

Lower Makefield Township Historical Commission Meeting September 14, 2022

Attendees:

- Joe Camaratta, Historical Commission
- Helen Heinz, Historical Commission
- James Nycz, Historical Commission
- Thomas Argentieri, Historical Commission
- Victor Fiori, Historical Commission
- Chris Greeley, Historical Commission (arrived late)
- Daniel Grenier, Board of Supervisors (arrived late)

Joe announces that James will be leaving the Historical Commission and that this is his last meeting. Good luck James! His commission ran through October 2022. This leaves the Historical Commission with a vacancy to fill. Joe will follow up on posting the position publicly.

With James leaving, Joe will be taking over on the Ad Hoc Committee to work on the RFP for Patterson Farm

James was the treasurer. We have a fund of \$5,000. In the past we've used it for events like the one at the cemetery. We need a new treasurer. Tom volunteers for the role.

Joe makes a motion to appoint Tom as treasurer. Helen seconds. Vote is unanimous. Tom is now the Historical Commission Treasurer.

We have another member of the committee – Barbara – who has not been able to join because this meeting time doesn't work for her. We'll revisit moving the meeting time at the end of the year.

Joe revisits goals and objectives for the year.

- Joe will continue to support the Ad Hoc Committee.
- Primary focus of the Historical Commission for the rest of the year on creating a plan with fundraising requirements for resubmission of Patterson Farm to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Cataloging township owned materials (waiting on grant decision, due in December). Going to make budget allocations so we can begin the project while grant is pending.
 - Jim M. wants us to take over the township's history online presence
- Last survey of historic resources was 10-15 years ago. Potential help from Barbara Ricker.
 - Helen to put Joe in touch with Barbara
- YouTube Series and an in-person event
 - After discussion, Commission agreed to continue planning in 2022 for execution in 2023.

Conversation moves to funding priorities. Review of funding priorities and discussion on whether these are the right things to focus on.

- Repair of stone walls at Slate Hill Cemetery – it needs to be repaired. There may be other things to do in the cemetery as well.

- The cemetery is in bad shape. The wall is damaged (stucco falling off in sheets) in front of the Anderson Section and there are a lot of stones that have fallen flat. We could use Eagle Scouts as a service project.
- We should ask the Supervisors to dedicate money over the next few years. Some trees need to come down too. Jim M. is aware.
- Depends on Township Manager that comes in and whether he/she delegates to committees or is hands on.
- We are going to keep this on our priority list and ask for 20-30k just for the wall repair based on prior work at the site.
- Discussion on Phase 1 archaeological survey. If it isn't needed for the National Historic Registry submission, it becomes a "nice to have"

****Chris and Dan join the meeting ****

Discussion around Octagonal Schoolhouse site – primarily the acquisition by LMT and the potential rebuilding of the structure as a historically significant site. It was both the first Octagonal Schoolhouse in the state (and potentially the country) and the meeting place of the first abolitionist society.

- If we can acquire the site, there may be a pathway with a Keystone Planning Grant to rebuild the structure.
- The biggest hurdle is that LMT doesn't own it and it doesn't seem like the current owner has an interest in selling.
- Decision was made by the group to remove the Octagonal Schoolhouse as a budget priority until the ownership issues are cleared up.

Discussion around the Patterson Farm Submission for inclusion on the National Register

- The prior submission was returned over confusion on whether we were submitting for the AOY house or the Satterthwaite side or both. There were also questions about the connection between the historic district and the farm and how Crossroads Village supported the farms. There were also questions about the crops that were grown on the site.
- The dendrochronology project would probably not provide information helpful or necessary to the re-submission. We are going to discontinue pursuing it.
- There is going to be a lead removal from the soil around the Satterthwaite House. We want to do an archeological survey of those areas first to make sure we don't lose artifacts in the process. We have to find a group that can both do the archaeological work and do it in hazardous soil (or an archaeological group that can work with a soil remediation group).
 - That funding/project may flow through the Ad Hoc Committee
 - We are focused on not losing artifacts through the remediation. It is independent of the national register.
- We are going to work on getting potential numbers together (we had \$20k as a rough number from the Prickett Preserve).
 - Some discussion of writing a planning grant to ask for half the funds on a matching archaeological grant.
- Helen makes a motion to put in a funding request and extend to Satterthwaite and Patterson at \$20-\$25k per farmstead. Tom seconds. Vote was unanimous in favor.