

The regular meeting of the Historical Commission was held tonight. Members present were: Stephen Banks, Barbara Bartlett, Louise Cohen, David Harrower, Lois Hirsch, Dorothy Spruill, Mary Washington, Joyce Werkman and Tom Wieckowski. Staff present was: Bryan T. Havir.

1. ***Call to Order.*** – Chairman Banks called the meeting to order at 7:34 P.M.

2. ***Acceptance of Minutes*** – Mr. Banks made a motion to accept the October 14, 2010 meeting minutes with one correction under No. 6, Staff Report. Ms. Werkman noted she did not volunteer to contact Abington Friends School regarding Quaker doctrine concerning photographs and use of images. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harrower and unanimously accepted.

3. ***Committee Reports.***

A. **Education Committee.** – Ms. Cohen reported on the, “A Women’s Exhibit” on Sunday, October 24, 2010 from 12 – 5 p.m. Ms. Cohen noted that the education committee met on November 18, 2010 to begin planning for the next lectures in February and May, 2011. (see attached report)

B. **Preservation Committee** – Mr. Harrower, Chairman of the Preservation Committee, reviewed the demolition permit for 8633 Cadwalader Avenue. Discussion ensued. Mr. Banks said that it is the responsibility of the Historical Commission to offer its opinion on preserving buildings/ structures that add to the character of the property and the neighborhood. Mr. Harrower noted that the structure (garage) is not located in a historic district; however, this structure is contemporaneous with the house and neighborhood. The structure looks tired; and it is estimated that is circa 1920 (based on purchase date of house). The question was posed, could it be stabilized, and repaired i.e., restored with epoxy wood

filler, painted, and retained to add to the charm and massing of the house. A motion was made by Ms. Cohen to have Mr. Harrower, Chairman of the Preservation Committee write a recommendation letter to the applicant to consider repair which would contribute to the character of the property and neighborhood; seconded by Mr. Wieckowski. A motion was unanimous. A motion was then made by Mr. Wieckowski; seconded by Mr. Harrower that the Historical Commission would like to have more information on future demolition permit applications when considering to preserve or demolish potentially historic structures. Specifically, the Historical Commission would like to request the Building and Zoning Department to collect additional information before it is submitted to the Commission, which includes the following: a) include cost estimate for demolition, b) include cost estimate for restoration and c) the application should be deemed complete. The motion was unanimous.

Mr. Harrower will follow up with a draft "Membership Responsibility List" to present at the next meeting. Mr. Banks asked members to send comments to Mr. Harrower for inclusion in the final draft. This list could then be put on the Township Website. Mr. Harrower felt this information could be placed under The Richard Wall House Museum, under donations.

C. Museum Committee. – Mrs. Spruill reported that new student docent training is scheduled for Sunday, November 22, 2010. Mrs. Spruill also wished to remind everyone to be mindful of securing the Museum. An attendance sheet for the Holiday dinner was passed around. Mrs. Spruill stated that she composed some information for visitors on, "Christmas Decorating at the Richard Wall Museum".

4. Chairman's Report – Mr. Banks wished everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday.

5. Staff Report – Mr. Havir stated that Mr. Rowland of the Old York Road Historical Society forwarded information regarding the Jenkinstown Lyceum grant application for up to \$500 to fund a lecture series. Deadline for filing the application is December 15, 2010. Mr.

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Havir felt that the Commission could apply for the Women's History lecture. Following discussion regarding honorariums, publicity and postage for the lecture events, a motion was made by Mr. Harrower and seconded by Mrs. Washington, to submit a funding request for speaker honorariums for the Commission's February, May and October special lecture events.

Mr. Havir reviewed a quotation for a plaque to commemorate the Eagle Scout Troop #22 Walkway Project at the Carriage House. Members suggested including the name of the project as well as the date. A motion was made by Mr. Harrower and seconded by Mrs. Washington to approve up to \$100.00 for the plaque which will be similar in style and dimensions to the plaque located on the Springhouse. The motion was unanimous.

Mr. Havir announced that last week, three large hazard trees were removed from the Wall House Museum property. There are plans to replace the trees next week with three new native 2-1/2 – 3" caliper shade trees.

Mr. Havir stated that the doors on the Carriage House were repaired and painted by Township property department staff, Joe Dunleavy and Richard Rone.

Mr. Havir reported that Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) has revived a historic preservation project grant up to \$15,000 for a 50/50 match. The application is due on January 31, 2011. Mr. Havir suggested applying for a Cultural Resource Survey (CRS), Phase III for approximately 50 additional properties in the Elkins Park area. Mr. Harrower made a motion to recommend applying for the PHMC grant for a CRS, Phase III in the Elkins Park area; seconded by Mrs. Washington. The motion was unanimous.

Additionally, there is a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant application due on January 14, 2010. Mr. Havir would file the application for funds to help offset the cost for a BHAR consultant for the Wyncote Historic District. Mr. Banks made a motion to

recommend to the Public Affairs Committee support for filing the CLG grant application; seconded by Mr. Harrower. The motion was unanimous.

Mr. Havir asked for a motion to approve the Preservation Pennsylvania annual membership renewal for \$25.00. Mr. Banks made the motion to approve the renewal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harrower and unanimously approved.

Mr. Havir noted the annual reappointment letters for citizen committee members whose terms are set to expire by the end of the year will be mailed next month by the Township Manager's Office. Mr. Banks reviewed the list of current ex-officio members who are Observers Janet Leach; Ex-Officio Member: John Valentine, and new school superintendent, Darlene Davis; and Honorary Members: Walter Hall, Anna Mae Trayham and Carolyn Ancker. It was recommended Mr. Valentine, Mr. Hall and Ms. Trayham be removed from the ex-officio list. Ms. Ancker and Ms. Davis should remain on the list.

6. Old Business - At the last meeting, a motion was made by Mr. Banks to request the Township's Public Information Officer to remove a statement concerning Harriet Beecher Stowe from the Township website; seconded by Mr. Harrower. In follow-up discussion, it was confirmed that the statement, "Harriet Beecher Stowe resided on Elm Avenue while she composed the classic novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," was removed from the Township website, under "About Cheltenham: Estate Development" as there is no documented evidence to support this statement.

Mrs. Washington noted there was no reference to Cheltenham Township, Elm Hill or Joseph Beecher in Harriet Beecher Stowe's biography. Records indicate that the owner of Elm House, Joseph Beecher, did not own the house on Elm Avenue until 1865; there was no evidence that Joseph Beecher was related to Harriet and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was written in 1850, published in 1851-1852. Additionally, there is no evidence found in neither Elaine Rothschild's book nor Don Scott's book.

7. **New Business** – Building and Zoning Committee Appeal No. 3388. Appeal of Young H. Kang, Tenant of Premises known as 1627 W. Cheltenham Avenue, La Mott, PA 19027. Ms. Werkman asked the Historic Commission if it could weigh in on the zoning application affecting the auto repair shop located on the corner of Sycamore and Cheltenham Avenue (Track 1, and 2 in the historic district) and its request to incorporate a Penske Truck Rental franchise on its property. Mr. Havir stated it was appropriate to discuss at the meeting and if agreed upon to make a recommendation to the Building and Zoning Committee. Mr. Havir noted that this matter is now before the Zoning Hearing Board. To his knowledge the Building & Zoning Committee took no action but noted the number of trucks be limited to 6-8 trucks. Discussion ensued and Mr. Harrower added that his opinion was that the truck rental franchise would be out of character and out of scale for the neighborhood. Mr. Harrower stated that the Planning Commission had recommended a limit of 15 trucks. It was also noted that this issue was not discussed at the local La Mott BHAR meeting. It was noted that the Historical Commission in its advisory capacity could pass along its concerns to the Building and Zoning Committee of the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Harrower suggested that the Historical Commission Chairman attend the next Zoning Hearing Board meeting and discuss concern of incompatibility with the historic district and the neighborhood. Ms. Werkman asked if Mr. Harrower could draft a letter from the Historical Commission to be read at the Zoning Hearing Board meeting. Mrs. Spruill made a motion to approve of Mr. Harrower writing a letter on behalf of the Historical Commission of the concerns regarding the truck rental franchise in the La Mott neighborhood; seconded by Mrs. Washington. The motion was unanimous.

Ms. Werkman passed around a sample of La Mott Historic District Identification Signage, gold on blue with an image of Civil War soldier.

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8. *Adjournment* - There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Banks, seconded by Ms. Cohen and approved by the Historical Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.



David G. Kravnik
Township Manager

Submitted by: Kathryn McDevitt



MEETING ATTENDANCE LIST

Historical Commission Regular Meeting @ 7:30 P.M.

Thursday, November 18, 2010

Carriage House

One Wall Park Drive, Elkins Park, PA 19027

(Please Print Clearly)

Print Name	Mailing Address (only if different)	Telephone Number (only if different)	E-mail Address (only if different)
Dave Harrower			
Stephen Baulin			
Mary Washington			
Lois H. Hirsch			
Barbara R. Cutler			
Louise Cohen			
D. Speuill			
J. Weskmar			
Tom Wieckowski			

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER, 2010

The Fall program for Best of the Burbs took place on Sunday, October 24, 2010 from 12 noon to 5:00 P. M. 24 visitors came and seemed to enjoy the experience. Student and commission members led tours. Refreshments were provided at a cost of \$34.06, some of which is paper goods that are left for future events.

The theme of the day was Noted Women in History. The women were Eleanor Roosevelt, Louisa May Alcott, Vera Lynn, Lucretia Mott, Harriet Tubman, Abigail Adams, Louise Knapp Curtis, Amelia Earhart and Jackie Kennedy. All were exhibited in appropriate dress from the Wall House collection.

Many thanks to Dottie Spruill for the research and writing of the biographies. Thanks also to Karen Indelicato for design of the flyer. And thanks to the Commission members for their help that day and to set up the exhibit.

An education committee meeting was held on Nov. 18 to begin planning for the next lectures in February and May, 2011.

Louise Cohen, Education Chair