

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 7, 2014  
Delancey Hall**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gail Pantezzi  
Marcia Rockwood  
Steve LaRocca  
Francis Tuoti, Chairman

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Debby Moore  
John Malone  
Linda Gracie

**ALSO PRESENT:** Susie Thompson, Town Historian  
Janice Will, Recording Secretary

Chairman Francis Tuoti opened the meeting.

The minutes of the November 5, 2013 public hearing/meeting were unanimously approved.

The Commission agreed to hold their next meeting on February 4, 2014 as scheduled.

HPC 2013 accomplishments/Town newsletter

The Chairman explained that he thought the group should discuss what they did in 2013 in order to put together a submission for the spring Town newsletter.

Susie Thompson said they should provide information about the landmark designation of the Bloomer House and the 3 mile-markers.

Gail Pantezzi said the NPS display about Rochambeau's march through North Salem should be mentioned.

Ms. Thompson remarked that the installation date continues to be moved farther into 2014.

Ms. Pantezzi thought it would still be worth putting an update in the newsletter in hope that it will garner some attention.

Ms. Thompson said she will work with Chairman Tuoti on a newnsletter submission.

Ms. Thompson added that a photograph of the Bloomer House could be submitted also.

Chairman Tuoti said the HPC could submit a photo of one of the mile-markers.

Ms. Thompson commented that the photograph should not give away the marker's location, as the markers are rather small and could be subject to vandalism.

### Plaque for the Bloomer House

Ms. Thompson said the plaque has been ordered, and she passed around a mock-up for the others to look at. She said Mrs. Fischbach expressed interest in having a plaque for the root-cellar on her property as well, but everyone agreed that the Town can't be expected to pay for a second plaque.

The Chairman commented that Mrs. Fischbach can pay for the additional plaque if she really wants it/the HPC could order it for her.

### HPC/newsletter cont.-public access television

Ms. Pantezzi suggested seeking volunteers to work on programming for the Town's public access television channel.

Ms. Thompson said people should not get the idea that the channel will be used only for historical programming.

Ms. Pantezzi thought the volunteer search could be placed in the newsletter separately from the HPC section. She suggested the other Commission members look at Channel 15 (the Lewisboro channel) to see the different kinds of programming they have.

Ms. Thompson said the problem for North Salem is money; there isn't any available for this project.

Ms. Pantezzi said the school has equipment; what's needed is a producer. She stated that Lewisboro has a budget for television programming. Ms. Pantezzi said she met with the leaders of 2 groups at the high school; they look for volunteers with interest in a particular topic. The school has a studio and equipment, so they have the ability to air programs. They will see if they have students who would be interested in working on a project from a historic prospect in the spring. She added that student input would be limited and in need of supervision by an adult with technical expertise.

Chairman Tuoti said it sounded as though any costs would involve personnel/not production of a program. Secondly, he said he is not sure the HPC should be in charge of setting up such a program, as it is for the whole Town and not just the HPC.

Ms. Thompson agreed, adding that although Bruce Buchholtz brought the idea to the HPC, they cannot do it themselves.

Ms. Pantezzi said she will continue to do research and look for help with the project. If she cannot find anyone to help, they can approach the community for funding.

Ms. Thompson commented that some of the Lewisboro programming is good and some of it is not, but mentioning the idea in the newsletter is a good idea.

Ms. Pantezzi said she will draft something for inclusion in the newsletter, and the Chairman asked her to include mention that other groups may be interested in using the TV programming. She said a friend at the Library offered to include something from the HPC for the Library bulletin also.

Ms. Thompson stated that she does not think it should be up to the HPC to recruit volunteers or take charge of the project, and there are lots of other groups in Town who may want to use the broadcast time.

#### Cell tower/101 Bloomer Road

Ms. Thompson said the property is in Bloomerside; and, although others may object, the co-op wants the tower/income.

The Chairman said he could not see this being of particular interest to the HPC/no historic landmarks in Town will be affected by the tower.

Ms. Pantezzi said the Town will ask the HPC what they think, even in terms of old but un-landmarked properties.

Ms. Thompson said the Bloomer farmhouse in the vicinity will not be affected/there is no real argument for the HPC to offer against installation for the tower.

It was agreed to leave the item on the agenda at least until it is known what the Planning Board is going to do.

#### Mills Road

Chairman Tuoti stated that Amy Rosmarin is circulating a petition for Mills Road residents about support for the historic designation of Mills Road from Titicus/TurkeyHill Roads to Bogtown Road. He said the HPC could consider designation of the rest of Mills Road later on.

#### Local Churches

Marcia Rockwood said that after hearing of their plight from Cynthia Curtis, she had offered to talk with the members of one particular church (Croton Falls Presbyterian) and added that she would like to meet with Ms. Thompson to work up some kind of format to use for that meeting.

Ms. Thompson said several local churches are in trouble due to falling membership. She added that she is not sure just what Ms. Curtis hopes the HPC will do.

Ms. Rockwood said she thought she remembered that Ms. Curtis had said there are State funds available for repairs to landmarked churches.

The secretary read from the November meeting minutes that there are matching grants available for restoration/repairs to religious structures. Ms. Curtis had suggested that if the HPC would designate a church/churches as local historic landmarks and perhaps help those churches apply for state and federal designations, they would be eligible for grants.

Chairman Tuoti suggested that Ms. Rockwood just concentrate on the Presbyterian Church for the time being.

Ms. Thompson offered to see what she has in her files.

The Members discussed a past attempt to interest St. James' Church in historic designation. The Chairman said he thought the church had been considering putting in some kind of crypts, but it is generally believed that the church chose not to go forward with historic designation because they were getting ready to make some changes to the church hall and would not want to add the complication of having to consult the HPC. It seems possible that the church might re-consider once their renovations are completed.

Ms. Thompson remarked that the only landmarked church in Town now is the former Methodist church owned by Richard Romanski.

Ms. Rockwood said she will meet with Ms. Thompson about the Presbyterian church, adding that they should see if it merits landmark status.

### Cemeteries

Ms. Thompson said she met with Jenny Weisberger from Friends of Bedford Burying Grounds. It's a volunteer 501C-3 group that works on preservation, restoration, clean-up, etc. of Bedford's 30 cemeteries. They got non-profit status so they could raise money for professional help, which is very expensive. After visiting Cat Ridge, Jenny recommended that we start small and gather volunteers, do clean up and simple repairs. She recommended books and a website with good info. Ms. Thompson, after consulting with Doug Bleakley, who's in charge of our cemeteries at highway, ordered a repair kit. With three volunteers from the Historical Society, she started work on repair of two broken stones. Cold weather has now postponed the project until spring.

She also met with John Malone, who has done research online. Their recommendation is to start with Cat Ridge for both restoration and landmark designation and to create a small committee of folks who are willing to do down-and-dirty hands-on work. This is a project for adults and should not include school or scout groups at this point. Ms. Thompson recommended starting with volunteers from HPC and the Historical Society.

Ms. Pantezzi commented that it would be a good project for the Lions Club and offered to see if they would be interested.

Ms. Thompson pointed out that the available cemetery book with inventory is a few years old and no longer up-to-date. She stated that she also looked into mapping techniques, and a map can be created using GPS. Ms. Thompson expressed hope that once the HPC gets started with one cemetery, it will generate interest and perhaps offers of help. She added that she thought the work should be done only with adults.

Ms. Thompson said historic designation would provide some protection, and the HPC would be able to restore some things, although it is dirty work. She credited the Highway Department for doing a good job of caring for the cemeteries, adding that FEMA provided money for clean-up of the Cat Ridge Road cemetery after Hurricane Sandy knocked down many trees in the vicinity.

Steve LaRocca asked if the Town owns the cemeteries, and Ms. Thompson said it does.

Mr. LaRocca remarked that if the cemeteries are landmarked, the Town would be responsible for maintenance.

Ms. Thompson pointed out that the Town is already responsible for upkeep of the cemeteries.

Mr. LaRocca said designation won't add any additional protection, but it would draw attention to the cemeteries/record them as a part of history.

Ms. Thompson stated that the stones in the Mills Road cemetery are so deteriorated that most cannot be read, and some are just little fieldstone markers. She reiterated that she feels Cat Ridge cemetery will be manageable; if it turns out to be too much for the HPC to do, it won't be finished. She suggested starting with creating a photographic documentation of all the gravestones and the wall, and she said she would not mind doing some of that herself even during the winter.

Mr. LaRocca said cemeteries are great history lessons.

Ms. Rockwood remarked that the wording used on old gravestones is very interesting also.

Ms. Thompson said the Cat Ridge cemetery is also the site of the original Baptist church. Going forward, she suggested everyone read the information available on North Salem cemeteries and invited the HPC members to look at her file on the Cat Ridge Road cemetery. Ms. Thompson stated that the Historical Society put up signs in the cemeteries, but if the cemeteries are historically-designated, placement of signs would seem to be the responsibility of the HPC.

#### NPS display

Ms. Thompson said the NPS is now saying they hope to install the display in August. The contract has been received and boxes for flyers have been ordered (approximately \$200).

Chairman Tuoti said it seems there is nothing to do about the project at present.

Ms. Thompson commented that everyone is aware of the back-and-forth regarding content, and she has heard nothing further.

#### NYS Certified Local Government program

The Chairman said he has not done any further work on this yet.

Ms. Thompson said she thinks she has a file that the Chairman should look at before he does anything else.

Chairman Tuoti said he seemed to remember that the HPC was interested in this program so that North Salem historic landmarks will be eligible for grant money. He said he would like to get back to working on the required changes to the local law and asked Ms. Thompson to call him when she has time to go over the file with him.

Other

Mr. LaRocca asked if anyone has any connection to the owners of the Grant house, as it is one of the most important buildings in Town, and he would like to see it historically-designated.

Ms. Rockwood said she would also be interested in another building near the Grant house that used to be both an ice house and a schoolhouse.

Ms. Thompson said she recently spoke to the owner of the Grant house, following a call from someone in California who has a stained glass business. The caller said he had worked on a project in a house in North Salem (the Grant house) and wanted to know if she had any photographs of the finished work. Ms. Thompson did not have pictures, but she called the owner (James Garten) who said he would call the stained glass person in California. Ms. Thomson said Mr. Garten had been very nice and suggested that Mr. LaRocca call him about designating the house.

Ms. Rockwood mentioned the ice-house/schoolhouse again.

The Chairman thought the HPC should look into historic designation of the Grant house first, and then perhaps consider the other structure.

Ms. Thompson offered to give Mr. LaRocca Mr. Garten's phone number.

On another subject, Chairman Tuoti said he once took a group of antique car-buffs to see the white barn at 955 Peach Lake Road. He commented that the barn is unusual.

Mr. LaRocca explained that the barn has a gambrel roof with trusses.

The Chairman asked if there was any interest in landmarking the barn.

Mr. LaRocca said the barn is neither very old nor all that unique, but it is nice.

Ms. Thompson and the Chairman both said the new owner of 955 Peach Lake Road is very nice and interested in history.

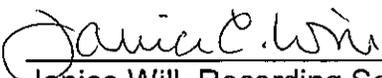
Mr. LaRocca said it might make sense to designate the barn.

To adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:10 pm.

***Motion by: Gail Pantezzi***

***All in favor.***

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Janice Will, Recording Secretary