

Lower Gwynedd Historic Advisory Committee
Regular Meeting
February 16, 2023

Committee Members Present

Matt Metcalf
Gloria Jones
Joseph Langella
Linda Sacks
Fawn Ostriak

Committee Members Absent

Michael Brockway
Allison Klinger

Supervisors Present

Janine Martin

Lower Gwynedd Staff

Michelle Farzetta (not present) Took minutes from recording

Call to order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:18 p.m. at the Lower Gwynedd Township building. Roll call was taken.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Metcalf addressed the meeting minutes and had some corrections he thought should be made. He addressed the corrections individually. Mr. Metcalf made a motion to approve with the corrections. Motion passed 5-0.

Changes to the Agenda

Mr. Langella asked to discuss the committee's presence within the township's communications to the public. There was an active conversation regarding the visibility of the Historic Advisory Committee in the township newsletter, e-newsletter and on Facebook. Ms. Martin explained the timing of the newsletters and when they are sent out to residents. Mr. Langella would like to see the Historic Committee have more visibility to let the public know they are here and what initiatives they are working on. A few suggestions were to get a group picture of the committee at the next meeting to post and sending out reminders for the monthly meetings. Ms. Martin suggested speaking with Michelle to get more information on how to gain more visibility.

Written Communication

There was no written communication.

Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

Board of Supervisors - Liaison Report

Ms. Martin discussed the memo sent to Ms. Gleason and Public Works regarding repairs needed at Ingersoll. These repairs were identified in the report completed by Heritage Building Inspections. Public Works had the gas leak repaired along with a few other items that appeared to be emergent issues. Once the township decides what they are doing with the building then they will move forward with any additional repairs. There are some additional repairs that the Historic Committee feels need to be addressed now; therefore, Ms. Martin is suggesting Mr. Metcalf send a memo to the Board of Supervisors asking for the additional repairs to be done. These additional repairs would be recommendations that affect the security and safety of the property not necessarily the preservation of the house. An example would be an outside door that has a broken hinge and other repairs to avoid critters entering the building.

Ms. Martin also commented that the Comp Plan Committee has started meeting to update our Comprehensive plan. They will be looking for input from the public. She is asking that the Historic Committee put this on their radar and make any recommendations along the way and she will be the liaison for them.

Monitoring of Historic Properties

Mr. Langella spoke regarding the preservation of the Owen Evans property. He asked Ms. Martin if she had any updates on this property. She stated that the intended plans have been submitted to the PC, but nothing has been done. Ms. Martin also mentioned that there is an ordinance advertised that addresses clear cutting of trees. Once this ordinance is passed then it would affect how this property and other subdivided properties are developed. Mr. Metcalf mentioned that he would like to keep track of properties or neighborhoods that would bring about any significant historical issues.

Old Business

- Mr. Metcalf revisited the earlier conversation regarding the committee's visibility on townships social media platforms. Mr. Langella would like to speak with Ms. Worman, who does the posting for the township, to discuss more publicity, as they see other committees who have weekly posts. They would also like a message on the outside sign advertising the meetings to the public. Mr. Metcalf said he will reach out to Ms. Worman and get some clarification regarding how the social media accounts operate.

- Affirm Priority List for 2023 – After some discussion it was decided that the committee would focus on four items this year, developing a framework for the township historical marker program, sharing data for properties on the Lower Gwynedd Township Local Landmark list, develop a historic preservation component for the townships comprehensive plan and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for utilizing township owned historical properties. Mr. Metcalf made a motion. Motion passed 5-0.
- Proposed Welcome Packet/Manual for New Members – This item was tabled.
- Engaging LGT Zoning Board – This item was tabled as Mr. Metcalf would like to discuss how the best way to make this communication happen.

New Business

- **Ingersoll Property / Information from Realtors-** Mr. Langella went through the house with two different realtors. Lei Barry suggested a professional real estate appraisal that would cost roughly \$1000. She also said the plumbing would need to be replaced and the asbestos removed. She suggested possibly using it as a museum similar to the 1895 School House in Whitpain. Ms. Barry stated that she has sold similar properties in similar conditions, but buyers for them are rare and they take time to sell. Jane Douglas had not provided any kind of report as of the meeting, but was expected to do so in the next day or so. There was discussion regarding partnering with Wissahickon Trails to see if they would be interested in seeing the property. Mr. Langella has reached out to them to schedule a meeting, as the previous meeting was cancelled. It was suggested that if the decision is to sell the property, then they would like to have deed restrictions.
- **Ingersoll Property/ Property History Research-** There was discussion regarding looking into the history of the property and tracking ownership through deeds. Mr. Metcalf is going to look into this and bring back what he can find.
- **Historical Markers** – Mr. Metcalf provided information about the state standards for historical markers. He is suggesting using these standards as a guide. We could follow the same format, but not use the state symbol. There needs to be a way to differentiate what should be registered as historical and what would qualify for a marker. Bethlehem Baptist Church was discussed. It is unclear where a marker should/would be placed, as the church has moved a few times. The church originated in Penllyn, so any historical marker placement should be there, not its current location. However, there also has to be consideration for the new parish has taken over the previous location. Mr. Metcalf is going to draft a framework and bring it to the next meeting to review and discuss.

Announcements

There were no announcements to share

Adjournment

Mr. Metcalf made a motion to adjourn at 8:23 pm. Motion passed 5-0.

