



West Vincent Township Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes for April 10, 2024

Commission Members in Attendance: Bob Wise, Kate Farnham, Peter Benton, Karl Brachwitz, Suzanne Bender.

Township Supervisors in Attendance: Sara Shick (BoS Liaison), Dana Alan

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

2024 Historical Commission Reorganization: As this is the first meeting with a quorum in 2024, the Commission reorganized. Mr. Wise welcomed incoming commission member Suzanne Bender and thanked outgoing commission member Thomaseth Dulchinos.

Officers: Motion put forth by Mr. Benton that commission continue with the current Chair (Mr. Wise) and Vice-Chair (Ms. Farnham). Ms. Farnham seconded the motion. Mr. Brachwitz stated that officers should rotate. Motion passed with 4 aye (Bender, Benton, Farnham, Wise) and 1 nay (Brachwitz). Mr. Benton made a motion to appoint Mr. Brachwitz as Secretary, seconded by Ms. Bender. Motion carried unanimously.

Liaisons to other Township commissions/committees: Benton – Open Space and Historic Resources Committee; Wise – EAC and HRC; Brachwitz – BoS; Farnham – Planning; Bender – ZHB.

Mr. Wise asked if Commission should appoint committees. Mr. Brachwitz stated it is working fine as it is and others agreed.

Approval of Minutes:

July 12 2023 Minutes (not approved previously): Motion of Approval by Mr. Benton, Ms. Bender seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.

December 13, 2023: Motion of Approval by Mr. Brachwitz, Ms. Farnham seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.

Applications: Lipton Property, 1245 Schoolhouse Lane

The Applicants, Jill and Glen Lipton, were present with an update on their project, which Commission had discussed in a previous meeting. Their home consists of a historic farmhouse with modern (post-2000) additions and they had planned a large addition. A historic bank barn on the property collapsed last year. They had an engineering assessment of the house due to concerns including water/dampness in the cellar and crawl space, mold, cracks in the masonry, and failing stucco. The house is heated but not occupied. Although dehumidifiers are run constantly, it is not drying out. They received an estimate of \$541K to address structural issues and remediate masonry cracks/stucco failure, and this would be in addition to actual construction of the addition. Due to uncertainty that remediation work would sufficiently address the issues and provide a safe living environment, they are considering demolition



and then constructing a new house on a higher part of the property. The Commission discussed the situation and asked several questions, and provided some guidance on the process to apply for demolition permits, including a copy of the historic ordinance. Mr. Brachwitz noted that there may be constraints on a new house location with setbacks, that this property had a long history of issues, and that due to the altered existing condition of the property, he does not have an issue with demolition. The Commission would like to make a site visit to see the existing conditions; Mr. Wise will coordinate a time with the Applicants.

Old Business:

1. Opalanie Park: Ms. Alan brought printouts of the interpretive panels and stated that there would be a presentation at the next BoS meeting to approve the signage plan. She needs the HC to review the text. Mr. Benton will send everyone a link to the files on Dropbox.
2. Threatened Properties/Demolition by Neglect: Commission needs to continue work on developing a written process for these issues.
3. Township Barn: No further update on reuse of the barn.
4. SR 1030 Birchrun Road Bridge: Ms. Farnham contacted PHMC and was put in touch with Tyra Guyton, their bridge specialist. Ms. Guyton was not able to find evidence of PennDOT making further findings about the project. Mr. Brachwitz noted that he'd seen a number of site visits by PennDOT, including archaeologists. Ms. Guyton suggested once PennDOT moves forward, that the HC request a context-sensitive design for the bridge. Isabelle Travaglini commented that the Eldredge book has a great historic photo of the bridge.
5. Ordinance Revisions: still in progress.

New Business:

1. Annual Report – Mr. Wise prepared a report of 2023 activities of the HC. Motion put forth by Mr. Benton to approve the report with minor edits; seconded by Ms. Bender. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Revised List of Historic Resources. Mr. Wise stated there is still some cleanup of this list.
3. The owners of 1255 and 1475 Hollow Road inquired with Tracey Franey (zoning officer) as to why their properties have Class I status as historic resources. 1255 has an old barn but Mr. Brachwitz noted the farmhouse was demolished in the 1980s and property should not be a Class I. Mr. Wise will work with Cindy Clark and Isabelle Travaglini to finish the List of Historic Resources.

Reports:

1. Assignments as Committee Liaisons: No Reports
2. HRC Report: Ms. Clark and Mrs. Travaglini presented the following items:
 - a. Mr. Wise will be giving a presentation at the Township Building on 4/24/2024 discussing Camp Meetings and Chautauquas of SE PA.
 - b. The Frederick Sheeder book project with East Vincent Township is continuing; final product will be the 1847 map with numbers identifying locations where Sheeder spoke.



- c. Stream Naming – Mrs. Travaglini plans to ask the BoS to remove the “Pine Creek” sign on Art School Road, since that is actually part of Pickering Creek. The Stream Naming committee of the HRC wants to call this Pickering Run.
- d. Mrs. Travaglini noted that the Township sign for West Vincent on 401/Conestoga Road is in the wrong place. Further discussion revealed that the boundary with West Pikeland is different on the north and south sides of 401.
- e. Mrs. Travaglini received an award from the DAR and reminded the HC that we are 2 years out from the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. She suggests a research project to definitively identify mass graves of war casualties in the Vincent Baptist Church cemetery, and suggests we discuss how to commemorate the anniversary.
- f. Ms. Shick asked about CCHPN. The Commission needs to update its contact list with CCHPN.

Business from Floor: None

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 9:22pm, upon motion by Mr. Brachwitz and seconded by Mr. Benton. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Kate Farnham, May 7, 2024

