

**EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
January 14, 2009  
SCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Gail Brown (Chairman), Lynn Coine (Vice Chairman- Absent), Ann Keen (Member), Jim Michael (Member), Rugene Caldwell (Member), L. Tietjen (Member, arrived at 7:15 p.m.), Rich Marchetti (Member-Absent), Phyl Snyder (Secretary)

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM

Roy Kolb resigned from the Planning Commission and will no longer be our Liaison or member of the Historical Commission. We will all miss Roy greatly. With his historical knowledge of East Coventry, he was a great asset to our Commission.

**Public Comments**

Noel Billingsley (214 E. Cedarville Road) was present to observe. Mr. Billingsley was invited to join the members at the table. He accepted.

**Organization**

G. Brown called for nomination of 2009 Historical Commission Officers.

**CHAIRMAN**

P. Snyder nominated G. Brown.

R. Caldwell seconded the motion.

G. Brown called for discussion. G. Brown discussed the many responsibilities of the Historical Commission as outlined in Zoning Article XII. The Historic Resource Map has been a priority and has been completed. It is now time to go forward and prioritize our other responsibilities. She emphasized the Historical Commission is a working Commission, our responsibilities go beyond meeting once a month, thus our ordinance is set up to form committees. She emphasized the responsibilities of the Historical Commission is a joint effort of the Commission and the Commission cannot rely on the efforts of one or two members. She asked the members to consider her comments.

The motion was approved unanimously 5-0-0.

**VICE CHAIRMAN**

R. Caldwell nominated J. Michael.

A. Keen seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously 5-0-0.

**SECRETARY**

P. Snyder nominated R. Caldwell for Secretary, R. Caldwell stated she did not feel comfortable accepting the nomination at this time, but would reconsider next year. Motion not seconded, G. Brown called for a new motion.

A. Keen nominated P. Snyder as Secretary.

L. Tietjen seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously 6-0-0.

## **Minutes**

Minutes of December 10, 2009 were reviewed. J. Michael made the motion to accept the Minutes. L. Tietjen seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously 6-0-0.

## **Action Items**

### **Goals for 2009**

1. Welcome letter from the Historical Commission to persons who have recently purchased old homes in East Coventry. Included would be information only, not endorsement, for resource materials available for planning, architecture, materials, crafts, etc. G. Brown had made up a similar packet earlier in 2008 with historical references and information. G. Brown stated she had sent a copy of the proposed list to the Township Manager, Board of Supervisors, and Township Solicitor for review and additional information of local crafts people. As the Historical Commission did not receive a response, she suggested we follow up on this request. - G. Brown, A. Keen, and P. Snyder volunteers.

2. On going research of East Coventry History – G. Brown noted much of the information previously researched by members of the Historical Commission was not turned over during the 2006 reorganization, thus our files are in immediate need of updating. Volunteers are needed for researching archives of Chester County Historical Society (CCHS), Pottstown Historical Society, Montgomery County Historical Society and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). G. Brown noted the Reading Museum has extensive archive material on the Schuylkill Canal. – R. Caldwell volunteered to research archives at the CCHS. G. Brown also volunteered to research the above mentioned archives.

Obtain copies of PHMC Historical Resource Documentation from Harrisburg Archives: pictures text, etc. – L. Tietjen volunteer. G. Brown to meet with B. Rodgers, Township Manager, to discuss setting up an account with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for reproduction costs.

3. Historical Commission Web Page-

Township website information about the Historical Commission to include members, contacts, goals, history, etc. G. Brown gave J. Michael list of all townships in Chester County to review other townships' Web Sites. Phyllis Snyder and J. Michael volunteers. – J. Michael noted he would soon have a proposed webpage draft to submit to the Historical Commission for review.

4. Present to the public a speaker from the Chester County Historical Society. "How Old is that Photograph" – How a genealogist researches photos from their family collections and dates them. Attendees are allowed to bring one photo for dating. G. Brown believes there may be a limit to this presentation. She will inquire. Cost is \$50.00 to non profit organizations, which includes the Township. Presentation would be at no cost to the attendees. Dates and facilities must be planned. - G. Brown

5. Recording "Oral Histories" from long time residents of East Coventry Township. (It has also been noted these 'Oral Histories' could later be published as local folklore). Volunteers need to review the "Oral Histories" workshop information. Legal releases

would need to be developed. G. Brown to check with the Township on audio/video equipment available. P. Snyder and R. Caldwell volunteers.

6. Participate with East Vincent Township in a joint town tour of Parker Ford in 2010. More discussion and information needed but East Coventry Historical Commission is interested.

7. Updating Historic Resource Surveys. G. Brown to discuss possibility of hiring a preservation planner to perform updated Historic Resource Surveys and possible grant funding for this activity with B. Rodgers, Township Manager.

8. The development of a 2010 Historic Calendar was discussed. It was the consensus of the members not to pursue this project.

9. Up-Date Display Case – could use theme approach such as Fricks Locks, churches, schools, etc., with photos and other archives.

Response to East Coventry Township residents' inquiries – G. Brown has received three inquiries for information. G. Brown to follow-up on these inquiries.

Fricks Lock Stakeholders - Supervisors received a letter from Exelon dated Nov. 24, 2008 from the PHMC to Dale Frens of Frens and Frens. This letter strongly discourages further demolition and provides reference for support from the PHMC and Preservation PA for planning strategies. G. Brown stated the current extension for a public hearing on the demolition of outbuildings, porches, additions, and one complete historic structure is February 28, 2009. G. Brown to meet with Township Manager to request assistance from the Township Solicitor for a meeting to go over the process of a public hearing with the Historical Commission members and to schedule hearings.

### **Subdivision and Land Development.**

88 Wells Road – In a letter from the PHMC to Scott J. Address, Edward B. Walsh & Associates, Inc. dated November 4, 2008, a recommendation was made for a Phase I Archaeological survey of the area. Since the canal is known to have been in that location and there is earlier evidence of prehistoric settlement (Indians), artifacts might be found during excavation. The Board of Supervisors required a Phase I Archaeological Study at their January 5, 2009 meeting. G. Brown was not present at that meeting and will request a written explanation of the specifics of the Board of Supervisors request.

G. Brown stated the Historical Commission should support the recommendations of the PHMC letter.

J. Michael made a motion to support the PHMC's recommendation. L. Tietjen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimous 6-0-0.

The Supervisors will make the decision.

### **Discussion Items**

Spring CCHPN Training – Preparing Grant Applications – March 14, 2009 – at Brandywine Museum.

Landis Valley Museums – Winter Institute – February 13th - 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## **Other Business**

### Newspaper Articles

- January 4, 2009 –“The Mercury “presented an article about the Battle Axes. J. Michael assisted in the research of this article upon a request from Spencer Claypool.
- Another article in “The Mercury” on the Real Estate Page entitled “Vincent Meadows lets you Embrace History and Modern Conveniences” embraced the nearby Valley Forge Park historical sites and trails as a marketing tool. East Coventry could be a model with its numerous historical properties (Fricks Lock Village, Parker Ford) in relation to the coming Schuylkill River Heritage Trail. The Schuylkill Valley Trail will go through East Coventry passing Fricks Lock Village and Parker Ford. There is great potential for all of East Coventry in this endeavor. With vision and planning East Coventry could become a first class historical attraction
- Recent articles in ‘The Mercury’ Should Old Farmhouse be Saved”, January 10, 2009, and follow-up article, “Council Vote Saves Manatawny Street Farmhouse”, January 15, 2009. Again emphasizes the growing awareness of the value of historical properties.
- Article in “The Mercury” January 6, 2009, “No Money for Sunny? – Township withholding grant from Sunnybrook” This article emphasizes the pitfalls of not researching and addressing the responsibilities and liabilities that may be a commitment when receiving grant monies

### Schuylkill River Trail Towns Conference

To inform nearby municipalities and businesses about the Schuylkill River Trail and how they can benefit from the Trail’s growing popularity. This is an excellent opportunity for East Coventry Township to emphasize the townships historical opportunities along the trail – the Schuylkill River Canal to Frick Lock Village, Fricks Lock Village, and Historic Parker Ford.

Article from ‘New Old House’ magazine – “New Ruralism, Developers are looking to our agrarian past to create communities” Excellent article on preplanning rural communities. This approach seeks to preserve the character of a place by reinterpreting old traditions, patterns, and customs in the design of new communities.

## **Adjournment**

P. Snyder made the motion to adjourn. R. Caldwell seconded the motion.  
The motion was approved unanimously 6-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phyllis Snyder  
Secretary