**Lower Makefield Township Historical Commission Meeting**

October 11, 2023

Attendees (in person):

* Joe Camaratta, Historical Commission (remote)
* Helen Heinz, Historical Commission
* Thomas Argentieri, Historical Commission
* Chris Greeley, Historical Commission
* Victor Fiori, Historical Commission
* Mitch Palin, Historical Commission
* Jeff Bedser, Historical Commission (remote)
* Lisa Pellegrino, Historical Commission (remote)
* Cathy Hanville, Historical Commission
* Jim Sachs, Historical Commission
* Monica Hinden, Volunteer
* John Lewis, Board of Supervisors (joins at 7:34)

**Agenda**

* Review and approval of September minutes.
  + Tom noted a correction. Motion to accept the minutes as updated passed unanimously by all members.

Existing Business (7:31p start)

* Slate Hill Cemetery
  + In the Spring we are hoping to 3D scan the cemetery to follow-up on the ground penetrating radar work that was done this year.
  + Ghost Tour
    - Harvest Fest is likely being cancelled if the forecast doesn’t change by morning
    - It looks like we are in good shape to move to the 15th. Light rain is predicted for Sunday morning so it may be soggy. The Sunday time will also run into the Eagles game, which could hurt attendance.
    - Victor and Monica will talk about publicizing it and Monica will tell the township and follow-up on police support.
    - Monica needs more worker volunteers. We will take spouses, nieces, nephews - if everyone brings someone, we'll be in good shape.
    - Monica - big thanks to everyone for working hard on it! Jim lead sponsorships, Mitch dealt with the printing. Cathy crushed the stories from Helen's brain. Victor is back on logistics!
    - Signs are all set!
    - Mitch is going to take pictures the day-of.
    - Everyone helping to show up by 3. If Commission folks can show up a little earlier, that'd be super.
    - Please help amplify on social media
    - Thanks to Monica for her leadership!
  + CLG Mini-Grant
    - Tom just received the contact information to obtain the final of three required quotes for the web developer.
    - We expect to be able to talk to Megan (SHPO) soon around the proposal, budget and potentially the RFP if she wants to review that.
* Cataloging township-owned material
  + For the next meeting in November, Chris will take the grant application that was prepared and modify the plan to something that we can begin to execute on over the next few months to complete this project.
* Ad Hoc Property Committee
  + Doug Seiler, who is the lead architect, went through each of the buildings to provide a condition assessment and list off some potential uses for each.
  + As members of the public, we can have our own opinions, but as the Historical Commission we should think about whether it is an appropriate use from a historic perspective.
  + On behalf of the Commission, Joe has opposed the sale of the Satterthwaite House. Joe's concern is that if the house is sold we lose all control of its designation - the Point and Edgewood Village are good examples of times when this has gone wrong.
  + Township doesn't want to be in the landlord business – Ad Hoc Property Committee is looking for a governance model. What would it be like for us to form a non-profit or bring a non-profit on to manage Patterson Farm? It is a great way to go because we'll get passionate people involved.
  + David Krasner said that Board of Supervisors is waiting to hear from the Ad Hoc Committee on how to go forward on Patterson Farm. His suggestion is to update the BoS and have them approve it to move forward.
  + At the October 12 Ad Hoc Property Commission meeting, Joe is going to ask for a motion for submission of Patterson Farm to the National Register.
    - The first to a submission is a determination of eligibility. When you have a historical property, you can submit it to PA SHPO and they make a recommendation on whether it is eligible for the National Register. This was done in 1998. A determination of eligibility has a 5-year lifespan, so it has expired and we need to renew it.
    - We have photographs from the Ad Hoc Committee process, Helen has done a lot of writing on the farm, and Tom and Helen have done a lot of work on putting together additional materials.
  + Joe wants to engage SHPO around three potential submission strategies:
    - We list both farmsteads on their own
    - We create a historic district
    - We expand Edgewood Historic District to include Patterson Farm. This was noted as an interesting approach by some members because “the farm creates the village, and the village supports the farm,” making the two intertwined.
  + Helen raised some concerns about the manner in which the history of Patterson Farm and the surrounding buildings was represented as the last Ad Hoc Committee meeting. Some of the omissions may be material for submission.
  + John Lewis posed a number of questions for consideration in this process:
    - What are the trade-offs with the inclusion with Edgewood Village? Overall, what are the potential benefits and how do we mitigate the potential risks.
    - Because there may have to be some trade-offs, it would be helpful if this Commission can help rank the historic significance of the buildings. That helps prioritize which work gets done, etc.
      * Some discussion about how the buildings have all contributed to the history of the site at various times over its history, so creating a priority list could be very difficult.
    - The Satterthwaite House is the sticky wicket. Some people think the cost of preservation is too high and it is not as important as people think.
      * In general discussion, the Commission noted that it could be interesting to sell the Satterthwaite House to a non-profit 501(c)(3) with a right of first refusal for any future sales.
      * The Township has some 501(c)(3)s now - Farmland Preservation is a great example. It manages those properties and has seven figures of money and the lease rates are reasonable and promotes open space.
  + After discussion, the Committee agreed that Joe should make the motion at the next Ad Hoc Property Committee meeting.
* Budget
* The budget was submitted by Joe to David Krasner. David had no immediate questions or comments. Joe will keep us updated on progress.

**New Business**

* LMT Historical Society
  + Joe had a conversation with Jennifer. She said that the Historical Society is a functional and operational society with 70+ members.
  + Jennifer represented to Joe that they have revitalized their board. The members of the Historical Commission that are also members of the Historical Society had no notice or update of those facts through normal channels.
  + Jennifer noted that If we have events we want to promote to the Historical Society, she’ll bring us before their Board. If we wanted them to do a mailing, we'd need to pay for it.
  + There was some discussion during this section around potentially starting a non-profit for Slate Hill to further the good work that members of this Commission have started.
* Community Foundation Fund
  + Joe worked with Christa (former head of this Commission) to track down funds that were previously raised by the Historical Commission.
  + Christa had detailed records (including a spreadsheet and copies of checks) that enabled the Township to trace the money to the Community Foundation Fund, where there is over $13k for the benefit of the Historical Commission.
  + Now that we know that there is a small pool of money, Tom, as treasurer, will be overseeing the process for reimbursement and general spend. All requests should be submitted to Tom.
* Misc. Topics
  + Brief discussion around the blue farmhouse at 1029 Creamery Road. As a late 19th century home, there has been some call to preserve the house in whatever plans are approved by the Township. Helen volunteered to write a letter on behalf of the Historical Commission to Jim Majewski advocating the for preservation of the house.
  + Next meeting is November 8. At 6:30p that evening, Megan from PA SHPO will be joining us to conduct a continuing education class.