

**TOWN OF WESTPORT  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING**

Kennedy Administration Building  
Community Meeting Room  
5387 Mary Lake Road  
Waunakee, WI 53597

**MINUTES** - September 8, 2016

All members present: Mimi Bloch, Ron Bowen, Janette Hermanson, Ray Mejia, Joe Pichette,  
Nancy Schlimgen

Public Attendance: Rebecca Bernstein, Consulting

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ray called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

HPC members present at the previous meeting approved minutes of August 11, noting Ray to invite Darren Marsh to this meeting as corrected in the minutes.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Ella Wheeler Wilcox Historical Home site Park**

Ray invited Darren Marsh, Dane County Park's Director to our September 8th Meeting via e-mail, however he did not respond and therefore discussion of stages of the EWW plans among members allowed us to strategize our next approach. Ray suggests from what we've done already, he is willing to work with Rebecca to summarize our position: our *itemized wish list* as Joe describes it. This will be sent both to Tom (Westport Town Administrator) and Darren (cc: HPC members). The commission feels they are in a position to negotiate details of interpreting the site with designated parking area, path, prairie, shelter and signs. What is acceptable to each entity, allocating who (County or Town) is responsible for what in site development and future management, and create timelines to further establish *EWW Historical Home site Park*.

Ron will meet with Rebecca to consider architectural details of a shelter prior to meeting with Jim Stephenson, who has experience with shelter construction at Jackson's Landing and is likely helping with implementing this design. Also, later in the meeting Rebecca revealed her Action Plan (attached list) including these aspects and other details of her continued efforts at interpreting the EWW site.

**The Future of the Former Koltes Farmstead at the (NHLT) Westport Drumlin Preserve**

Feasibility of joint use of the original Koltes homestead for artifact display is a complicated venture as described by Rebecca after talking with Jim Welsh, Executive NHLT Director. NHLT is interested in tearing down several structures on the site including the home site,

(which is said by Jim Koltes to be “the oldest standing homestead in Westport”). Note that another consultant hired by NHLT found that this structure was not eligible for listing with the Natural Register. Also, the NHLT does not plan to have anyone (caretaker) live at the site and may in fact be limited by their grants received in doing so.

Mimi referenced the July *Waunakee Tribune: Westport Drumlin* article describing NHLT site plans. Tony Abate was mentioned for his NHLT role in seeking input to shape the future site.

Rebecca senses the HPC may not be interested in taking care of a building, as it doesn't seem like as volunteers, we have the time or energy, not to mention the funds like a *Westport Historical Society* might attempt. Janette mentioned trying in the past to form such a group, but had few people participate. Ray defended our HPC efforts as identifying properties, recording and creating inventories to empower families for instance at preserving their heritage. Rebecca later in the meeting, referred to one of our roles or concepts for HPC as being a *clearing house for Historic Preservation Connections*.

Rebecca is not arguing against use of the original residence for HPC display efforts, but wants the commission to be realistic in our aims. A shelf for EWW artifacts or a cupboard for maps may not be enough demand for the town to take on such a site. Schumacher Farm or the Town Hall may offer other options for displaying artifacts. Rebecca concludes either the Town needs to say if they are interested in preserving portions of the home site or NHLT will tear it down.

Therefore, we could consider repurposing of artifacts suggests Joe, “What would we like? Siding? Construction timbers?” Ron reminds us to look beyond using the building per se but to also view its character that it preserves in the town's landscape. Joe notes these historic features continue to disappear with on-going local developments e. g. silo off of Hwy Q.

Ray recommends Rebecca, Ron and Mimi along with Jim Stephenson meet on site with Jim Welsh as a reconnaissance mission to investigate the site for any salvageable pieces. In preparation, Rebecca will review the historic consultant's on-site report more closely. Questions include: Would the original homestead portion serve as a resource room or display for EWW site (If adequately labeled as such according to Rebecca), if the Town were to take it down and move it? Does it have any log cabin or notable features hidden in its construction?

### **A Peter Bloch Memorial Tribute: Jackson's Landing Bench(s) and Signage Update**

While no official word as to the progress of the HPC proposed bench(s) and signage in memory of Peter Bloch from the Park's Commission review, Ray offered to work up a portion of the Military Trail signage (that Peter Bloch had been working on), as part of the tribute to him, to be located within Jackson's Landing as part of our HPC proposal. The addition of memorial benches to be located and placed this fall or next spring/summer could then proceed. Mimi is going to ask Terry Enge of the Parks Commission the cost of a single Leopold style bench, thinking that would enable the GROW Grassroots Organization of Waunakee, to know how many benches they could choose to fund and/or if in some combination to cover a sign or not.

At the minimum, an e-mail or letter of appreciation from Ray (for the HPC or possibly also the Town Board, if they have not already done so) was offered to confirm and thank the organization for their generous gift toward *Peter's Memorial* to enhance our Westport parkland.

### **Action Plan for HPC Projects**

In formulating *An Action Plan for HPC*, Rebecca has listed *Projects/Status/Planning* (See attached list). It is hoped that this serves as a catalyst for accomplishing these projects and their associated tasks as outlined to help focus our HPC energy. This is as far out as she can forecast and is subject to HPC input. We will inevitably *juggle priorities* as we proceed step-by-step.

She reviewed this list by adding some details. For example, she is working on finishing drafts of the EWW markers so that we can proof the last 2 at our next meeting and if so, go on to manufacture them in October. When mentioning the *Siberz Architecture Project*, Joe told Rebecca he had an *Inventory of 60-70 Properties* of his design, given to him through Siberz daughter and asked if she had seen that document. She had not, so Joe will share that with her to assist in her research of his architectural designs built in Westport, including his home at one time. She was also adding to her Siberz photo inventory to eventually create one of the Town's originally designated display panels showcasing his architecture and its local significance.

### **Westport Silo Inventory and Other Items touched on as on the Action Plan**

#### **Miscellaneous Business**

Slated for future meetings due to limited time and further input forthcoming.

**Website Builder Status**

**Comprehensive Plan Update**

#### **Forthcoming Events**

**Schumacher Farm—*Heritage Fest* on September 11th afternoon!**

#### **NEXT MEETING**

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

**Next month's meeting will be Thursday, October 6, 2016 at 6:00 pm**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Ray moved to adjourn at 7:30pm.

**Minutes submitted by Nancy Schlingen**