

**Historic Preservation Committee
Town of Westport**

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting of the Committee of December 9, 2013

Members present: Peter Bloch, Ron Bowen, Ray Mejia, Martin Timmins, Nancy Schlimgen and Dave O'Malley

Members absent: None

Others present: Rebecca Bernstein, Jeanette Hermanson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

November 7, Minutes

November minutes were not recorded (Dave was absent...)

Old Business

Historic Resources Consultant- Rebecca mentioned she had located interesting old black and white photos of the Mary of the Lake church. She distributed copies of an excerpt of the Phil Salkin report on the Ella Wheeler Wilcox site and we discussed its contents. The study by Salkin generally located the house and farm site area. Rebecca took photos of the site area and noted the exact location was not found since it is under soil and it has undergone a lot of agricultural use. She mentioned the site is a little further from Easy St. than she expected, about 34 meters. We discussed some possible methods to uncover the site such as scraping or grading. It was also noted it we may want to consider moving the historical marker closer to the actual home site.

We discussed options for layout of the site for interpretation and a recreational trail around the property. It was noted we should get an easement from the County for the home site area. Ron mentioned we should sketch out a rough plan for the site and present that to the Town Board so that can be discussed with the County. Based on a letter from County Executive Joe Parisi it seems our ideas for the site would be supported by the County. We agreed a 10' wide path and easement for a perimeter trail around the property would make sense. We discussed many ideas for interpretive developments at the site. It was noted this is a farm site interpretation and not a park. Possibilities include a replica of the stone foundation, kiosk/exhibit, small shelter, benches, interpretive signs, small replica structure, etc. We also discussed planting of vegetation that would represent what was existing at that time, for example; native grasses, windbreaks, shrubs, etc. Rebecca agreed to draft a vision for the homestead and larger site area and we will discuss that when it is ready.

Informal Interviews- We had a brief discussion to get ready for the presentation of the historical plaques at the Plan Commission meeting immediately following our meeting tonight.

Old Military Road Survey- Marty noted we are still waiting for a larger map from Bob Birmingham.

New Business

None

Miscellaneous Business

We recognized Marty Timmins for all of his very significant contributions to our HPC. Marty is retiring from the HPC and we will miss his attention to detail, his organizational memory, and of course his Irish Wit.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for Jan 9 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Administration Building.
(Note the mtg. was cancelled)

Adjournment

There being no further business brought before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm and we planned to regroup for presentation of historical plaques at the Plan Commission Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave O'Malley