

**TOWN OF WESTPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING**

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

MINUTES of October 5, 2017

Members present: Mimi Bloch, Ray Mejia, Joe Pichette, Nancy Schlimgen
Member absent: Janette Hermanson,
Public present: Rebecca Bernstein, Historic Resource Consultant;
Jim Stephenson, Jackson's Landing Research: Natural and Cultural History

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mimi motioned to accept September 7th minutes. Joe seconded. Motion approved.

NEW BUSINESS

HPC Social Media Presence

Joe offered to create a Facebook page for HPC that would be easily updated and user friendly. In thinking about downloading photos, Ray commented that at our next open house if a portable scanner is provided residents could upload Westport photos to share, yet still keep them.

Jackson's Landing Interpretation with Jim Stephenson

Jim discussed his research he has documented on the history of the Jackson Family at the Jackson Landing. Please note that the recent Park Shelter display gives a good historical summary which includes pictures, which will be referred to here in recounting the Jackson Family History. Jim also has oral histories from some members of the Jackson Family.

Rebecca in concluding the discussion offered to meet with Jim this coming spring as part of HPC involvement to help create a Westport copy of Jim's research materials and help further Jim's hope or aspirations of creating a corresponding booklet or publication interpreting the Jackson Landing site. Rebecca also could possibly see a 3-dimensional artifact display.

Jim envisions environmental education at Jackson Landing to include land management with invasive control, interpreting historical, wildlife and phenological features with a trail guide, newsletters and meetings of a Friends group exemplified by the Friends of Pheasant Branch in Middleton.

Jim highlighted the plat of *Willow Park Lots* located within and adjacent to Jackson Landing that due to the proximity of the wetlands, since the Tenney Lock construction raised water levels, would likely not be approved for a permit to built on those sites. So the question of finding out if any of the landowners would be willing to donate their parcel back to the town and be absorbed by the Conservancy was contemplated. Joe and Mimi mentioned one way might be to offer some memorial to allow once park owners, family recognition in exchange for access to the property. Raising taxes may encourage landowners to donate or sell. In any case, invasives like

honeysuckle and buckthorn could then be dealt with and the land could be managed as parkland. Joe suggested the Park Committee take the lead especially if these parcels are not going to earn income. Although a letter from Bob Anderson may have been sent out in the past, this Committee could also initiate this renewed effort to inform *Willow Park* landowners, given their historical significance, in partnership with Westport's Park Committee.

Jim informed the HPC that recently the Yahara Water Trail's canoe landing access to Jackson Landing had been cleared and once again open as a paddle and picnic destination. Noting the site preserves the lakeshore!

Pre-settlement and Indigenous peoples in the area of Jackson Landing and Governor Nelson State Park were also referred to with Joe mentioning the Indian Trail and encampments in the Jackson Landing vicinity at the mouth of the Yahara River. Jim expressed his shared interest in native cultures and successfully discovering arrowheads and other artifacts in the area. Rebecca reiterates that even after 120 years of agriculture, given the future development planned in the area is with huge earth movers, the opportunity for such discoveries will be lost forever!

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Ella Wheeler Wilcox Shelter Design

Jim has also met with Ron Bowen, former HPC member and Barry B to consider EWW shelter design and potential Westport Contractors.

Peter Bloch Memorial Dedication

Mimi mentioned that the GROW (Grass Roots Organization of Waunakee) Group is establishing a scholarship in Peter's name to compliment with the Jackson Landing's Peter Bloch Memorial that links civic responsibility and related to climate change and the environment. The announcement was made at the on-site dedication by this group. Mimi was hoping to host a similar event for the HPC so that members could see the placement of the plaque and benches in person.

NEXT MEETING AND ROTATING AGENDA ITEMS

The Historic Preservation Commission meets the first Thursday of each month, unless otherwise stated at 6 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room of the Town Center.

The next meeting is on November 2nd.

FORTHCOMING RELATED EVENTS

2017 Local History and Historic Preservation Conference in LaCrosse on October 20-21

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned ~7:30 p.m.