



Springfield Township Historical Commission

April 4, 2023

MINUTES OF MEETING OF REGULAR MEETING

HC-30

Meeting held in the Conference Room at Springfield Township Building 1510 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA 19038

NOTICE: The Historical Commission of Springfield Township is an advisory board appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The actions of the Historical Commission on any agenda items does not reflect a final decision. The Board of Commissioners must render the final decision on any agenda items

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name:		Name:	
Matthew Harris	Commission Chair	Heather Snyder-Killinger	Commission Member
David Sands	Commission Vice Chair	Joseph Devine	Commission Member
Al Comly	Commission Secretary	Mark Penecale	Staff Liaison

All members present—1 vacancy for alternate

Guests: None

- 1) **Call by Order by the Chairperson** **Called to order at 6:07 PM by Chair Matthew Harris. Roll was taken and absentees noted.**
- 2) **Approval of Minutes** **Meeting HC-29 (March 7, 2023) Motion Matthew Harris, seconded by Heather Killinger.. Approved on voice vote.**
- 3) **Update by Board of Commissioners' Liaison:** **Commissioners were not represented at the meeting.**

4) **Review of Agenda**

Mr. Penecale reported that there were no changes in status relative to Knipe (Willow Grove Ave) or Wild (Manor Road).

5) **Discussion Items and Appropriate Action (“Previous Business” and “New Business” in earlier minutes).**

HC-30.1 General agreement of role of Historic Commission relative to the ordinance:

- **Obligation to be stewards of buildings of significance in the Township**
- **Educate about the ordinance and its benefits**
- **Focus on the ordinance—making adjustments to optimize the stewardship of significant structures in the Township.**

HC-30.2 Ms. Killinger had distributed the list prepared by the Springfield Township Historical Society—dated September 2000. Discussion focused on starting with this list and editing/ amending it to create a list of significant structures in the Township. This would also serve as a possible scope document for a third party to develop an initial Township inventory.

HC-29.1 The majority of the meeting as a discussion of next steps, focusing on a memo generated by Mr. Comly prior to the meeting (copy attached). See Item 26.1 for update. This item will be the primary discussion item in defining the Commission's role and objectives.

April 4, 2023 Update: It was noted that the benefits of the ordinance generally apply to residential properties, Commercial zoning generally allow most of the benefits offered in the ordinance.

HC-29.2 Mr. Harris noted that the PHMC criteria form was not readily available in a useable format. It was agreed that this was really one component of the larger discussion regarding the development of a list of properties important to the Township.

April 4, 2023 Update: This effort will be incorporated into the preparation of a list of importance noted in Item HC-30.2

HC-28.1 There was a query from the Historical Society regarding a building at Stenton and Evergreen that was designed by Frank Furness. This will be investigated.

March 7, 2023 Update: Copies from Frank Furness,, the Complete Works, Revised Edition 1996, by George E. Thomas, Jeffrey A. Cohen & Michael J. Lewis attached to these minutes. Discussion followed noting that the ordinance does not provide a mechanism for addressing this issue.

April 4, 2023 Update: This issue will be incorporated into the preparation of a list of importance noted in Item HC-30.2

HC-28.2 Mr Penecale had drafted and circulated the letter to the Commissioners regarding the implementation of an initial list. It was reported by Commissioner Ratsavong that this has not been addressed as yet by the Commissioners.

March 7, 2023 Update: Nothing to report

April 4, 2023 Update: Nothing to report—no response on letter regarding Block Horse and Flourtown Country Club

HC-27.1 Mr Penecale reported on his contact with Ms. Wild at 308 Manor Road. Particulars of the property:

- o 5.8 Acres 400 foot frontage on Manor Road, main house & carriage house
- o Currently zoned for multi-use residential
- o House is circa 1780. It was moved from Ridge Pike—date not known
- o Ms. Wild does not want to subdivide the property

Mr. Penecale will send out a copy of the ordinance and other information along with an invitation to attend a Commission Meeting.

February 7, 2023 Update: Nothing to report.

March 7, 2023 Update: Nothing to report.

April 4, 2023 Update: Nothing to report—this item will be incorporated into the list preparation in Item 30.2

HC-26.1 The Commission renewed its discussion of the path forward for the Commission and the preparation of a list of Historic Properties in the Township. Summary points of that discussion included:

- The Township Comprehensive Plan included 28 properties of historic significance to the Township. Previously, these properties had been presented as a list for protection in the township, but the process was informally rejected by the Township Commissioners, noting that several are already owned by the Township and 2 are already on the National Register of Historic Places. The Commission requested that Mr. Penecale draft a letter to the Board of Commissioners to again request that these properties noted in the Comprehensive Plan be recognized as the initial township list of protected properties.
- The Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) is currently being reviewed (last done in the 1990s). It might be possible to include Historic Commission review in the SALDO process as part of the review and comment process for the Planning Commission. This is already done for first responders (STEMS) and Shade Tree Commission.
- The matter of Conservation Easements was discussed. The Chestnut Hill Conservancy does assist owners with easements, including some in Springfield Township. There is no capability in the Township to do Conservation Easements.

- Formalize a process to accept properties for the township list. The PHMC (Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission) might provide some excellent guidance in this regard.

January 3, 2023 Update: The PHMC (Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission) short form was discussed as a guideline for properties to be placed on the Township List. Mr. Harris will try to get a copy for discussion next month.

The intention is to have some information for each property on the Township list. It could be whatever is in the public domain or whatever could be provided by the property owner. It is not intended to be extensive. Springfield Township Historical Society might be one resource to this information.

February 7, 2023 Update: Discussion focused on the development of a “Watch List” of structures thought to be important. This might be a role filled by a third party professional. To do so will still necessitate the development of an initial scope of work. That could be as simple as structures built 1920 or before, with photos, addresses and a site map (Google Earth or something similar). We could then consider what other information would be important and how that would be provided: Use Data, Historical Use, current use, building materials and style, construction date, would be examples of base information for a file.

March 7, 2023 Update: The Commission discussed how best to move forward and to provide the historic property advocacy that the Commission believes was intended when the ordinance was passed and Commission formed, noting:

- Agreement on the Objectives noted in the Comly memo.
- Agreement that identifying structures to be considered was really the next action to undertake. Discussion will continue as to how best to do this—either hiring a professional firm (assuming the funds are available) to create this inventory or self-preparing a list. Commissioner Killinger offered to distribute her list that she got from Cindy Hamilton of the Historical Society as a starting point.
- Consideration will be given to reviewing the previous “scope document” that had been prepared as a potential RFP to retain a third party professional.
- It was also noted that many of the benefits in the ordinance are more useful to residential properties than commercially zoned sites. While this may be true, there was agreement that identifying the properties should precede any consideration of changes to the ordinance to encourage retention of historic structures.

April 4, 2023 Update: This effort will be added to Item 30.2

6) Citizen Comments *None*

7) Assignment of Member Action Items

- **Follow-up with the Knipe and Wild. Mr Penecale—awaiting responses from each**

- Copy of available listing of properties—Ms. Killinger—provided and discussed at meeting
- Follow-up on letter to Commissioners regarding Black Horse & Flouertown Country Club—Mr. Penecale

8) **Agenda for next meeting** *All new agenda items shall be forwarded to Mr. Penecale at least one week prior to scheduled meeting date*

9) **Adjournment** Adjournment at 7:02 PM. Next meeting will be **May 2, 2023** at 6 PM to continue the discussion on the best means to move forward.

Respectfully Submitted

Albert M. Comly, Jr., AIA
Secretary

Attachments