

**EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
February 27, 2008  
SCHEDULED MEETING MINUTE**

*(Pledge of Allegiance)*

**Attendance:** Gail Brown (Chairman), Lynn Coine (Vice Chairman) (absent), Elaine Preston (Secretary) (absent), Ann Keen (Member), Phyllis Snyder (Member), Roy Kolb (Planning Commission Liaison)

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM

**Minutes**

- Minutes of December 12, 2007 were reviewed.  
A. Keen made a motion to approved the minutes of December 12, 2007  
P. Snyder seconded the motion.  
The motion was passed unanimously. 4-0-0
  
- Minutes of January 23, 2008 were reviewed.  
P. Snyder made the motion to approve the minutes of January 23, 2008.  
A. Keen seconded the motion.  
The motion was passed 3-0-1 with R. Kolb abstaining as he had not attended the meeting of January 23, 2008.

**Public Comments**

- Visitors were introduced:  
Susan and Frank Gallagher - new owners 1777 E. Cedarville Road  
Ann Bedrick - East Nantmeal Township and Board of Directors, Chester County  
Historic Preservation Network (CCHPN)  
L. Tietjen – 131 Maack Road  
Liz Willow – 683 Ellis Woods Road
  
- County historical resource information was discussed with attendees. A. Bedrick of East Nantmeal Township took the time to expand on the locations of various historic records in the Chester County archives. We thank Ann as a neighbor and friend in her generosity in sharing her knowledge. G. Brown to assemble information packages for the Gallaghers, L. Tietjen, and L. Willow (historic resource survey sheets, research and restoration information).

**2007 Annual Report**

Everyone on the Historical Commission was extremely pleased with the 2007 Annual Report which G. Brown prepared for review and acceptance by the Historical Commission members. As Roy Kolb said, “Real good job!”

Roy Kolb made the motion to approve the report as amended

A. Keen seconded the motion.

The motion was passed 4- 0-0

The 2007 Historical Commission Annual Report will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors in accordance with the East Coventry Township Zoning Ordinance, Ordinance 135, September 19, 2005, Part XII, Section 1203.4.H. We would recommend to the Board of Supervisors that Annual Reports from all Commissions and Committees be posted on the Township web page.

### **Action Items**

G. Brown reported the Chester County Historical Society (CCHS) membership was paid by check on December 17, 2007. The check was not received by the CCHS and had not cleared through the bank. Hopefully all will be straightened out by our next meeting.

Update on ideas and progress for the Historical page on the East Coventry Township website – tabled as L. Coine was unable to attend due to work schedule

G. Brown discussed methods to inform citizens regarding the Historic Resource Map. We don't want to add anything to the Zoning Change Notice mailings which would add weight, thus cost to the mailings. Consensus was to write a document to be referenced in the notices to be available at the township clarifying the classifications and what these classifications mean to the property owner of a historic resource. G. Brown, P. Snyder and Ann Keen to compose the letter.

On February 18, 2008 approximately 3:00AM a fire occurred in the Lock Tender's House in Fricks Locks Village. G. Brown was notified by E. Preston after the Chief of Police had notified B. Preston of the fire. The county fire investigator has been at the property and we will await a report to verify his findings. A reporter from 'The Mercury' called B. Preston, Supervisor, questioning the source of the fire. Mr. Preston said we were waiting on the report from the investigator. The fire has not been reported to date by 'The Mercury'. G. Brown, after observing the Zoning Officers in Fricks Lock Village on Monday and Tuesday asked what their action was in the area. The Zoning Officers for East Coventry Township have deemed the property 'unsafe' and have posted all buildings with the exception of a garage as unsafe. The Zoning Officer drafted a letter to PECO stating the unsafe condition of the properties and requesting a response within a certain time period. Mr. B. Rodgers, the Township Manager, is holding this letter until he can determine from the Licensing Agreement whether the township or PECO is responsible for the structures. G. Brown asked if this letter is copied to the Historical Commission. The response was, "That's why it went to the Board of Supervisors". G. Brown stated the property is a National Register Historic District and cautioned that no demolition can take place without the proper reviews. Had the Historical Commission been consulted, we may have been able to provide such information. G. Brown will follow-up on this matter. G. Brown had requested access to Fricks Lock Village on Tuesday February 19, 2008 (the township building was closed February 18, 2008 for President's Day). After two discussions with the Chief of Police and conversation between the Chief and the Township Manager, G. Brown was allowed to go into Fricks Lock Village on Tuesday afternoon with police escort to take pictures of the fire damage to the Lock Tenders House. The House was gutted by the fire, but the stone structure and chimneys are intact. G. Brown passed around the pictures taken of the fire damaged Lock Tenders House at the Historical Commission meeting.

The Historical Commission has this building well documented and knows of persons who lived in this structure. It certainly can be reconstructed.

G. Brown and other citizens have on several occasions over the past four (4) years reported the gate open, 'no trespassing signs' not posted at the village, and unauthorized persons and vehicles in the village. G. Brown has reported this in open meeting to the Board of Supervisors. It is vital the village be secured and the township follows up with their commitment of July 2, 2007 to develop a business plan for Fricks Lock Village

Although the fire is a setback in current negotiations with PECO, the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area, East Coventry Township, and Chester County Parks and Recreation, it does emphasize the need to continue these meetings in a timely manner. Since last August, discussion has been developed toward a 'spur' through Fricks Lock Village off the Schuylkill River Trail. PECO has also indicated that signage at each of the structures along the spur would be acceptable. PECO has also indicated that their personnel may volunteer in a clean up effort in Fricks Lock Village. The Schuylkill Navigation Company Canal from Laurel Locks to Fricks Locks is National Register eligible and Fricks Lock Village is a National Register Historic District. This canal system was a great boost to the economy for all towns along the towpath including Fricks Lock and Parker Ford. It can continue to be a boost to the economy in East Coventry Township in the future. Fricks Lock is a rich and valuable link to the history of East Coventry Township and southeastern Pennsylvania.

### **Discussion Items**

Inventory of Historical Commission Artifacts – tabled as E. Preston was not able to attend due to work schedule.

A. Keen, E. Preston, and P. Snyder have been recording and filing documents most Wednesday mornings.

Larry Tietjen presented the Historical Commission with specifications and blueprints of modifications made to his property early in the twentieth century. Mr. Tietjen's property is National Register eligible. These objects will be of great value to the Historical Commission as well as future owners of the Maack residence. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Tietjen for his generosity and support.

Liz Willow showed us pictures of some of the artifacts she has recovered when the family reworked the floor in front of her fireplace. Old pewter flatware, glassware, feather ware, tooth brushes, pipes, slipware pottery, mocha ware, combs, and many other samples of wonderful historical artifacts. She and her family have treated this find as an archaeological dig, and even constructed a sieve to retrieve the small pieces. Many artifacts were intact and many painstakingly reconstructed. She presented the Historical Commission with a picture of reconstructed red ware pottery for our files. The Historical Commission was graciously invited to her home to view the artifacts recovered. We were all pleased and excited to see the visual evidence of the rich history of East Coventry Township. All members appreciated the Willows great respect for our history and the involvement of their son and other young people in this recovery effort. We are so thankful to have these wonderful people share their treasures.

A. Keen will put these donations in our files.

Ann Bedrick with CCHPN was present to discuss the subject for the Historic Resource to be sketched for the East Coventry Township Historic Resource Atlas. Ann Bedrick is usually the artist for these sketches, but as Ann Keen has always been our resident artist and has generously contributed her drawings for use to the Historical Commission for many years, we have asked

Ann Keen if she would like to render our sketch. Ann Keen graciously accepted. Everyone was asked to choose a subject for nomination at the next meeting.

G. Brown attended the Northern Township CCHPN meeting on February 21, 2008. The CCHPN has developed Municipality Support Areas to further provide support to local historical commissions and HARBS and to enhance networking. Our area consists of Warwick Township, West Nantmeal Township, East Nantmeal Township, North Coventry Township, South Coventry Township, East Coventry Township, East Vincent Township, and West Vincent Township. Our contact is Mr. Spencer Claypoole. Discussed were the Hopewell Big Woods Project and the Iron and Steel Heritage Region. These trails along with the Schuylkill River Trail will bring interest and commerce to our areas. In the public opinion survey conducted for Landscapes2, almost half of all respondents identified cultural and historic resources as an important asset contributing to the county character. Areas of interest in East Coventry Township are Fricks Lock Village and Parker Ford. The rehabilitation of Fricks Lock Historic District (National Register) and Parker Ford Historic District (Township Class II) will be essential as to whether these resources bring commerce to our area or whether East Coventry is simply passed through.

On March 8, 2008 the CCHPN will present their Spring Workshop entitled "Will the Walls Come Tumbling Down???" at the Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. G. Brown asked who would like to attend. P. Snyder and G. Brown volunteered to attend.

One of the goals of the East Coventry Historical Commission is to be an informative resource for our growing community. If there is a question about windows, plaster, any renovation problem, we want to be able to help.

### **Adjournment**

P. Snyder made the motion to adjourn.

A. Keen seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously. 5-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Phyllis Snyder  
Substitute Secretary