

TOWN OF WESTPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
Kennedy Administration Building
Community Meeting Room
5387 Mary Lake Road
Waunakee, WI 53597

MINUTES December 3, 2015 at 6:00p.m.

Members present: Ron Bowen, Nancy Schlimgen, Ray Mejia, Janette Hermanson
and Joe Pichette

Members absent: None

Public attendance: Rebecca Bernstein, Consulting

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the November 5, 2015 meeting were approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Ella Wheeler Wilcox Site Plans:

Joe talked with Tom Wilson on behalf of the HPC showing him the sketch of desired concepts developed at our last meeting and overlaid on the site map to include in the County's EWW DRAFT site plan. In his response, Tom acknowledges these aspects of the plan such as meandering paths and sign locations to serve as the basis for further discussion with the County, suggesting Rebecca and Tom meet with Dane County staff to refine their site plans. Joe concurred with Ron's account. Ron also reviewed our EWW site plan concepts with the plan commissioners.

Rebecca reported on the progress of creating the EWW interpretative displays. She has placed her marker boards on digital files: 6 are planned, 5 digitized, plus a photo shoot. She continues to research Ella's life in New York.

Ray talked about finishing signs during winter with interpretative text around images and poems, even viewing before installation with plaques before they're installed on the posts. Rebecca noted a couple of options for display posts.

Shelter ideas were pictured in a gazebos book of 1900's designs that Rebecca was reviewing. The shelter would be reminiscent of Jackson's landing with a rustic (park) aspect or design features with perhaps bracketing off the roof. Ray asked if Westport was responsible for its construction and Ron said yes. Joe mentioned perhaps the Town could customize a commercially available "gazebo in a box," if a similar structure could be found. Rebecca emphasized the potential of the shelter responses: looking through the structure, use as a

gathering space and a location for displays. Rebecca's efforts to interpret EWW at this site have the more immediate goal of "moving ideas forward."

Koltes Homestead on Bong Road

This Koltes property is included in a Westport Oral History Survey of 2007. While Marty Timmons and Ray have interviewed Jim Koltes (and/or others of his family) for his oral history, Rebecca would like to have a follow-up interview now that the Natural Heritage Land Trust (NHLT) is acquiring this property. There is some question as to which buildings will be kept. According to Janette, Jim Koltes indicated that the chicken coop is the only building to go. Rebecca will pursue this with Jim Welsh, Executive Director of the NHLT.

Signage at Jackson's Landing as a Peter Bloch Memorial

Rebecca will research accuracy of the former landscape location of Rocky Roost relative to those landscape features still visible on the lake edge today.

Silo Survey

A potential press release describing our silo survey was created by Rebecca and emailed to HPC members prior to the meeting. Report was that Tom was supportive and approved the letter. Procedurally, it was agreed that HPC will publish it in the Waunakee Tribune, with Ray signing as chair of HPC. To receive responses from the letter, Ray suggests creating an email box or a way that people can respond to this at the Town Hall by phone or email. Rebecca will check with Michelle at the Town Hall as to how to set that up to obtain community responses on silos located on their properties.

A Community Gathering

Joe suggested hosting this gathering at the Town Hall meeting space after checking if it is available with staff, early next spring in March before Waunakee Schools' spring break. We are looking at a Saturday morning with coffee and donuts, with speakers optional. Rebecca suggests clarifying date selection: The first Saturday in March is the 5th or the Saturday before daylight savings time is March 12th.

As a goal of this event, EWW and the Peter Bloch Memorial signs could be on display. This could also be a "kick off" event for the Silo Survey.

Old Military Trail

Joe is pursuing a clearer understanding of how to compare the Old Indian Trail and the Trail to Fort Winnebago, with present day landmarks. He would like to see if we can locate the documented Effigy Mounds along the trail, if they still exist, as a way of relocating the trail. Ray reiterated that if we could identify a segment of the trail that coincides with Westport trails it would be of interest in interpreting the cultural history of our trail system.

NEW BUSINESS

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Joe reported inquiring with Town staff on the status of the Walsh House located at Oncken Road and County Highway M. While it is believed to have been sold (to Dane County ?) and they have a permit to tear the house down, as “it is not fixable and in dangerous shape” as a matter of protocol, we would like to consider, if it is not too late, its’ “historical significance” as part of this process.

NEXT MEETING

The HPC meets regularly on the first Thursday of the month.

Next month’s meeting will be Thursday January 7th, at 6:00 pm

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Nancy Schlingen