

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Westtown Municipal Building, 1039 Wilmington Pike, West Chester
Thursday, April 16 2015 6:00 P.M.

In attendance: Commission members Dave Walter, Erica Reilly, and Jonathan Hoppe. Township Manager Rob Pingar was also in attendance.

I. Call to Order

Dave Walter called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

II. Approval of Minutes from March 19, 2015

Minutes from the March 19 meeting could not be approved due to the lack of a quorum. The action was postponed until the next meeting on May 21, 2015.

III. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Historic Resources Listing Review by Jane Dorchester – Dave Walter reported that Jane Dorchester reviewed the historic resources listing, and that Dorchester and himself performed a “windshield tour,” driving around for a roadside view, of the sites. Based on her expertise and findings, she recommended several sites be upgraded in their importance (e.g., to be eligible for listing on the National Historic Register), and several removed from the listing. Gail Guterl subsequently updated the listing per her recommendations and draft of the list was presented to those members present. Rob Pingar noted Dorchester’s report had not yet been received by the Board of Supervisors (BOS), and subsequent actions or updates would be pending its consideration by the BOS. Dave said that Dorchester spent well under the \$1800 budgeted to her by the BOS, and that she could render more services to the Township with her remaining allotment. Dorchester’s own recommendation was for the creation of a listing of unique or otherwise historical structures from 1901-1945. Dave noted that Jane identified several craftsman-type houses on their tour, though there could potentially be thousands of buildings that fit the criteria. Erica Reilly supported the idea, saying the listing would be beneficial for posterity. Dave said he would contact Karen Marshall of the Chester County Planning Commission for a listing of township structures from 1901-1945.

B. Taylor Burial Ground Update – Dave Walter presented a copy of a letter addressed to the BOS by Mrs. Susan C. van Vonno, of Florida, asking for permission to erect monuments to her ancestors, Col. Thomas Taylor, and his son, Capt. Titus Taylor, veterans of the American Revolution. She noted in the letter she wished to apply to the Veterans Administration to supply the stones, but would not do so unless the BOS

granted her request for erection. Rob Pingar said that the BOS had not yet seen the letter, but it would be scheduled for discussion at their May 4th 2015 meeting. Dave related that through other organizations to which he belongs he had been in discussions with Rep. Ryan Costello's office regarding veterans' gravestones, and that he would forward the form to which Mrs. van Vonno alluded in her letter to the BOS for their consideration with her request.

V. New Business

A. Chester County Historic Preservation Network Meeting, April 25, 2015 — Dave Walter reported that the Chester County Historic Preservation Network (CCHPN) was holding a best practices workshop on April 25, 2015, at the Brandywine River Museum. An invitation was made to the Westtown Township Historical Commission (WTHC) to send one member for \$25.00. Neither Dave Walter nor Gail Guterl, chair and vice-chair of the WTHC, would be able to attend. It was decided Jonathan Hoppe would attend in their stead and report the proceedings back at the next meeting.

B. Township Photography Project – Dave Walter proposed that at some future point the WTHC begin a project to document current views of the township, including commercial buildings, new developments, etc, for the township files, and to ask the BOS for a small budget to reimburse members for the cost of developing photographs, Rob Pingar indicated that the BOS would probably support the idea, and that he would forward the request to the BOS for consideration.

C. Summer Newsletter Article – Rob Pingar related that there is a World War II veteran in the township on whom it may be interesting to write a newsletter article. This resident has a small museum of memorabilia in his house, and has been the subject of several articles in the newspaper over the years. Dave Walter suggested that he be the subject of either the summer or autumn newsletter article to coincide with Memorial Day or Veterans Day. Dave will author an article on the Civil War Westtown Love Story for next winter's newsletter.

VI. Public Comment (All Topics)

None.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 P.M.

The next Historical Commission meeting is May 21st, 2015 at 6:00 P.M.