

EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

May 14, 2008

Scheduled Meeting Minutes

(Pledge of Allegiance)

Attendance: Gail Brown (Chairman), Lynn Coine (Vice Chairman-absent), Ann Keen (Member), Phyllis Snyder (Secretary), Roy Kolb (Liaison-Planning Commission), L. Tiejten, (Interested Party)

Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM

Public Comment

James Michael and Tanya Mason of 2003 Summer Lane were visitors. Mr. Michael has expressed interest in becoming a member of the Historical Commission. G. Brown explained the requirements for application for membership – resident for one year and submittal of a resume. Mr. Michael has research experience and would be a welcome addition to the Historical Commission. We look forward to their attendance in the future.

Historic Resource Inquiries

- Donald Pell, owner of a Nursery business, is an interested buyer in the Yorgey Property at 495 Ridge Road. In response to his inquiry as to the historical jurisdiction of the property, G. Brown explained the property is listed on the 1981 Historic Resource Survey and has been included on the East Coventry Historic Resource Map draft. The property (house and barn) is on the '1873 A. R. Whitmer Atlas of Chester County' and the 1981 Chester County Architectural Inventory Form #135 estimates this property possibly 1860's. It also states it is part of the old Brownback land. Mr. Pell's concern is how the historical buildings will affect the resale value 20 years or so from today. The Historical Commission has noted that if these properties are properly maintained, they are very good resale value. The Maack residential property is a very good example.
- Mr. Henry Yorgey owner of the property at 495 Ridge Road inquired as to the historic jurisdiction of the property. G. Brown explained, as noted above, that the property is on the 1981 Historic Resource Survey (filed with state) and also the East Coventry Historic Resource Map draft. Mr. Yorgey inquired how to have this property removed from the draft. G. Brown explained he could address this issue with the Historical Commission and the Board of Supervisors at the current Zoning Workshops.
- Mark McNally of 138 Grubb Road is interested in the historic impact of his property at 138 Grubb Road (110 Grubb Road on the GIS maps). G. Brown explained his property is listed on the '1873 A. R. Whitmer Atlas of Chester County' and the 1981 Chester County Architectural Inventory Form #235. The Chester County Architectural Inventory Form dates this property 1780 -1820. Old tax records list the date of this property as 'circa 1776'. It is one of the oldest properties in the township. Mr. McNally currently has the property 'for sale' – possible subdivision. G. Brown told Mr. McNally that the Historical Commission will not be involved in the 'permit process' for historical properties until the Historic Resource Map is approved. G. Brown explained where the criteria can be found (Article XII of the Zoning Ordinance) and it is the intention of the Historical Commission to work with home owners to achieve results

satisfactory to everyone. As to development, due to the age of this property the Historical Commission would most likely recommend a 'Historic Impact Study'.

- Stephen Corson, pending purchaser of 117 Sanatoga Road has inquired about the package for Historical Research. Due to the size and reproduction costs of this document, we will send him a condensed version. G. Brown did ask Mr. Corson about the rumor that this property is being purchased by two buyers. He said he was purchasing the house and his father the balance of the property, much to be put in a conservation trust. Much of this property is wetlands. Mr. Corson has been very helpful in providing information he has obtained through his research of this property and has offered to assist in property research when he becomes a resident of the township. G. Brown to follow-up.

Action Items

- G. Brown distributed for review 1) Exelon letter of April 23, 2008 to Ms. Gail Brown, Chairperson, East Coventry Historical Commission – an agreement between Exelon and E. Coventry Township (Historical Commission not represented at this meeting) wherein a agreement was made to stay enforcement violations and applications for demolition permits be submitted retroactively; 2) Wisler Pearlstine (township solicitors) letter of May 5, 2008 to John C. Halderman, Associate General Counsel Exelon – as a result of the April 30, 2008 'Fricks Lock Stakeholders Meeting' – consolidation of eight 'retro demolition permits with possible future demolition requests and request for Exelon to formally waive its right to a hearing before the Historic Commission within 30 days of receipt of application. All pending results of a Frens & Frens Study update in an attempt to reach some sort of consensus on what additional structures should be demolished and which structures should be safeguarded for future preservation; and 3) Exelon letter of May 12, 2008 to Ms. Gail Brown, Chairperson, East Coventry Historical Commission consenting to a ninety-day extension of time for the East Coventry Historical Commission to take action on the request for Demolition Permits (Retroactive) for Frick's Lock Village dated April 23, 2008. A. Keen made the motion to accept the letters and the May 12, 2008 request for the ninety-day extension. P. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion was accepted 4-0. The issue will be discussed again after the Frens and Frens study has been submitted and reviewed. The next Fricks Locks Stakeholders Meeting is June 18, 2008 (time not yet established).

Discussion Items

- Fricks Locks Stakeholders Meeting – April 30, 2008, Historical Commission represented by G. Brown and A. Keen. Exelon will commission and pay the \$3000 for Frens and Frens to do the study to be completed by the end of May 2008, which will include the following
 1. Evaluate physical condition of historical structures and make recommendations on which structures should be demolished in whole or in part because preservation is no longer feasible.
 2. Rank the most historic structures in order of priority for future rehabilitation and preservation.
 3. List non-historic structures which could be demolished.

4. Make recommendations for stabilizing and securing the structures that will remain after demolition.
5. Comment on work done by Exelon this spring.

On June 18th the stakeholders will meet and discuss the study recommendations. Exelon would then file for a demolition permit with the township for the agreed work. The permit should be issued by September with work to commence by October. The PA Historic and Museum Commission needs to be advised of all activities.

Possibility of Exelon hiring private security to break the cycle of vandalism at Fricks Locks. Exelon expressed interest in working with the Stakeholders and leasing property to township, county, or appropriate agency under long-term lease.

Exelon is not committed to donating any funds for rehabilitation at this time. Karen Marshall suggested DCR grants as a possible source

- G. Brown requested permission for the Historical Commission Members to access Fricks Locks without escort. Both the Township Manager and Exelon did not feel this would be acceptable due to safety issues. The Historical Commission will need to tour Fricks Locks in its present condition prior to hearings.
- The Board of Supervisors has changed the Zoning Ordinance Draft, Section XII, to state the Historical Commission meeting shall be once a month. We will continue to have one meeting a month and a second meeting, a Workshop Meeting, as needed.
- Chester County Historical Society (CCHS) Conservation Workshop "Saving Your Treasures" will be held May 17, 2008, 1-4 pm at the Chester County Historical Society. G. Brown asked if anyone was interested in attending. No one was available.
- The Historical Commission discussed the idea of setting up a workshop for the CCHS to demonstrate how to preserve old photos. To follow-up later.
- Liz Willow has invited the Historical Commission to view the artifacts her family has excavated and preserved. P. Snyder volunteered to set up a date in the future.
- June 11, 2008 is the tentative date for Karen Marshall to speak to the Historical Commission.

Other Business

- Mr. Tietjen suggested we have meeting with the Supervisors to get to know each other since we are getting several new members.
Objective :What the Supervisors expect from the Historical Commission and what the Historical Commission expects from the Supervisors.
Excellent idea - to follow-up.
- In addition to Mr. Tietjen, we have another potential new member, Dr. Marchetti. G. Brown will submit both resumes for the Board of Supervisors consideration and approval May 19, 2008.

- G. Brown asked Mr. Kolb if he had considered as Planning Commission liaison to request developers at Sketch Plan stage to attend the Historical Commission meetings. Mr. Kolb agreed.

Adjournment

A. Keen made the motion to adjourn. P. Snyder seconded.
The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectful Submitted,

Phyllis Snyder
Secretary