

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
January 10, 2022**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Julie Bauer, Joe McCormick, John Prendergast, Jonathan Martin, Joshua Anderson

TOWNSHIP STAFF: John Weller, Planning Director
Pam Gural-Bear, Asst. Township Manager

Phil Yocum, Historic Consultant, Commonwealth Heritage Group
Candice Strawley, Consultant, Commonwealth Heritage Group
Theresa Santalucia, Board of Supervisors Liaison

I. Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. The meeting was a hybrid meeting with participants attending both in person at the Township Building and on-line via Zoom.

II. Reorganization

Motion: To elect Julie Bauer as Chairman of the Historical Commission for 2022. (Anderson/Martin)

Vote: Passed 5-0

Motion: To elect Joe McCormick as Vice-Chairman of the Historical Commission for 2022. (Martin/Anderson)

Vote: Passed 5-0

III. Approval of Minutes for December 13, 2021

Motion: To approve the minutes of December 13, 2021 (Bauer/McCormick)

Vote: Passed, 4-0-1 (Anderson abstained as he was not a voting member of the Commission in December 2021)

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Old Business

1. Review of Historic Resource Survey Update Deliverables: Updated Survey Forms, New Designation Criteria, & Updated "History of West Whiteland"

Candice Strawley presented a recap of the survey results. The process of condensing property boundaries resulted in 162 properties, down from the previous 210, and a building/structure count of 200+. Non-contributing structures (structures that do not meet the historic criteria; i.e., modern garage, but are found on historic properties, were also counted. New property types such as corn cribs, root cellars, etc. were also identified and added to the survey.

Ms. Strawley briefly reviewed the Historic Resources Classification Criteria and listing requirements approved at the November 14, 2019, Historic Commission meeting. A historic resource must be 50-years or older and express two additional criteria from the list to be included as part of the West Whiteland Historic Resources Map. Resources that are less than 50-years old must meet three criteria. She provided a list of previously listed resources and newly identified resources that do not meet three or more criteria.

Ms. Strawley explained that the survey was designed to make future updates easy by adding new entries as new resources are identified. Mr. Weller added that the Zoning Ordinance also contains provisions for amending and updating. There is still a record for those properties that no longer meet the required criteria or properties that have been demolished, so the historic information is not lost.

The Historic Resources Map and its categories/designations was reviewed. A new district "Battle of the Clouds" was added. There was discussion about how applicants within this district would be evaluated by the Commission when seeking a plan review. Mr. Yocum suggested that this new district was more educational in nature seeking to make applicants aware of the fighting that took place in this area. Mr. Weller said a text change to the Zoning Ordinance can make it clear that this district is for "level of awareness" only, but he will get an opinion from the Township Solicitor to be sure.

There was discussion about possibly adding some type of symbol to the 22 contributing resources with the Battle of the Clouds District to readily identify these structures, but Mr. Martin suggested this could make the Map "too busy". After further discussion, it was suggested that additional separate maps with details for each district would be useful.

Mr. Yocum suggested adding Criteria B ("is relevant to or associated with the significant development, heritage, or culture of the Township") to some of the resources (Autocar Factory and Richard Ashbridge Sisters House) as ways to protect resources. Mr. Martin expressed concern that changing criteria at this late date could slow down the entire project. Noting that the County has yet to review the project, Mr. Yocum suggested making the motion flexible to allow minor adjustments before finalization.

Ms. Strawley presented the updated "History of West Whiteland" book and noted that while new text and pictures have been added, there are no digital copies of the historic sketches found in the original book. Scanned copies will be added to the updated book.

Motion: To make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to accept the three deliverables as presented on January 10, 2022, as part of the update to the 1982 Historic Resource Survey, with minor edits as per discussion.

Vote: **Passed 5-0 (McCormick/Anderson)**

VI. Historical Commission Concerns:

Ms. Bauer reported that the person previously interested in taking the Witch's Cap (in September, but then lost his job) was still somewhat interested. Mr. McCormick suggested that Jeff Devlin (host of the tv show "Stone House Revival") might be interested. Not knowing the status of the December 31, 2021, deadline previously imposed, Ms. Bauer said the Commission will continue to offer the Witch's Cap until a taker can be found.

Ms. Bauer said she plans to interview Nancy Carnes to obtain her oral history (lived at Lochiel Farm in the 1950's-60's) in the near future. There was discussion regarding the need to preserve various audio tapes of oral histories and convert them to digital media. The Commission also plans to obtain an oral history from previous Police Chief Joseph Catov.

VII. Township Update

The Commission welcomed back Joshua Anderson as a voting member of the Historical Commission and Theresa Santalucia as the Board of Supervisors' liaison.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: **To adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m.
(Bauer/Anderson)**

Vote: **Passed, 5-0**

Recording Secretary,

John Weller, AICP
Planning Director