

**Historic Preservation Commission
Town of Westport**

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting of the Commission of Sept 11, 2014

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

Members absent: None

Others present: Dave Rush (Pres. MARCS), Terry Enge, Brad Robinson, Rebecca Bernstein

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the July meeting were unanimously approved.

New Business (Note agenda modified to discuss this first)

Model Airplane Park Proposal- Dave Rush (President of the Madison Area Radio Control Society (MARCS) presented a rough proposal for their society's possible use of the Ella Wheeler Wilcox site for use of model airplanes. This is a 92 member group of model airplane enthusiasts. Dave, president since 2000 presented maps and a rough outline of how the site could potentially be used. The maps illustrated a roughly 40 acre area needed for total flight area. He roughly diagrammed the field area where a runway, parking shelter, and storage structures were proposed. He noted they are well organized, safe and have liability insurance. It appears they would be looking to operate seven days a week but no schedule was outlined.

We discussed the proposal and went around the table with each committee member stating their thoughts regarding it. Though all felt it is good to get people out using the site, there are concerns with this type of use interfering with the planned use of the site which is intended to be more of a quiet, passive use. All agreed the model airplane use would not be compatible for this particular site. Other options were discussed that we felt could be compatible, including other areas of the county property adjacent to the landfill/compost area or shooting range.

A motion was made by Ron and seconded by Dave as follows: We do not recommend a model airplane proposal for the Ella Wheeler Wilcox site since this is incompatible with the intended use of the property. The motion passed with all in favor.

Old Business

Historic Resources Consultant- Rebecca presented her latest work and visions for the Wilcox site. We discussed the size and layout of interpretive signs for the property and possible shelter and kiosk design. All agreed that 18"x24" as recommended by Rebecca would be a good size for the five or so interpretive signs planned. We are considering four color graphic or brushed aluminum, with the color being preferable. Prices are pretty close between them. We agreed Rebecca should meet with the three vendors to discuss price and design and let us know. Price for each sign could range from \$85 to \$110. The signs would be placed at the home site and along the grass mowed trail bordering the site. They would provide interpretive information on natural vegetation (prairie grasses, flowers etc.), agriculture, and include signs with Wilcox poetry possibly in chronological order as she wrote poetry from her early years to later years. This would be tied in with history of the site/landscape and what she may have viewed at the site and beyond during those times. The shelter may be modeled after the older shelter at Jackson Landing. We discussed the shelter should reflect the design and size of the original home as much as practical. It should mimic what was there and evoke the sense of how small the homes

actually were then. It would include a large sign that outlines background and history of Wilcox along with appropriate maps tying everything together. Terry Enge noted he will check in with Jim Stephenson on the Jackson shelter design and construction for an example. Ron noted in discussion with Tom Wilson were expecting everything to be constructed next year.

We also noted the extent of excavation at the site and wondered if things were going to be returned to the original topography as was planned? Would be nice if we could use existing gravel pad that was constructed for staging. Will grass swales be modified?

Informal Interviews- Nothing discussed on this.

Old Military Road – We briefly discussed the route of the old road and how we could potentially tie that into the existing Westport trail system. We would like to do interpretive signs at least providing background and maps at trail locations either on or close to the old route. Terry Enge noted some good places for connections and noted there are some good routes that would require permission from a couple of landowners yet. He also mentioned the existing trail location at the Tierney development in Blue Ridge may be on part of the old Military Trail route. We still get confused over terminology of the Old Military Road vs. Fort Winnebago Trail vs. Old Indian Trail. We noted that Bob Birmingham says the correct name is the old Fort Winnebago Trail and discussed the fact the old Indian Trail branches off and goes more through Westport just north of Lake Mendota. We will review Bob's work and make sure we have this correct. Terry mentioned he could work with Town Consultant General Engineering on digital maps laying out the old trail and where it overlaps with the existing Town Trails.

Jackson Landing Visit- We discussed this under the Wilcox site discussion.

New Business

None other than previous discussion on the Model Airplane Proposal

Miscellaneous Business

None

Next Meeting

Did not schedule before adjourning. **Thursday Oct 2nd** would be the next regular date unless changed.

Adjournment

There being no further business brought before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Dave O'Malley