include the windshaft, the blades, the millstones, the brake wheel, five of the eight main structural beams (originally made of Norwegian fir), the roller system and track, and additional horizontal support beams.

By September windmill parts totaling a weight of 70 tons were loaded onto the ship *Prins Willem van Oranje* in Rotterdam and made their journey across the ocean to America, under the leadership of Dutch captain, Aart Schuijjer, arriving at Muskegon harbor, on Lake Michigan thirty-five miles north of Holland, on the morning of October 5, 1964. Company officials for the *Oranje Lijn* had informed Holland mayor Nelson Bosman on September 10 that “it is nautically impossible to use your harbor at Holland.” After a formal ceremony in Muskegon aboard ship, where the mill parts were turned over to the Americans, they were taken by truck to Holland, their transport through the city’s main street to the site witnessed by a large crowd.

The location for the windmill in Holland, Michigan, was chosen by the technical advisor to the Dutch Mill Society, Arie de Koning, who had made a site visit to Holland in 1962. He chose the site, which became Windmill Island, because it offered a sweep of flat lowlands without trees, buildings or other obstructions so that the windmill would have sufficient access to wind.

While the ship was crossing the Atlantic Ocean in September of 1964, work was already underway on the thirty-two forty-foot pilings that were needed to support the base and the mill. During October, November, and into December, work progressed on the three-story brick base that would raise the mill thirty-five feet high to capture the wind. The brick base was thirty-four feet in diameter at the ground narrowing to twenty-eight feet at the gallery level. It was built of Michigan brick but laid in a Dutch style, sloping inward to add strength and promote drainage.

Working through the winter under the leadership of Dutch millwright Medendorp and assisted by local contractor and crew, Del Schrotenboer of Del Construction, the old windmill was pieced back together and placed atop the base. The brick base, fourth-story gallery or stage, and the original mill are octagonal in shape. Above the brick base and wooden gallery, the exterior of the

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body of the mill was covered with wooden clapboard siding and cedar shakes, and the rounded cap was given a roof of copper shingles. Inside the mill, wooden staircases were added to make the mill more accessible for public visitation. There are two sets of stairs (up and down) from the first through fourth floors, then a single staircase to the fifth floor. Traditionally only ladders were used between floors in Dutch windmills, and this is still what is used in De Zwaan by the miller to access the sixth and seventh floors.

The blades that turn on the windmill reach from the gallery level up to a height of 125 feet, as measured from the ground when the blades are in a "T" position. The two metal sail stocks that make up the base of the blades are eighty feet in length and sit in an exposed axle of the windshaft, held in place by wooden wedges. Lattice framework made of wood extends from the metal sail stocks to create both a leading edge and trailing edge to the blades. The original cast iron wind shaft came with the mill from Vinkel. It was made by an iron foundry named Feyenoord, located near Dordrecht, the Netherlands. Its date of manufacture is approximately 1840.

All of the gears that make up the drive train in the upper three floors of the mill (fifth, sixth, and seventh) are made of wood. The brake wheel is one of the oldest gears of the windmill. The brake band that surrounds it had to be created when the mill was rebuilt in 1964-1965. The original spur wheel and stone gears from Vinkel had to be replaced, so Medendorp used parts from the Molen van Jonker, which was built in 1897, and had recently been relocated and rebuilt by Medendorp in Aruba in 1961. The mill was to be used as a restaurant, so was not in need of the gears for a grain mill.

When moved to Holland, Michigan, the mill was set up with two sets of millstones, with one set of millstones for the purpose of grinding grain and the second set of millstones to be on display for interpretive purposes. The working and interpretive set of millstones in the mill are a man-made poured stone dating to the early part of the twentieth century most likely made by the Dutch millstone maker firm of Jaspers. Also arriving with the mill from Vinkel were two additional stones made of German bluestone that were used when the mill was first built in 1884, and had most likely come from an earlier mill *Nooitgedacht* (Never Thought) built in 1800 in 's-Hertogenbosch (Den Bosch). The artificial stones had replaced the blue stones in 1908.

The mill was completed in time for a dedication ceremony with Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and Michigan Governor George W. Romney on April 10, 1965. Windmill Island officially opened to the public on May 8, 1965, and received over forty thousand visitors in the first nine days of operation, with many eager to see the Dutch windmill De Zwaan and also the accompanying 125,000 tulips in bloom in a park-like setting reminiscent of the Netherlands. The canals and reconstructed drawbridge, based on one at the *Nederlands Openlucht Museum* (Netherlands Open Air Museum) at Arnhem, helped complete the appropriate setting for the windmill on the north side of the Island. Towards the front of the park, a reconstructed Post House made of brick, copied from one in Ruinen, the Netherlands, provided a taste of historic Dutch architecture.



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The windmill has been able to continue as a working grain mill for the fifty years that it has resided in Holland, Michigan. By the year 2000, it needed the first part of a major restoration effort with the replacement of the blades of the mill. The original blades had been installed in 1902 in the Netherlands and had served nearly a century, still carrying bullet holes from WWII. They were made by a well-known Dutch firm, *Gebroeders Pot* (Pot Brothers), who produced many sail stocks for windmills in the early 1900s. The next restoration effort came in 2012 with the replacement of the gallery or stage of the mill. A wooden structure was used to replace the one put on in 1964-1965 during its relocation to Holland, Michigan.

The most recent portion of the major restoration efforts occurred during the fall of 2013. This work required the removal of the blades and cap of the mill. Portions of the cap were rebuilt, and the brake system received an overhaul. The track and rollers that the cap turns on along with several large structural beams that stabilize the cap were replaced. The lightning grounding system was updated for safety. The millstones also received a great deal of attention such as a new bearing in the bedstone, a new rind and balancing of the runner stone, and a new drive shaft designed more in the traditional Dutch style.

The exterior of the body of the mill also received renewal. The original cedar shakes placed on the outside in 1965 needed to be replaced after serving almost fifty years. The four thousand copper shingles that adorned the cap had also served their life, so De Zwaan received brand new cedar shakes and shiny new copper shingles, put in place by Grand River Builders. The primary local contractor who assisted with the restoration was Elzinga & Volkers, who was supervised by the Dutch millwright firm *Verbij B.V.* from Hoogmade, the Netherlands. Verbij carried out all three projects in 2000, 2012 and 2013.

De Zwaan windmill continues to be open to the public during its season from late April to early October. Visitors who view the outside of the mill see the three-story brick tower, encircled at the top of the base by a wooden gallery or stage, then above that the oldest part of the mill, made of wood and covered with cedar shakes. The rounded cap on top is covered with copper shingles and has the axle of the windshaft protruding out the front to hold the two eighty-foot long blades. On the back side are two sets of diagonal beams extending downward from cross beams coming out from the cap, connecting to a long tailpole reaching to the gallery. At the bottom of the tailpole is a large capstan wheel for rotating the cap and blades. Also extending from the back of the cap is a brake pole with a chain hanging down, then finally changing to a rope to serve as a brake rope for controlling the brake. On the back side of the cap, there is a name board identifying the mill as "*De Zwaan*" (The Swan). On the front side of the cap, and visible behind the axle of the windshaft and just below, is the "*baard*" or beard of the mill. There is a carved wooden swan set on a decorative scroll board to serve as the beard and identify the mill.

Visitors touring the inside would learn that every floor has a name and a function. The first floor is the receiving floor where farmers would drop off their grain to be milled. There are large double doors allowing a horse and cart to pull through after unloading their grain. There is a rope for a sack hoist for hoisting bags of grain and an elevator shaft that goes from the first floor to the fifth floor, which is the destination for the grain. The second floor is the packaging floor where today flour is sifted, weighed and packaged for sale. Equipment on this floor includes a

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bolter, a mechanical sifter, twelve-inch electrically powered stones for small batches of alternate grains, a large scale for wholesale orders, a small scale for retail orders, a mechanical bagger, and two freezers for freezing the product before it goes out for sale.

The third floor is the storage floor where there is a large stainless steel storage bin (installed in 1966) for storing the flour after it is milled by the millstones on an upper floor. The bin can hold from 3,300 to 4,000 pounds depending on the bulk density of the product. There is also a display of older mill parts including the maker's plate from the old blades that served the mill from 1902 to 2000 made by *Gebroeders Pot*. Metal rollers from the old turning system are also on display. They are unique in that they are tapered. Only one other mill in Rotterdam is known to have had similar tapered rollers.

The fourth floor begins the old part of the mill that was brought from the Netherlands. The walls change from brick to wood at this point. The ceiling is fourteen feet high with the eight main, upright, structural beams visible. There are double doors opposite each other to access the gallery outside. Inside, the elevator shaft that comes up from the first floor is visible with a railing for viewing downward. This floor is called the milling floor because here the miller controls the milling process. A stainless steel chute covered by wood provides access for the miller to check the quality of the flour, and if needed, a thick weighted rope is nearby to adjust the distance between the stones during the milling process. In 2013 a set of blue weights were connected to ropes that extend to the stones above that allow the miller to adjust the feed of the grain into the millstones. Between the fourth and fifth floors is a wooden loft where a governor is visible and can be seen turning during the milling process. It also allows access to the stone bearings below the stones for maintenance, and to the upper part of the flour chute for cleaning.

A single set of stairs provide access to the fifth floor, called the stone floor. With the octagonal shape and inward slanting brick and wood frame, the size of the floors narrow as you go up. The stone floor houses two sets of millstones, two stone gears, a large spur wheel above, a central shaft, a sack hoist wheel called a "Y" wheel, and a friction gear to drive it. There are also two stone cranes for hoisting the top millstone if needed for sharpening or dressing the stones. The set of millstones to the west is the working set, with the set to the east for interpretive use. The fifth floor ends the public tour space of the windmill.

The sixth floor is the dust floor. It is located directly beneath the cap and helps to prevent dust and dirt from falling on the mill floors below. This floor is also the powerhouse, or engine room, of the mill, and is only accessible by ladder. It houses the rollers and track system for turning the cap, the brake beam and lower portion of the brake wheel and band, and the wallower gear that transfers power from the brake wheel and windshaft downward to the central shaft and spur wheel below. The cap above has only a very small ladder and is accessed by the miller for maintenance to the bearings on the windshaft and upper part of the central shaft. Beeswax is applied to the wooden gears such as the brake wheel and wallower gear to keep them lubricated.

The year 2015 marked the fiftieth anniversary of De Zwaan in its American home of Holland, Michigan. Thanks to the recent restorations, the mill is in very good condition and operates well. It is still performing the task for which it was built of grinding grain to feed a community, all the

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while being a symbol of heritage, industry, and technology reminding us that wind power has been around for a long, long time.

### **Additional Features**

Additional features found on the 22.7-acre island include eleven-foot-wide interior canals running north, south, southwest and northeast, originally intended to create different areas for interpreting Dutch use of a rural landscape, particularly with regards to agriculture, horticulture, floriculture and water management. At present, there are three fields in use to the northeast of the windmill. The largest in size and closest to the windmill is somewhat triangular in shape, running 260 feet on its north to south side by 130 feet along its north end. This field is referred to as the *West Veld*, or West Field. The second field, known as the *Oost Veld* or East Field, is ninety feet running east to west by eighty-four feet running north to south. The third field, *Noordoost Veld* or Northeast Field is ninety feet running east to west by forty-eight feet running north to south. All three are used for planting and displaying tulips when they are in bloom in May, particularly for the Tulip Time Festival when Holland is host to thousands of visitors from all over the world. The second field is used from late May through September for a community garden, allowing local residents to use eight-by-twelve-and-a-half foot plots to grow their own vegetables.

Wooden board fencing with five-foot-high posts and three six-inch wide boards coming up to almost four feet in height is located on the south, southwest and west sides. The fencing along with a wooden horse shelter measuring twenty-four feet in length, fourteen feet in width, and ten feet in height, is located about 125 feet west of the windmill. The shelter and fencing provide containment for Frisian horses that are in residence during the summer months.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A Cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage: European: Dutch

Social History

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1964-1965  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

October 5, 1964  
April 10, 1965  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Wichers, Willard C.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

De Vocht, Henricus Franciscus – 1884  
Medendorp, Jan Diederik – 1964/65  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The De Zwaan Windmill, a reconstructed Dutch windmill built using structural and working components brought from the Netherlands to Holland, Michigan, has become the symbol of the city of Holland in the more than fifty years since its completion and dedication in 1965. De Zwaan meets National Register Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage (European: Dutch) as a unique and significant community project led by the City of Holland out of a desire to have a tangible symbol of the city's Dutch heritage, which dates back to the founding of the town in the 1840s and is still very much present in the city's substantial Dutch population and Dutch institutions. The mill also meets National Register Criterion B in the area of Social History through its direct association with Willard C. Wichers, who played a key role in securing the mill

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for Holland, Michigan, from the Netherlands. Wichers is significant for his work in support of Dutch migration to West Michigan and the United States in the wake of the devastation in the Netherlands resulting from both World War II and the devastating 1953 North Sea flood, and for his long-time efforts related to historic preservation and the preservation of the historical record in the Holland area and state of Michigan in general.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Ethnic Heritage: European: Dutch**

The original suggestion for an authentic Dutch windmill to be moved to Holland, Michigan, as a symbol of the city's Dutch heritage dating back to Holland's founding, came in 1929 by a member of the Holland Exchange Club. This was the local unit of a national service organization founded in Detroit in 1911 by businessmen who wanted to "exchange" ideas on improving their communities. That same year, the first Tulip Time Festival was held resulting from a suggestion made in 1927 by Lida Rogers, a biology teacher at Holland High School. She suggested that in an effort to beautify the city and reflect the Dutch heritage, tulip bulbs should be planted throughout the community. Tulips were first planted en masse in the fall of 1928.

While the annual Tulip Time Festival has continued from 1929 onward (with the exception of the war years 1942-45), the idea for an authentic Dutch windmill languished until it was raised by Carter P. Brown in August 1961. Brown served as the owner and manager of the Castle Park resort on Lake Michigan, located just south of Holland. Originally from Chicago, Brown grew up spending summers at Castle Park. He took over ownership and operation from his uncle, John Parr, in 1917. Brown and his wife spent many years running the Castle Park resort and as a result developed a strong affinity for Holland. Brown's affection for the Dutch community led to his suggestion of acquiring an authentic windmill.

At the time Brown began summering in the Holland area in 1905, the town was already more than a half-century in the making. Its origins are traced to the Reverend Albertus C. van Raalte, who in 1846 left the Netherlands with a group of 109 followers to seek a new life in the American Midwest. Van Raalte and his followers found themselves drawn to the West Michigan area in hopes of finding a place both to practice their own form of religion free from the oppression of the state church in the Netherlands and find economic opportunity in a region with fertile land and waterways. The area was already home to a band of Odawa Indians under the leadership of Chief Waukazoo, a missionary family (Smith), an agricultural agent here to serve the Odawa (Fairbanks), and a nearby settler (Harrington). Van Raalte's fledgling colony flourished as more Dutch settlers arrived. By the fall of 1847 the population of the growing Dutch *Kolonie* (colony) in Holland and the surrounding settlements numbered approximately 1,500. Between the years of 1847 and 1857, about one thousand Dutch immigrants came to America per year, with nearly half of them making West Michigan their new home. This was a ten-fold increase from the years 1820 to 1840, when less than a hundred people a year were leaving the Netherlands to come to America (Ten Harmsel, *Dutch in Michigan*, 2002).

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The main areas from which they emigrated included the provinces of Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe, Overijssel, and Zeeland. Additional settlers started new communities beyond the Holland colony, and often named them for the regions they left behind. As a result, many of the communities surrounding Holland, Michigan, still bear Dutch names to this day. Dutch settlement spread across West Michigan as far south as Kalamazoo, to the north to Montague, and to the east to Grand Rapids. By 1880 there were about ten thousand people in Michigan who were Dutch-born, and another thirty thousand were second generation (Ten Harmsel, *Dutch in Michigan*).

Although there were additional Dutch settlements across the Midwest in places such as Little Chute, Wisconsin, and Pella, Iowa, as a result of migrations led by a Dutch priest, Father T. Vanden Broek, and another Dutch pastor, Rev. H. P. Scholte, due to the overwhelming numbers of Dutch immigrants and success of the settlements, West Michigan became the epi-center of mid-nineteenth century migration to America. Of the total number of foreign-born Dutch immigrants residing in various sections of the United States, for the years 1850 to 1930, residents in Michigan accounted for a quarter to a third of the total for all the states combined, quickly surpassing New York state by 1860 (data from the United States Bureau of Census).

Henry S. Lucas, in his 1955 volume, *Netherlanders in America: Dutch Immigration to the United States and Canada, 1789-1950*, explains:

the immigrant from the Netherlands did not come to America or to Canada merely to exchange one fatherland for another. It must be evident that he brought to this country a rich cultural inheritance – something he could not forget as he and his friends embraced the myriad forms of life in the new fatherland, on its prairies, and in the wild forests of the Midwestern frontier... the Netherlanders who began to immigrate to this country under the leadership of Van Raalte and Scholte in 1846 and 1847 were endowed with a marked refinement and an inner spiritual life which guided their thought and action after they had settled on the American frontier. Although their mental and moral influence cannot be measured exactly, these people have made notable contributions to American life and culture.

Lucas' account of Dutch settlements makes note of other Dutch-settled areas such as Pella, Iowa, and places in other states including Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota, but asserts that:

nowhere has the Dutch contribution been so marked as in the *Kolonie* in western Michigan and in the neighboring cities of Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Muskegon. In this area, settling the wilderness, the Dutch founders shared in the short and simple annals characteristic of frontier pioneers and created a community which for no less than three generations was essentially Dutch in thought and language and which will long bear the marks of its Netherlands origin.

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Holland, Michigan, is today at the center of the largest concentration of people of Dutch ancestry in the nation. The broad area of West Michigan that extends outward from the city generally to Grand Rapids on the east, Kalamazoo on the southeast, and Muskegon on the north retains visible evidence of its Dutch heritage in its many polychromatic brick houses and other buildings and Dutch gable-front barns, in its Dutch Protestant (most commonly Reformed and Christian Reformed) churches, in the cemeteries with their names and sometimes inscriptions in Dutch, and in the Dutch family names that are so characteristic of that part of the state that those who have Dutch names are commonly assumed to be from, or at least have roots, in that area. Holland's Tulip Time Festival, which has expanded over the years into a large-scale event that brings thousands of visitors to the city each year to revel in the display of tulips along the roadsides, wooden shoes, and Klompen dancers, and every other sort of Dutchness is one of the most visible manifestations of the Dutch heritage and the people's pride in it. Yet, with the 1964 arrival of the truckloads of material from the original De Zwaan windmill from the Netherlands, when the public lined Holland's main street to celebrate as the shipments made their way to the new site, to the completion and dedication of the mill in 1965, and down to the present, De Zwaan became and has remained the symbol of the city.

### **De Zwaan Windmill**

Carter Brown thought that one way Holland, Michigan, could prominently celebrate its Netherlands origins was to have an outward and visible sign in the form of an authentic Dutch windmill. In late 1961 he brought his idea to Holland resident Willard C. Wichers, who at that time was the Director of the Midwest Division of the Netherlands Information Service, an agency of the Dutch government located in Holland. Dutch officials had chosen Holland, Michigan, because of the size and importance of the area's Dutch community. Within weeks of his suggestion, a "windmill committee" was formed, the City Council and Mayor were soon behind the project, and the effort to obtain an authentic windmill from the Netherlands began in earnest. The same year that "project windmill" began in Holland, Michigan, the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act of 1961 was passed in the Netherlands. The law recognized historic buildings as monuments and provided for their protection. Among its provisions was a prohibition on the exportation of windmills from the country.

Despite the new law Brown, Wichers, and city officials continued in their quest. The effort to secure an authentic Dutch windmill for Holland, Michigan, was a two-and-a-half-year process that included extensive negotiations between the Dutch government, the Dutch Mill Society, and the City of Holland, as represented by Willard Wichers. The long process began with repeated "no's" from the Dutch, but fortunately turned the tide with the positive influence of the wife of the Netherlands Ambassador Herman Van Royen, after Wichers related the windmill idea during a trip with them. Van Royen reminded her husband what an important Dutch community Holland, Michigan is and encouraged him to let Wichers go to the Netherlands to make his request for a windmill. The tide turned again in Wichers' favor during a visit in the Netherlands when an article entitled "A Mill for Bill," written by a Time-Life magazine correspondent appeared in the popular Dutch newspaper, "*De Telegraf*," and swayed Dutch public opinion in a positive direction for the American Hollanders to acquire a windmill.



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An exception to the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act was ultimately granted allowing Holland, Michigan, to receive the last windmill allowed to leave the Netherlands. The sale of the windmill was concluded in June 1964. Following its dismantling, it was loaded onto a ship in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, in September and arrived in Muskegon harbor in October. A ceremony aboard ship on October 5, 1964, officially transferred the windmill from the Netherlands to the City of Holland, Michigan. Diek Medendorp, the Dutch millwright who supervised the dismantling of De Zwaan windmill in the Netherlands, arrived in the United States in October 1964 to supervise the reconstruction of the mill in its new American home.

Just as the City of Holland found difficulty with convincing the Dutch in the Netherlands, there was also difficulty with financing the project back at home. In addition to the effort to acquire the land needed for the windmill and accompanying park, (which they did with initial two-year payments, then ten-year leases with an option to buy, for the thirty-acre Hyma property and 120-acre Kempker property) they also had to have a strategy to finance the whole project. City Council thought they had found a wonderful solution through the Public Facilities Acceleration Act of 1962 which made available up to ninety million dollars for eligible localities in Michigan for approved projects on a fifty percent matching basis. The city would have been authorized by the state to sell revenue bonds to finance the matching portion of the project. Any bonds not purchased by individuals could be purchased by the federal government at an interest rate of not more than four percent. So, the possibility existed that the entire project could be financed through the use of existing and presently allocated federal funds. City Council was committed to not allowing any tax dollars to be used for the project, and expected the revenues to allow the project to be self-sustaining, based on a marketing study conducted by Dr. Frank Suggitt from Michigan State University. Holland City Council took the steps of retaining the services of the architectural firm Kammeraad and Stroop to prepare the engineering plans and also by retaining the law firm of Dickinson, Wright, McKean and Cudlip of Detroit as bond attorneys to prepare the revenue bond ordinance in preparation for submitting an application to the Community Facilities Administration of the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency for a grant under the Public Facilities Acceleration Act of 1962. Ultimately the application submitted was turned down due to the requirement that all bids must be competitive in a federal contract, and it would not be possible to buy an imported windmill on a competitive basis.

City Council heard the first reading of the Windmill Island Recreational Facilities Revenue Bond Ordinance at their September 25, 1963, council meeting which called for 450,000 dollars in revenue bonds. Controversy surrounded this new solution over the issue of whether Windmill Island would be a compulsory seven-day or six-day operation. On a 5-to-4 vote, the ordinance was amended to "a minimum of six days." Council members voting "no" were concerned that it would bind future Councils to a seven-day operation for the twenty-year revenue bond period. The bond ordinance was approved at the October 16, 1963, meeting. The next step was to obtain permission to issue the revenue bonds from the Michigan Finance Commission in Lansing. Approval for the bonds was granted on February 11, 1964, and the sale of revenue bonds as prepared by James R. Pollack, a financial consultant from Kalamazoo, began Wednesday, March 18, 1964, when the city council approved the sale of 450,000 dollars of bonds to Goodbody and Co. of New York, Chicago, and Detroit at an interest rate of 4.224 per cent with an 8-to-1 vote. City Auditor John Fonger reported at that time that inquiries to purchase bonds by individuals

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had already totaled fifty-five thousand dollars. They were sold in one-thousand-dollar denominations for a twenty-year period.

The approved 450,000 dollars was intended to finance development of Windmill Island and the annual operating budget of 125,000 dollars. Revenues were expected to pay all costs involved including the principal and interest on the bonds. Based on a marketing report prepared by Frank Suggitt, it was expected that annual average attendance would approximate 500,000. Annual attendance figures of the two restored forts at Mackinac of one million visitors at fifty cents per visitor was encouraging to the windmill committee.

Local, regional, and national support for the project had been expressed in many different forms from an initial anonymous check of one thousand dollars for the project, to the one thousand people who attended a barbecue dinner held July 24, 1962, at the Civic Center where the guest of honor was Arie De Koning, the technical advisor of the Dutch Mill Society (the purpose of his visit was to locate a suitable site for a windmill in Holland, Michigan), to the 450,000 dollars in revenue bonds that were sold to people both locally and throughout nineteen different states to finance the project, and even the local and regional trucking companies who generously provided trucks and drivers to transport the windmill from Muskegon harbor to Holland when it arrived in October 1964. The six-month restoration project was concluded just in time for the official dedication by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and State of Michigan Governor George W. Romney on April 10, 1965. Its opening to the public in May 1965 fulfilled the revenue bond issue requirement of being open in time for the 36th annual Tulip Time Festival. By bringing De Zwaan to America, the citizens of Holland fulfilled a dream of having an authentic Dutch windmill in their city, and also saved it from continuing deterioration in its original home.

The decade of the 1960s was a time of reflection on heritage and preservation. A report coordinated by Lady Bird Johnson, and published as a book, *With Heritage So Rich*, and containing a collection of essays, helped stimulate public awareness for the need for historic preservation and a national program to support it. The report helped pave the way for the National Historic Preservation Act to be signed into law on October 15, 1966. The Act allowed for the establishment of several key institutions and preservation programs, including the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Register of Historic Places, State Historic Preservation Offices, and the Section 106 review process. The project of acquiring De Zwaan and moving it to Holland, Michigan, and carefully reconstructing it to be as authentic as possible fits broadly into the increasing national interest in preserving historic properties. It is interesting to note that the project to acquire the windmill took place in the time period between the passing of significant preservation legislation in both the Netherlands and the United States.

While the historic preservation movement was beginning to sweep the country, the Holland community's desire to have an outward symbol of the Dutch heritage of the town, and most of its residents, was an expression of the awareness of the importance of history and development of their community, or everyman's history. This idea of expressing their heritage was recognized by the Dutch government through their willingness to allow a windmill to be brought to the United States and restored in Holland. The 1962 resolution from the Dutch government proclaimed that the De Zwaan windmill "recognizes the importance of Holland, Michigan as a center of Dutch

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influence in America,” and that “the bringing of the windmill to Holland and its availability to the public will enhance the reputation of the city as a focal point in the United States for things Dutch.”

The windmill project came at a unique juncture in time. In addition to the preservation movements in both countries and the awareness of social history, it required a sympathetic and cooperative spirit from the Dutch, and a key person from Holland, Michigan, to persuade the Dutch government, handle negotiations, and see the project through to completion.

The remarkable person of Willard C. Wichers deserves attention because he was the key figure in the project by representing the City of Holland and was also important as an advocate for the preservation of history and the historical record in the West Michigan area and Michigan in general. Wichers was born in 1909 in Zeeland, Michigan, attended Hope College in Holland, Michigan, where he graduated in 1932, and later studied at the University of Michigan. He married Nell Van Haitsma in 1937, and the couple eventually had two daughters. Wichers’ interest in history may have been influenced by his uncle, Wynand Wichers, who was a historian and also president of Hope College from 1931 to 1945. Although a chemist by degree and during his early career, after setting up a small public relations business, Willard Wichers came to serve as the West Michigan supervisor of the Historical Records Survey Project (HRS) in the 1930s. The HRS was a project of the Works Progress Administration New Deal program in the United States from 1935 to 1943. Originally part of the Federal Writers' Project, the focus was surveying and indexing historically significant records in state, county and local archives.

Wichers’ involvement in the HRS led him in the direction of history and historic preservation, for which he was a strong advocate throughout the rest of his life. Among other organizations, Wichers was a member of the Holland Historical Cultural Commission, the Holland Area Historical Advisory Commission, the Michigan Historical Commission, the Michigan Historic Preservation Review Board, the Historical Society of Michigan, and the Netherlands Pioneer and Historical Foundation, and was a commissioner of the Dutch-American Historical Commission. Along with his uncle, Wynand Wichers, he founded the Netherlands Museum in 1937, which later became the Holland Museum and Archives, an important repository for documents telling the history of the Holland, Michigan, area and now operated by the Holland Historical Trust.

Following his work to organize and publicize a visit to Hope College by Princess Juliana in 1941, the Dutch government under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, established a Midwestern Office of the Netherlands Information Bureau (NIB, post-World War II the name of this office was changed to the Netherlands Information Service, or NIS), of which Wichers was named the director, and oversaw a twenty-state region. The Holland, Michigan, office was one of only four such offices in the United States. It was established in 1942, along with an office in San Francisco which covered the western United States. The primary NIB office in the United States was at Rockefeller Center in New York City which was established a year earlier in March 1941. Additional NIB offices were added in Washington, D.C., and a small office in Boston.

The NIB/NIS promoted trade and travel between the two countries, and a positive image of the Netherlands to Dutch Americans. He held this position until his retirement in 1974, when the

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Midwestern division office of NIS was closed, then afterwards served as the Netherlands Consul for Press and Cultural Affairs. Additional activities outside of his work with NIS included directing the Netherlands Museum, managing the Tulip Time Festival for several years, serving on Holland's Centennial Commission in 1947, working with the Reformed Church of America, the Governor's Commission for Refugees and Displaced Persons, Grand Valley State College's (now Grand Valley State University) Advisory Council, and serving as secretary of the Hope College Board of Trustees. Wichers also worked behind the scenes to support the preservation and reuse of various historic properties in the Holland area. Among other causes in which he played a role in his later years, he worked to encourage the city's purchase of the farm property that contained the home of Reverend Albertus Van Raalte's son Benjamin and then worked to see the house itself preserved. He also advocated for preservation and reuse of Marigold Lodge, the National Register-listed (1984), Prairie School house, designed by Thomas Eddy Tallmadge, and built in 1913 for Egbert H. and Margaret J. (Dickey) Gold, on the Lake Macatawa shore, just outside Holland. The lodge was donated to Hope College by Mary Jayne Gold in 1969.

What is less-known about Wichers is how he and his wife were personally involved with assisting the emigration of hundreds of Dutch immigrants. Following World War II, many Dutch had been waiting and hoping for their chance at emigration because there was little economic opportunity available at that time due to the devastation resulting from the war. Eighteen thousand immigration quota numbers went unfulfilled during the war years. This was due to the fact that the Nazis had closed off all emigration from German-controlled Europe by autumn 1941. On the United States side, restrictions had been enacted by the State Department by December 1941 for persons from German-controlled territories, identifying them as "enemy aliens," and making it extremely difficult to be granted a visa, thereby preventing most refugees from entering the United States. In 1952 the current United States quota for Dutch immigrants was only 3,155. To remedy this, a proposal was made by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on March 24, 1952, for a temporary increase to the Netherlands' quota for immigration. On August 7, 1953, the Refugee Relief Act (RRA) was signed into law with the President's signature.

The RRA was partly due in response to the devastating North Sea flood that occurred during the night between January 30 and February 1, 1953, in the Netherlands, Belgium, Scotland, and parts of England. The flood took its largest toll on the Zeeland region in the southwestern Netherlands. This inundation from the sea resulted from massive storm-caused damage to the dike system, and was declared the greatest flood disaster for the Netherlands since the Saint Elisabeth's flood in 1421. A February 13, 1953, report from the Netherlands embassy in Washington, D.C., estimated the direct damage sustained at approximately one billion guilders or 260 million dollars. The loss of lives at the time of the report was up to 1,390. The total area flooded was 330,000 acres, or 5.7 percent of the entire cultivated acreage of the Netherlands. Some sixty-five thousand people were evacuated from their homes, and approximately 300,000 individuals were left homeless or without their belongings. The loss of animals at the time of report was given as 25,000 head of cattle and 15-20,000 hogs, 2-3,000 sheep, 1,500 horses, and over 100,000 fowls. Even for those who could return to their land after the waters receded, no crops would grow on their lands for many years due to the amount of salt water that was absorbed into the land. The tremendous loss and devastation increased the numbers of those wishing to emigrate. In a February 5, 1953, report, the Netherlands Emigration Office announced

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that it would take special measures to speed up the handling of emigration formalities for flood disaster victims who wished to emigrate abroad.

Willard C. Wichers played a part in a nationwide effort to raise funds for relief for the flood victims. Judge C. Vander Meulen submitted to Governor G. Mennen Williams 270,536.57 dollars that were raised in Michigan. They joined funds from all over the country and were collected through Holland Flood Relief, Inc., located in New York City.

Because the RRA did not prove as effective as hoped, Wichers left Michigan on February 19, 1955, for the Netherlands to attend a series of conferences in The Hague in regard to steps to be taken to further implement the immigration to the United States, as provided by the RRA. During that trip, he visited some areas of the region that had been devastated by the flood including Schouwen Duiveland. In June 1955, Wichers went to Washington D.C. for talks about problems relating to the RRA, and then in mid-December 1955 he headed off to New York City to meet with officials at the Dutch embassy to talk about immigration matters.

In the summer of 1956, Wichers went to the Netherlands and took his family, staying for the better part of the summer. During that time, he visited with Dutch people wishing to emigrate. Frustrated with the lack of information and publicity available in the Netherlands regarding the RRA, which resulted in lower levels of utilization of the allowable increase in immigration quota numbers, Wichers and his wife Nell spent many evenings that summer signing paperwork to sponsor many Dutch individuals. His daughters have vivid memories of their parents signing paper after paper in this endeavor.

The process of applying for emigration was complex in the Netherlands. It was organized under the Dutch Agencies for Immigration, and included the Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health, then the Commissioner for Emigration, then the Emigration Council & Emigration Board, and then the Netherlands Emigration Service with the Emigration Application Agencies. Each hopeful immigrant had to be sponsored by a voluntary agency such as the Christian Emigration Centre, the Dutch Reformed Emigration Commission or the Catholic Central Emigration Foundation (among others).

Wichers signed each set of papers as the secretary of the Netherlands Pioneer and Historical Foundation. This was an organization that grew out of a two-day conference that Wichers helped organize in 1936 for representatives from Dutch communities throughout Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa. The purpose of the newly formed organization was to work jointly on planning celebrations of each settlement's hundredth anniversary. Two of the other objectives of the organization were a historical display, and ultimately the formation of a museum. The latter objective was achieved when the Netherlands Museum was opened in Holland, Michigan, in 1937, for which Wichers served as director. Since 1937 the organization held "Commemorative Exercises" in February of each year as the anniversary of the beginning of the Holland *Kolonie*, and the founding of the Dutch-American community in West Michigan.

Now the organization was able to help open the door to new Dutch immigrants and served as the voluntary agency or supporting organization on their behalf. In total, Wichers signed papers for

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sponsoring a total of 1,348 persons. Near the end of his life Wichers stated<sup>2</sup> that he signed the great number of sponsorship papers knowing it was a gamble: that if many of those for whom he signed could not make a go of it and needed to be supported, the foundation would be unable to cover the cost and he would be personally responsible. He further stated, with a clear measure of pride, that not one of those sponsored became a burden to the organization or the community. Part of the urgency of completing this process was that the RRA was due to expire at the end of 1956. Departure from their homeland could be made after that, but paperwork had to be completed by the end of the year. Departures of the emigrants took place from October through December 1956, with more departing between January and April in 1957. They came to America by boat or by airplane, flying *Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij N.V.* (KLM Royal Dutch Airlines). Although not all the new immigrants chose to settle in West Michigan, Wichers had helped provide new lives to over 1,300 people and contributed to the Dutch presence, culture, and heritage in America.

Wicher's commitment to the windmill project was unwavering, and required personal sacrifice, dedication, and diplomacy. His role in what seems to have been personally sponsoring the immigration of so many may have played a significant role in paving the way for the Dutch government's approval of the windmill project. Wichers' work with Dutch immigration and his subsequent working relationship with Dutch colleague Dr. David Hofmeijer, director of the Netherlands Emigration Service was key in laying the foundation for the success of Holland, Michigan's efforts to import a windmill. Dr. Hofmeijer helped open the doors to additional needed contacts within the Dutch government for Wichers. He also provided on the ground assistance during Wichers' visits to the Netherlands by allowing his office to serve as headquarters, and provided transportation, translation and communication assistance for Wichers.

The door to the Dutch Mill Society was opened with the help of Wichers' long-time friend and Dutch colleague, Ton Koot, who was the secretary of the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam and also served on the board of the Dutch Mill Society. When the technical advisor of the Dutch Mill Society, Arie de Koning made a visit to Holland, Michigan in July 1962 to see if Holland had a suitable site for a windmill, Dr. Hofmeijer was the one who arranged it and made government funds available for this key step. Holland City Council recognized Hofmeijer's help with a resolution passed at the June 6, 1962 council meeting. Hofmeijer's interest in the project was sincere enough that he stopped in Holland, Michigan in mid-December 1962 during an around the world tour to meet with members of the committee to learn progress of "Project Windmill" and provide encouragement. Both Ton Koot and Dr. David Hofmeijer were critical contacts and colleagues in the Netherlands for Willard Wichers and were invaluable to him when he began his request on behalf of the City of Holland for an authentic Dutch windmill. It is possible that had Wichers not been the one to pursue the project with the Dutch authorities, the City of Holland may not have ultimately found success.

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<sup>2</sup> To Robert O. Christensen, former National Register Coordinator for the State of Michigan, in a conversation in downtown Holland sometime in the later 1980s

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Through Carter Brown's initiative and Wicher's efforts, the citizens of the city of Holland were able to realize their dream of having an authentic Dutch windmill reside in their community. The project also served to strengthen the bond between Holland, Michigan, and the Netherlands, as evidenced by the words written by the Dutch Mill Society in a scroll presented in Holland, Michigan in October 1964.

*"Convinced* that the project and especially the windmill accentuate the bonds of history and affection between both Holland here and over there....

*Wishes to honour* the American Friends of our Society in the person of the author intellectualist of the magnificent project – Mr. Carter P. Brown, Chairman of the Committee for his splendid initiative and endeavour related to this work....

*The work* appealing to the best historical traditions linking our people here and over there....

*The work* that in the years to come might be the symbol of friendship and mutual admiration....

*De Hollandsche Molen (The Dutch Mill Society)  
Vereniging tot behoud van molens in Nederland*

*Amsterdam, October 1964*

Wichers received many honors for his work including being made a knight and officer of the Order of Oranje-Nassau in recognition of his services to the Netherlands and the Service Above Self Award from Rotary International. Willard C. Wichers died on May 19, 1991, leaving behind a legacy of preservation and lifetime of accomplishments. De Zwaan as it stands today in Holland, Michigan, is in part a monument to Mr. Wichers.

When the windmill was moved and reconstructed in Holland, Michigan, it was with the intentional effort of having a visible symbol of the Dutch heritage that was woven into the cultural fabric of both Holland and the entire West Michigan Dutch settlement area. This structure has now resided in Holland for over fifty years and has become a well-known icon of the region. The structure provides a direct link between the Netherlands and Holland, Michigan, and celebrates the long relationship between the two regions and the people on both sides of the Atlantic.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Western Theological Seminary, "W88-0101. Wichers, Willard C. (1909-1991). Papers, 1909-1979. 2.75 linear ft." (2014). *Collection Registers and Abstracts*. Paper 849.

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency



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- Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: Holland Museum / Holland Historical Trust Archives

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** 22.7

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.800890 | Longitude: -86.095529 |
| 2. Latitude: 42.798721 | Longitude: -86.093025 |
| 3. Latitude: 42.798212 | Longitude: -86.095822 |
| 4. Latitude: 42.799025 | Longitude: -86.098638 |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

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The north polder of Windmill Island, bounded by a main channel of Black River to the east, northeast, north, and northwest, with water widening to marsh on the west and southwest sides. (This water connects to Macatawa Lake, which connects to Lake Michigan.) The south and southeast border is a man-made interior channel that reconnects to Black River.

**Tax Description of Property:**

THAT PT OF SW 1/4 OF SW 1/4 OF SEC 21 LYING SOUTH OF MAIN CHANNEL OF BLACK RIVER SEC 21 T5N R15W

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property is surrounded primarily by water. The north polder location was originally selected to provide adequate access to wind to allow the windmill to operate. The 22.7 acre setting for the windmill is important not only for operational reasons, but also interpretive. The setting was intentionally created to reflect a rural landscape of the Netherlands, which helps support the historical interpretation of the windmill.

The rest of the park to the south of the windmill's location contains additional buildings and structures dating from 1965 and later, some of which are replicas from older structures in the Netherlands.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Alisa Crawford, Miller & Coordinator  
organization: Windmill Island Gardens  
street & number: 1 Lincoln Avenue  
city or town: Holland state: MI zip code: 49423  
e-mail: a.crawford@cityofholland.com  
telephone: (616) 928-0585  
date: January 4, 2017; March 29, 2017; July 31, 2017

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### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: De Zwaan Windmill

City or Vicinity: Holland

County: Ottawa

State: Michigan

Photographer: Alisa Crawford

Date Photographed: December 22, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Exterior Photos 1-5 are taken from the perspective of the cardinal directions looking at windmill at approximately 30 paces from mill.

Photo 1 of 20: East façade – camera direction West

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0001

De Zwaan Windmill  
Name of Property

Ottawa Co., MI  
County and State

Photo 2 of 20: North façade – camera direction South

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0002

Photo 3 of 20: West façade – camera direction East

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0003

Photo 4 of 20: South façade – camera direction North

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0004

Photo 5 of 20: Cap and axle of the windshaft – camera direction East

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0005

Photo 6 of 20: First floor, Receiving floor, taken on Sept. 8, 2017 by Alisa Crawford. Camera direction North

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0006

Photo 7 of 20: Second floor, Packaging floor, camera direction Northwest

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0007

Photo 8 of 20: Second floor, Packaging floor, taken on April 5, 2016 by Alisa Crawford, camera direction West

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0008

Photo 9 of 20: Third floor, Storage floor, camera direction North

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0009

Photo 10 of 20: Fourth floor, Milling floor, camera direction West

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0010

Photo 11 of 20: Fourth floor, Milling floor, camera direction Northwest

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0011

Photo 12 of 20: Fifth floor, Stone floor, showing the working set of millstones and grain bags. Camera direction West

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0012

Photo 13 of 20: Fifth floor, Stone floor, showing the non-working set of millstones and crane. Camera direction South

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0013

Photo 14 of 20: Fifth floor, Stone floor, showing the wooden spur wheel and center shaft. Camera direction West

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0014

Photo 15 of 20: Sixth floor, Dust floor, showing the wallower gear, center shaft and brake beam. Camera direction North

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0015

Photo 16 of 20: Seventh floor, Cap showing brake wheel and cement counterweight. Camera direction West (cap rotates 360 degrees).

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0016

Photo 17 of 20: Seventh floor, Cap showing tail bearing, counterweight, brake wheel, carved beam, and rounded shape of cap ceiling with sprinkler system above brake wheel. Camera direction West

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0017

Photo 18 of 20: Exterior photo of windmill, blades decorated with blue flags. Taken on April 19, 2014 by Bryan Dozeman. Camera direction West

De Zwaan Windmill  
Name of Property

Ottawa Co., MI  
County and State

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0018

Photo 19 of 20: Exterior photo of body and blades of mill with miller, Alisa Crawford, climbing a blade. Taken July 28, 2016 by Deborah Schakel.

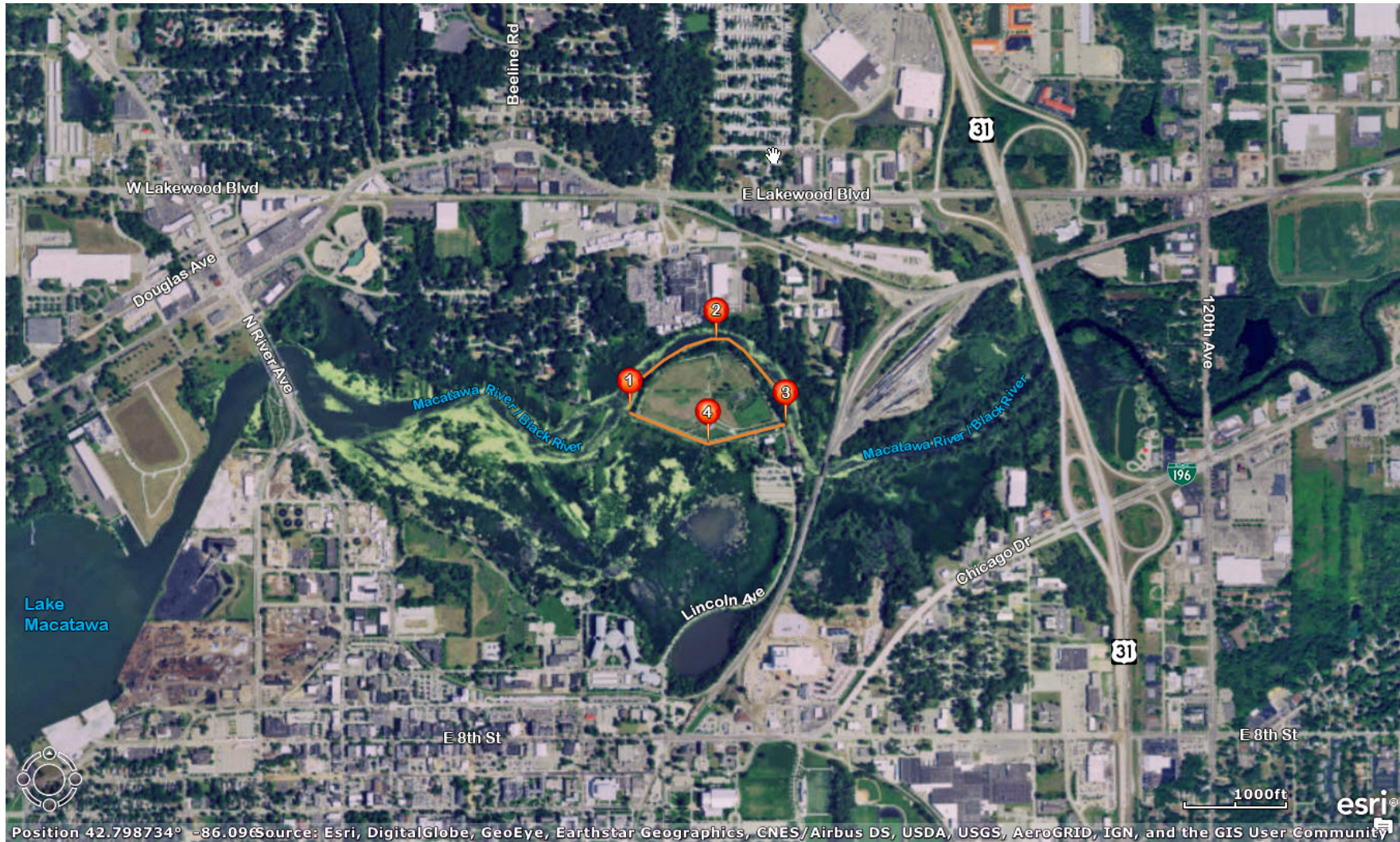
MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0019

Photo 20 of 20: Aerial photo of windmill, taken on May 9, 2009 by Greg Holcombe. Camera direction WNW

MI\_OttawaCounty\_DeZwaanWindmill\_0020

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

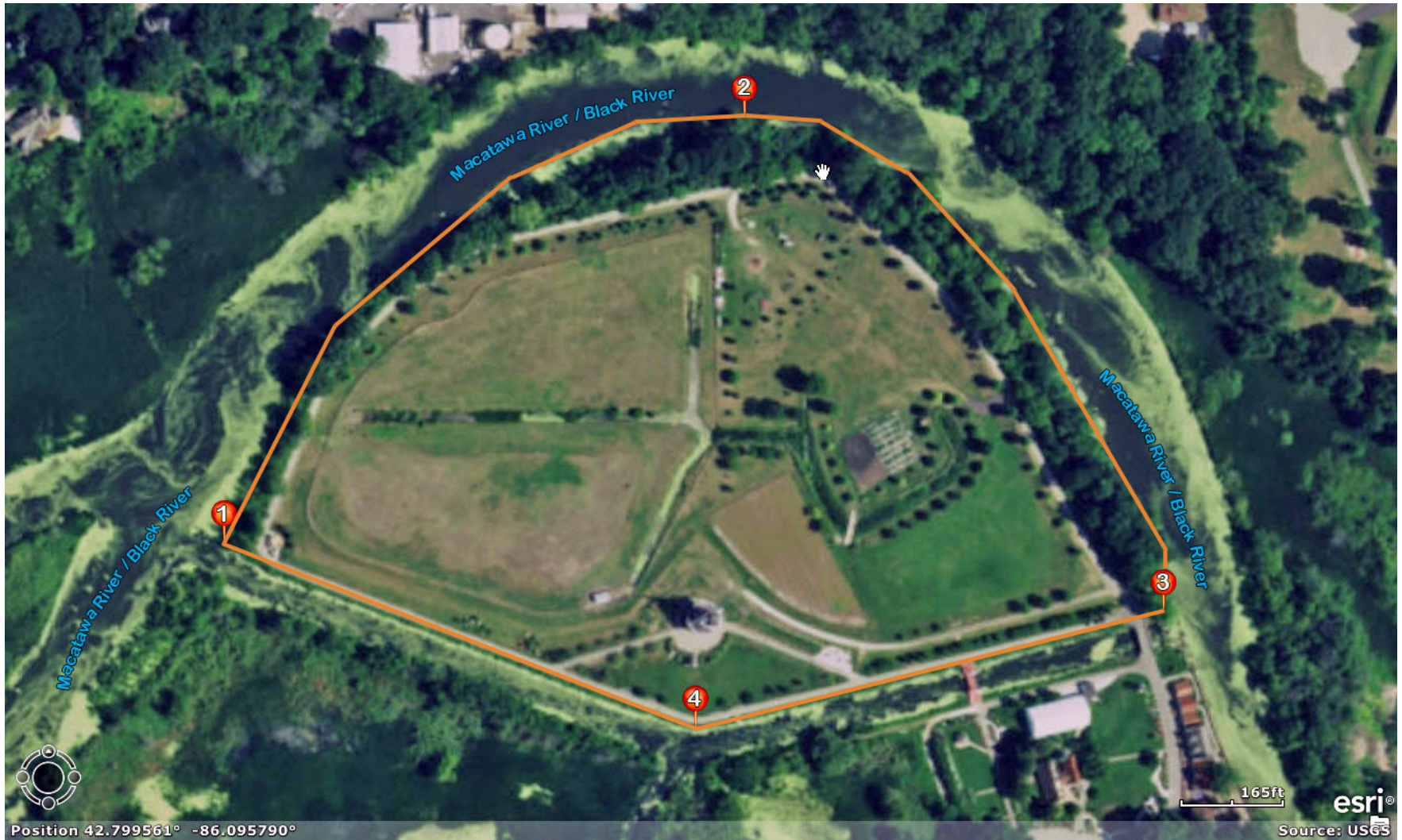


## De Zwaan Windmill

1 Lincoln Avenue, Windmill Island, Holland, Ottawa County, Michigan

- |    |                     |                       |
|----|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Latitude: 42.800890 | Longitude: -86.095529 |
| 2. | Latitude: 42.798721 | Longitude: -86.093025 |
| 3. | Latitude: 42.798212 | Longitude: -86.095822 |
| 4. | Latitude: 42.799025 | Longitude: -86.098638 |





## De Zwaan Windmill

1 Lincoln Avenue, Windmill Island, Holland, Ottawa County, Michigan

- |    |                     |                       |
|----|---------------------|-----------------------|
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| 4. | Latitude: 42.799025 | Longitude: -86.098638 |

















WINDMILL  
Products Available  
Today

Coke 20  
Wheat Flour 20  
Coke 10gal 5  
Coke 5gal 5

DE ZWAAN PRODUCTS

Wheat Flour 20  
Coke 10gal 5  
Coke 5gal 5

De Zwaan Products  
Sold Here



For the comfort of  
the customer  
Please turn  
off your cell  
phone while  
in line in the  
windmill.  
Thank You.

NO  
SMOKING



PLEASE NO SMOKING

**PACKAGING FLOOR**

































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination  
Property Name: De Zwaan Windmill  
Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
State & County: MICHIGAN, Ottawa

Date Received: 3/7/2018      Date of Pending List: 4/2/2018      Date of 16th Day: 4/17/2018      Date of 45th Day: 4/23/2018      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100002333  
Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal           | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request     | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver           | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      4/17/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria      Accept, National Register Criteria A and B.

Reviewer      Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus*      Discipline      Historian

Telephone      (202)354-2218      Date      4/17/2018

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

RECEIVED

MAY 10 2017

Certified Local Government  
National Register Nomination Review Report

Michigan State Housing Development Authority  
State Historic Preservation Office



Name of Property: De Zwaan Windmill  
Address: Windmill Island Gardens, 1 Lincoln Ave., Holland  
Owner: City of Holland, Andy Kenyon, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Date completed nomination approved by the SHPO: April 11, 2017

\*\*\*\*\*

The CLG agrees with the SHPO to expedite the review period for this nomination.

YES X (date of agreement) 5/2/2017 NO     

[Signature] 5/2/17  
Signature of CLG Commission Chairperson Date

[Signature: Nancy DeBee] 5/3/17  
Signature of Elected Chief Official Date

\*\*\*\*\*

Date(s) of commission meeting(s) when nomination was reviewed: **5/2/2017**

Date of written notice to property owner of commission meeting: **4/12/2016**

The CLG provided the following opportunities for public participation in the review of this nomination:

**Historic District Commission Meeting on 5/2/2017.**

Were any written comments received by the CLG? YES      NO X  
(Please submit copies with this report.)

Was the nomination form distributed to CLG Commission members? YES X NO     

Was a site visit made to the property by CLG Commission members? YES X NO       
If yes, when?

**Commissioners have visited the site individually. It is a major attraction in Holland.**

Did the CLG seek assistance of the Michigan Historical Center in evaluating the eligibility of this property for the National Register? YES X NO     

VERIFICATION of Professional Qualifications of Commission in accordance with 36 CFR 61, Appendix 1, of Michigan's Certified Local Government Program.

List those commission members who meet the 36 CFR 61 qualifications required to review this type of resource.

Commission Member	Professional Qualifications
1. <u>Andrew Peterson</u>	<u>Architect</u>
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____

Was an outside consultant used? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X

If yes, provide the name and list the 36 CFR 61 qualifications the person meets:

The CLG Commission finds that the property meets the following national register criteria of significance: **A and B**

The CLG Commission finds that the property meets the national register standards of integrity.  
YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation of CLG Commission: Unanimous Approval

APPROVAL X

DENIAL \_\_\_\_\_ (specify reasons on a separate sheet of paper)

---

Signature of Chief Elected Official Nancy DeBoer Date 5.3.17

Date of transmittal of this report to MHC/SHPO \_\_\_\_\_

Date of receipt of this report by MHC/SHPO \_\_\_\_\_



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

EARL J. POLESKI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



March 2, 2018

Mr. Paul Loether, Keeper  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed discs contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **De Zwaan Windmill, Windmill Island, 1 Lincoln Avenue, Holland, Ottawa County, Michigan**. Disc 1 contains correspondence and the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, which includes site maps. Disc 2 contains photographs of this site. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. We enclose a copy of the National Register Nomination Review Report received from the City of Holland, Michigan. As a Certified Local Government we have provided the city with notice of our intent to nominate this site. Their response has been included on Disc 1, as instructed. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, Interim National Register Coordinator, at (517) 373-1979 or WalshT@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Martha MacFarlane-Faes  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer