

Lower Gwynedd Historic Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 19, 2023

Committee Members Present:

Mike Brockway
Gloria Jones
Allison Klingler
Joseph W. Langella Jr.
Matt Metcalf
Linda Sacks
Fawn Ostriak

Supervisors Present:

Janine Martin

Lower Gwynedd Staff Present:

Michelle Farzetta

Call to Order:

The hybrid meeting was called to order in the caucus room at the Lower Gwynedd Township building at 6:08 PM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Meeting Minutes from December were sent to committee members prior to the meeting. No changes were recommended. Mr. Metcalf made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jones. Motion passed 7-0.

Changes to Agenda:

Mr. Metcalf stated that Bill Kibble from Heritage Building Inspections would be coming to discuss the inspection completed at the Ingersoll House. At that time tonight's agenda will be paused for him to speak.

Written Communication

Mr. Metcalf referenced a communication received from Reverend Quann at Bethlehem Baptist Church regarding a 135th anniversary celebration. He is asking for a historical marker and for the street to be renamed "BBC Way", as ways to mark this celebration. The committee had a discussion lead by Ms. Martin regarding a uniform way to request markers. There was also a discussion regarding how the residents of Penllyn would feel about a marker being placed at Bethlehem Baptist Church's current location, as it originated in the village of Penllyn and any historical markings should be located at the original church. The committee is not opposed to the "marker"; however, the BBC marker and its placement are worth further discussion. The conversation ended with a decision to first put together a uniform plan in place for requesting markers.

Audience Participation:

None.

Board of Supervisors - Liaison Report:

Ms. Martin stated that she has brought on Fawn Ostriak to replace Michelle Mayer, who is unable to continue on the committee, as she is relocating this year.

Monitoring of Historic Properties:

Mr. Metcalf stated that the Owen Roberts property at 1348 Sumneytown Pike is being sold and is under contract. Mr. Metcalf has seen a copy of the plans and it appears that they are looking to preserve the farm house. They are looking to put in a cul-de-sac and several other lots. Mr. Metcalf proposed that he would like to write a letter to the developer, acknowledging the history of the property and telling him the historic committee would be happy to work with them on the property's rehabilitation.

Old Business:

- **Affirm Priority List for 2023** – this item was not discussed due to time.
- **Proposed Welcome Packet/Manuel for New Members** – this item was tabled

New Business

- **Publicity Ideas/Plan for Local Historical Resources** – Mr. Metcalf stated that the Historic Committee is now submitting articles for the monthly e-newsletter and for the paper newsletter that is published twice a year. The committee also discussed submitting monthly posts for Facebook. Mr., Langella will be responsible for sending Facebook information and Mr. Metcalf will take care of all news articles. All information will be sent to Ms. Farzetta for publication.
- **Review of Ingersoll Report** – Mr. Kibble gave a thorough overview of the inspection he performed. He inspected structural conditions, systems, roofing, heating, plumbing, the surrounding grounds and the barn. Mr. Kibble stated that it is a simple building built on a well and spring cellar. He stated that it appears that the house was set up for a dairy operation and the spring cellar was used to keep the milk cool. The house is in repairable condition, however will need some repairs to the wood structure and wood window frames. The stone is in good shape, but there is moisture in the house from the basement. Some suggestions were to repair the grading so it slopes away from the house, add down spouts, and possibly a relief pipe to keep the water from getting deep. He was not able to access the attic, as the decking had been replaced and no access given, however, by looking in-between the decking you can see what appears to be damage from a fire.
Mr. Kibble stated he did find a gas leak related to the main shut off valve outside that needs to be taken care of. The heating installation is inappropriate, there is no distribution system and the tubing in the basement are not installed properly. The plumbing needs an entire replacement, the radiators are blown out and the boiler needs to be replaced. The electrical service looks to have been updated to two 200-amp panels. The cable coming into the panel needs to be corrected and there is no ground on the circuits. The barn has its own separate service.
There is some asbestos that would need to be addressed. New insulation has been installed, but they just covered the old insulation. Inevitably, the paint in the house contains lead, which would need to be addressed, too.
The patios outside need to be repaired, as they are tripping hazards and railings should be installed.
- Following Mr. Kibble's report, the committee discussed various options moving forward. The options discussed included getting professional feedback from a professional relator to see the property, a potential educational partnership with Del Val or Wissahickon Trails, and making repairs to rent it as office space. Mr. Langella made a motion to have a realtor come out and offer their input on the property, seconded by Ms. Klinger. Motion passed 6-0. (Mike Brockway was not present for the vote) It was agreed that if the property were to be sold

that we would have a preservation clause put into the deed of sale.

There was also a discussion regarding possible funding, should we opt to make repairs. Mr. Metcalf stated that if we can get the property on the national registry then we would be eligible to apply for funding. If we are able to connect the “spring” house as the original site to which the town was named and show that it still exists then we would have something to work with to get it on the registry.

- **Discuss Gwynedd School (aka McCormick House) Next Steps**
This item was tabled
- **Engaging LGT Zoning Board**
This item was not discussed due to time.

Announcements: There were no announcements

Closing: Mr. Langella made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Sacks. Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.

Meeting Minutes prepared by: Michelle Farzetta, Administrative Assistant

