

The regular meeting of the Historical Commission was held tonight. Members present were: Stephen Banks, Barbara Bartlett, Cynthia Breen, Louise Cohen, Herschel Elias, Ellen Gartner, Betty Goldman, David Harrower, Lois Hirsch, Jim McCann, Dorothy Spruill, Ben Tisdale, Jack Washington, Mary Washington, Joyce Werkman and Tom Wieckowski. Staff present was: Bryan T. Havir. Guests present: Alan Barrows, George Breen, Daniel Cohen, Bruce Conner, Timothy Hinchcliff, Ed Landau, Joanne McCann, Patricia Miller and Brad Pransky.

1. *Call to Order* – Chairman Banks called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M.

2. *Acceptance of Minutes* – Mr. Banks asked for a recommendation to accept the November 18, 2010 meeting minutes with one correction under No. 3, A, Preservation Committee Report: Mr. Harrower noted placement of Historical Commission Responsibility Statement should be on township website under Citizen Committees:

<http://www.cheltenhamtownship.org/histcomm/index.htm>. The motion was made by Mr.

Wieckowski to accept the minutes as amended; seconded by Mr. McCann and unanimously accepted.

3. *Committee Reports*

A. Education Committee – Ms. Cohen reported on the two lectures planned for next year – Black History Month Lecture - February 27, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. Curtis Hall and the National Preservation Month Lecture - May, 12, 2011 at 8:00 p.m. at Curtis Hall. (see attached)

B. Preservation Committee Report – Mr. Harrower provided an update on the demolition permit for 8366 Cadwalader Avenue. Following a conversation with the property owner who stated that the building had termite damage and that stucco was falling from the walls, etc., it was, in the end, decided to proceed with the demolition.

Mr. Harrower also announced that Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia recently released its Endangered Properties List for 2010 and the following two (2) properties listed at risk of demolition by neglect: Lynnewood Hall and Laverock Hill Estate. (see attached)

At this point, Mr. Banks asked to continue the Preservation Report regarding Kerlin Farm at the end of the Agenda.

C. Museum Committee Report – Mrs. Spruill thanked everyone for coming and those who helped provide the holiday dinner, especially Cynthia Breen and Alan Barrows, Louise Cohen and the guests who brought their favorite dishes.

Mrs. Spruill reported on the artifacts found amongst the many, many boxes from Manny Kramer which had been stored at the Rowland Community Center. Over the past six months, Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Spruill went through the boxes. Mr. Barrows continued to go through the boxes and found some interesting artifacts such as an 1800's shoe button hook found amongst a box of bottle tops; and in another box he found an opal. Mrs. Spruill shared this information at a lecture she gave at Keneseth Israel. Mr. Banks commented that the Richard Wall House Museum is really beautiful with its Christmas decorations. It looks like it is from a magazine. He acknowledged the efforts of Ms. Werkman, Ms. Breen, Mr. Havir and Mrs. Spruill.

4. Chairman's Report – Mr. Banks announced that Mr. Greenberg was recuperating at the Center for Jewish Life in Horsham. If anyone would like his address, please see Mr. Banks. Mr. McCann circulated a card for members to sign to send to him.

5. Staff Report - Mr. Havir reported that he filed the grant application for the Jenkinstown Lyceum requesting \$500 in funding to help defray the costs associated with the Historical Commission's annual lecture series. If approved, the grant funds will help ensure the lecture

program is continued. Mr. Havir included in the project narrative, costs associated with the three-part lecture series, such as honorariums, publicity and refreshments. It is anticipated that awards will be announced by the end of the year.

Mr. Havir also noted that the Township recently received its FY 2007 \$20,000 Preserve America Grant reimbursement via electronic transfer from the National Park Service for updating the Township's Cultural Resources Surveys.

Mr. Havir noted that Ms. Karuza has not offered a report this month on her progress with the Museum cataloging grant project. Mrs. Spruill acknowledged that Ms. Karuza had been at the Museum on Friday and Sunday this past week. Mr. Havir suggested Ms. Karuza attend the next Historical Commission meeting to give a progress report to the members. Mr. Havir noted that the consultant contract is set to expire by the end of March and the Historical Commission may need to recommend extending the contract through July depending on Ms. Karuza's progress to date.

Mr. Havir presented the plaque for the Eagle Scout Project organized by Patrick McCann of Troop #22. Members will have to select a location for the plaque. Mr. McCann noted that Patrick presented his project to the Eagle Scout Board of Review. Mr. Havir stated that he had received favorable comments from several Commissioners and Staff on the project.

6. Old Business – Membership Responsibility List. Mr. Harrower passed around some sample text he would recommend adding to the Township Website for volunteer recruitment. Following review and discussion by the Commission regarding the level of expectation for contribution and types of activities that a new resident moving into the Township could expect, if they wished to participate on the Historical Commission, the members recommended that attendance at meetings be changed from "at least six" meetings to just meetings. Mr. Harrower recommended

a motion that this be included in letters of reinstatement which was seconded by Mrs. Cohen.

The motion was unanimously accepted. (see attached).

Discussion ensued about the various ways a member could actively participate. Regarding retention, Mrs. Spruill made a motion that members should be asked what their qualifications are and how they can assist or be available when asked. If they do not respond, do not attend meetings or do not participate in the docent program, then they should be removed from the Historical Commission membership list. Mr. Banks seconded the motion which was unanimously accepted.

At this point in the meeting Mr. Banks returned to the Preservation Committee report for review of the demolition permit application for 1050 Ashbourne Road. Mr. Banks stated the following:

The application says nothing but tear down. He noted the cost of the demolition was identified on the application as \$19,600 which seemed very low to demolish and dispose of the debris for this structure.

It does not address several critical issues which are considered significant by both Mr. Banks and Ms. Gartner:

- Kerlin Farm is listed as being eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- This property is listed on the endangered at risk buildings list by Preservation Pennsylvania associated with Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
- This property is listed on the endangered list by Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia
- There is significant documentation on the history of the building site on a page on the Township Website dedicated to Kerlin Farm
- There is significant archival documentation on Kerlin Farm that can be found at the Old York Road Historical Society which includes, deeds, letters, reports which is easily accessible for research; and in the Richard Wall House Museum archives.
- There are other structures on the property that are not mentioned such as, the horse shelter and three sunken green houses.

- In his opinion, there may be public health issues involved with demolition including:
 - Lead base paint.
 - Asbestos covered pipes.
 - Every room is filled with furniture/trash.
- Historic Artifacts
 - Significant amounts of eighteenth century hardware, glass, and a marble fireplace that should be salvaged. These items should be saved and displayed as a part of history for which the Historical Commission would display.
 - Owner should hire or allow for a historic preservation consultant or archeologist on the site during demolition.
- The most important item to be considered is that the original structure (1690's), the strongest structure on the property, was built to a specification developed for houses for the colony by William Penn for King Charles. The roof line is visible across the stairwell of the two story building. This structure was protected by the additions of 1790 and 1850. The first and second floor is intact with stairwell. It would be a terrible shame to see this go the way of the bulldozers.

Mrs. Spruill made a motion that all of the above information along with photographs be communicated to Mr. Lynch stating that the Historical Commission is hopeful he will express these matters with the developer before a demolition permit is approved; ask for time (six month extension) to look into the above concerns; and grant permission to record and properly document historical findings and salvage items of historical significance; seconded by Mr. Harrower. The motion was accepted with one naye.

Both Mr. Wieckowski as well as Mr. Breen suggested that an open letter should be sent to the press for publicity of the historic grounds.

Mr. Wieckowski made a motion to have the Executive Committee charged with writing a letter for open communication appealing for salvation of this building site; seconded by Mr. McCann. The motion was unanimous.

Mr. Banks then made a motion to seek permission from Mr. Lynch to be present and/or a member of the Historical Commission on demolition day, if demolition proceeds; seconded by Mr. Wieckowski in support of a witness to any possible discoveries that may be found at that time; which was unanimously accepted.

7. Citizen's Forum

Mr. Landau, who visited the site in October, presented photographs documenting the four stages of development of the structure. His observation was that there was still a lot of integrity in the foundation and walls of the original structure. The rear addition seems sound. The 1898 addition appears to be the weakest. Mr. Landau felt that there had been an effort put into protecting the original structure when the additions were built. Mr. Landau inquired about how the property went on the market and if someone may be interested in saving the property. Ms. Gartner offered a brief history. Mr. McCann also added information to the history of sales efforts for the property. He also noted that, unofficially, he was informed that the property was purchased for \$400,000 and it might be held until it can be put on the market again. Ms. Gartner added that it costs \$100,000 per year in taxes and insurance to maintain the property.

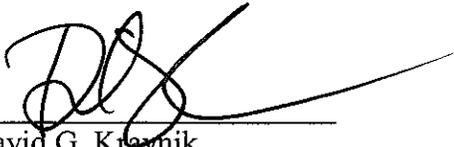
Ms. Gartner then addressed the members. She stated that she had been interested in this property for eight years. She noted that there are only three, 300-year old buildings in the Township – The Richard Wall House Museum, and Ashmead House which have had the finances to maintain the sites, and Kerlin Farm which is the last in the County that has been privately held and hasn't been disturbed since 1898. She feels that the Historical Commission should have rights and privileges and the opportunity as a group to come together, document, and research the property since it is a historical treasure. There should be some compromises such as taking the structures taken down in sections. She would like to see the owner have an archeologist/architect on site.

Mr. Banks noted that the Historical Commission cannot stop the demolition permit; but that the Township's Director of Zoning, Licenses and Inspections can set certain conditions for the demolition permit. Mr. Banks stated that he does have the name and contact information of the new property owner, if anyone is interested.

8. Adjournment - There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr.

McCann and approved by the Historical Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Everyone was invited to tour the Wall House holiday displays.



David G. Krzywik
Township Manager

Submitted by: Kathryn McDevitt

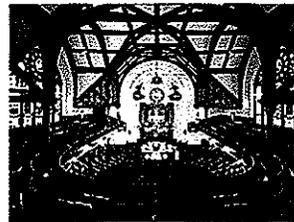
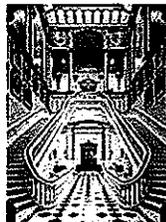
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Endangered Properties List 2010

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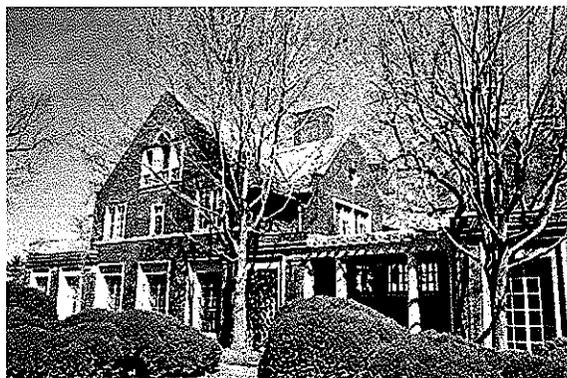
Check Out Our New Preservation Blog

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SIGN OUR PETITION: Family Court Building: Not for Sale

Buy a Stunning Philadelphia Landmark

Laverock Hill Estate
1777 Willow Grove Avenue, Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County
Charles A. Platt and Ellen Biddle Shipman, c.1915



Significance: Laverock Hill, Philadelphia socialite Isaac T. Starr's early-twentieth-century estate, occupies a sprawling forty-two-acre site just beyond the northern limits of Philadelphia. Using a consistent palette of Tudor and Colonial Revival details, famed New York architect Charles A. Platt transformed an existing manor house into an imposing mansion and added a small hamlet of outbuildings—a stable, two-story carriage house, greenhouse, and caretakers cottages. Platt's long-time colleague Ellen Biddle Shipman, an early pioneer in the field of landscape architecture, planted an elaborate sequence of formal gardens in 1915. Today, both the estate buildings and their gardens are remarkably untouched, standing as one of the few completely intact Platt-Shipman collaborations anywhere in the country and one of Montgomery County's last intact estates.

Threat: In 2008, Hansen Properties purchased the estate with plans to construct an age-restricted housing community. Hansen initially claimed they would retain the mansion for use as a community clubhouse for the new development. But plans presented to Cheltenham Township officials in 2009 proposed the complete demolition of the mansion and gardens to accommodate eight new four-story buildings. A township preservation overlay district that would otherwise protect the property is nullified by a clause exempting age-restricted developments.

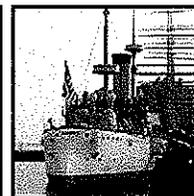
Recommendation: The Montgomery County Planning Commission has urged the developer to reconsider the demolition of the property, citing its significance in both the township's 2002 comprehensive plan and 2005 open space plan. Hansen Properties has developed an alternative site plan retaining both the mansion and gardens, but this plan has been tabled while the developers pursue approval of their original concept, to be reviewed by Cheltenham Township officials in early 2011. We urge the township and developer to respect the township preservation overlay district and pursue alternatives to demolition, using Hansen's own alternative plan as a starting

Eighth Annual Endangered Properties List

Click images below for more info



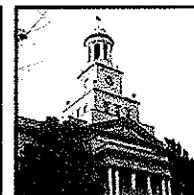
Divine Lorraine



Cruiser Olympia



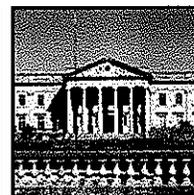
Burk Mansion



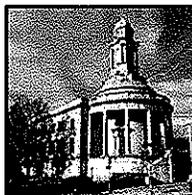
Provident Mutual



Dilworth House



Lynnewood Hall



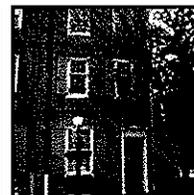
Germantown Town Hall



Henry Pierce House



Laverock Hill Estate



109 Elfreth's Alley

Photo and Support the Alliance!

point for continued negotiation.

What you can do:

More information on the project is available at <http://hellerspringfield.com/issues/laverock.htm>. Save Laverock Hill (www.savelaverockhill.com) is a group of neighbors and concerned citizens actively opposing demolition of the site. Visit their website to sign up for email updates and action alerts.

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Historical Commission December 9, 2010 Meeting Minutes

6. Old Business – Membership Responsibility List.

Bold type indicates additional information recommended for the Township website:

The Historical Commission meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Richard Wall House Museum, located at 1 Wall Park Drive in Elkins Park. Anyone interested in joining the Commission should send a letter to the Township Manager at 8230 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027-1589. **Members of the Commission are to attend meetings, and participate with the Commission's activities and events, typically by being a docent at least four times a year at the Wall House during the Museum's open hours on Sundays. With approval from the Executive Committee, performance of alternate activities/roles may be done in lieu of Sundays at the Wall House.**

Education Committee Report, December 9, 2010

Two lectures have been set for next year. The Black History Month lecture will be by Hugh Boyle and the topic is Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Mr. Boyle is the founding member and president of the Delaware Valley Civil War Round Table and the April 1865 Society. He is on the faculty of the Civil War Institute of Manor College. He is the Executive Director of the Grand Army of the Republic, and many other Civil War societies. The lecture will be on Sunday, Feb. 27, 2011, at 2:00 at Curtis Hall. This raises the question of the opening of the Wall House that day.

The lecture for National Preservation Month will be by Don Scott who will review his book, Remembering Cheltenham Township. It will be on Thursday, May 12, 2011, 8:00 in Curtis Hall following a commission meeting. ~~in Curtis Hall following a commission meeting.~~



MEETING ATTENDANCE LIST

Historical Commission Regular Meeting @ 7:00 P.M.

Thursday, December 9, 2010

Carriage House
One Wall Park Drive, Elkins Park, PA 19027

(Please Print Clearly)

OVER →

Print Name	Mailing Address (only if different)	Telephone Number (only if different)	E-mail Address (only if different)
HERSCHEL ELIAS	509 SPRING AVE ELKINS PARK, PA. 19027	215-635-2814	helias11@ verizon.net
Jim + Joanne McCann			
Tom Wiecekowski			
Jack Washington			
Mary Washington			OVER →
Daniel Cohen	[90 Louise]		
Betsy Goldman			
Lois H. Hersch			
Ben Tiodor	110 EMOY LN CHELTENHAM 19012	215 782-8306	TOYSOLDIER94@ VERIZON.NET
Peter Miller			
Louise + Dan Chen			

Barbara Bartlett
BRAD PRANSKY

BPRANSKY@CTCDC.ORG
also use other side
when filled.

EVEN GARTNER

207 432 5908

ED LANDAU

215-500-9178

BRUCE CONNER

215-698-9329

ALAN BARROWS

215 886 8455

GEORGE BREEN

215-450-3443

CYNTHIA BREEN

Dottie Spruell

215-880-4306

Timothy C. Hincstoff

215-782-1444