

Westtown Township Historical Commission Meeting Minutes
1039 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, PA
Thursday, 15 May, 2014

In attendance: Commission members Dave Walter, Gail Guterl, Township Manager, Rob Pingar, and one guest.

I. Call to Order

Dave Walter indicated that the Commission did not have a quorum at the meeting, and therefore would discuss, but not vote on any matters.

II. Approval of Minutes (April 17, 2014)

Dave stated that the minutes could not be approved due to lack of quorum. He mentioned that the meeting recording was truncated because he neglected to flip the tape. The minutes were compiled from Dave's notes.

III. Public Comment Non-Agenda Items

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Historic Properties Mapping Project

Dave and Gail have been working to clean up the list, and anticipates being able to submit it to the supervisors at their first meeting in June.

B. Bozutto Development

Dave stated that representatives of the Bozutto Development were invited to attend this meeting to discuss and defend their responses in opposition to the Historical Commission's preliminary recommendations:

1. Preserve the structure
2. Require ground penetrating radar study
3. Require use of the name Darlington's Corner
4. Require that architectural features and colors complement the look of local serpentine stone.

In an email dated April 30, 2014, their attorney, John Jaros, respectfully declined the invitation stating that he believed their responses were "clear and distinct and did not require defending." Dan Campbell prepared a rebuttal to Bozutto's responses. Dave stated he would like to get it to the Township Planning Commission and Supervisors as soon as possible.

Gail asked about the hearing on Monday night, May 19. Rob responded that it is a continuation of the Conditional Use Hearing. He stated that the township is not presenting any witnesses. Gail asked when it would be appropriate for the HC to present its recommendations to the Planning Commission and the Board. Dave thought the HC should make a Powerpoint presentation and will schedule this through Chris Patriarca.

Ken Lawson, 904 Shetland Court, Chadds Ford, stated he was immensely pleased to hear that the HC recommends ground penetrating radar study to ensure that there are no archeological remains concerning the 1777 battle.

C. Ordinance Amendments

Currently, there is no formal requirement to notify the Historical Commission prior to alteration of any property on the list of historic resources. Dave discussed several proposed ordinance amendments which would give the HC the right to review permits for demolition or alteration. The HC is also seeking the right to review permits for any property that falls within the Brandywine Battlefield footprint, even if the property is not on the list of historic resources.

The HC is not a Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB), and will not have authority to regulate development in the Township, but they would like thirty days to review permits for demolition or alteration, hopefully allowing them time to research the property and take pictures prior to any changes being made.

Rob suggested that the HC present their proposed amendments to the Board for their feedback.

D. Commission Membership

The HC is looking to increase its composition from 5 to 7 members, and has two potential candidates in mind. Rob stated that the openings need to be made public to all residents in good standing. Dave will prepare an ad for Pam to put on the website and send out on the listserv.

V. New Business

A. Announcements

1. Brandywine Battle Reenactment at Sandy Hollow this weekend, May 17 & 18.
2. On Sunday, June 1 at noon the West Chester Railroad is running a History Train.

Dave will provide the information to Pam to put on the website and send on the listserv.

VI. Public Comment All Topics

Although he is not a township resident, Ken Lawson expressed his appreciation of the efforts the HC has made regarding land that falls within the Brandywine Battlefield Plan overlay. He also updated the HC on his conversation with Virginia Logan, Executive Director at the Brandywine Conservancy. He stated that they were willing to become involved the effort to preserve Crebilly.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05pm.