



Springfield Township Historical Commission

December 5, 2023

MINUTES OF MEETING OF REGULAR MEETING

HC-36

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	Baird Standish	Commissioner Liaison
Al Comly	Commission Secretary	Mark Penecale	Staff Liaison

Not present: J Devine, (1 vacancy remains for alternate)

Guests: None

- 1) **Call by Order by the Chairperson** **Called to order at 6:08 PM by Chair Matthew Harris. Roll was taken and absentees noted. The meeting that had been scheduled for November 23 was cancelled due to schedule conflicts.**
- 2) **Approval of Minutes** **Meeting HC-35 (October 3, 2023) Motion by D. Sands, second by H Killinger, abstention M Harris--approved**
- 3) **Update by Board of Commissioners' Liaison:** **Commissioner Standish provided some observations regarding the upcoming appearance before the Commissioners' Work Shop Meeting on December 11. Mr Comly also related his**

recent meeting with Michael Taylor, Township Manager, regarding the upcoming appearance—to focus on why the BOC should fund this effort. Commissioner Standish also noted that this fund request is not in the 2024 Budget, but if approved would be funded from township discretionary funds

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-36 Discussion focused on the upcoming appearance before the Board of Commissioners (BOC) regarding the funding request. Secretary Comly had prepared and circulated some thoughts regarding the strategy. Several items were noted by Commissioner Standish as important to the BOC regarding the request:

- There are a multitude of lists—including the one that was grant-funded in 1999. Isn't the plan to get property owners to participate in the program, thereby creating the list?
- What efforts have been made to get property owners to participate in the program?
- Why was it necessary to retain an outside consultant to create a list that would not be as envisioned in the ordinance?

The discussion focused on the strategy to explain the real status of an inventory of the properties that might be significant to the township and how to navigate the difference between the current situation and at least having an inventory of those significant structures. It was also agreed that this would then provide some basis for review of future developments that might affect the character and nature of the Township. Important components of the strategy for the inventory were:

- Context—the stories associated with the property to support its significance
- Completeness—having an inventory that truly presented the properties of the township—not just an amalgamation of a series of separate attempts using different criteria
- Digital—every list that is now available is in hard copy (although some have been scanned by the Springfield Township Historical Society). Having an inventory of significant structures completed by a credentialed consultant would provide a digital basis for any future discussion
- Priority and Significance—not all buildings that are old represent the same significance or contribute to the township character and context in the same way. A credentialed consultant would be provide invaluable guidance in establishing the priority and significance of a property in that overall character and context.

- **Time**—the assessment and inventory would involve a time commitment that is significantly greater than could be expected from volunteers.

It was agreed that these would be the talking points for the BOC appearance. Mr Comly will be present and encouraged all other members of the Commission to attend and participate—DECEMBER 11, 2023. We are scheduled first at approximately 7:30PM

HC-34.1 The Commission discussed the merits of the Pennsylvania Certified Local Government Program (CLG) administered by the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) for the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). Attached to these minutes are the Guidelines & Procedures for Pennsylvania Communities and checklists relative to the requirements to participate in the CLG. Becoming certified in the CLG program offers opportunities in funding and technical assistance not otherwise available. It was agreed that more discussion was needed and closer review of our current status relative to the requirements would be undertaken.

Update—October 3, 2023 No additional action at this time.

Update—December 5, 2023 No additional action at this time

HC-33.1 The Commission discussed the best path forward—noting the items that have been recorded in HC-30.1 and HC-30.2 below. Summary points from the discussion are:

- Discussion of ordinance changes will not prove effective at the current time
- The inventory task is greater than can be performed by the Commission. Engaging a qualified firm to develop a list, that will be informal at this time,
- Scope of work for a consultant has been discussed in the past—Commission will return to that effort to get the progress started. Issues such as the variety of existing lists, their accuracy, level of survey (ie desk top, windshield survey, evaluation of properties to prioritize), and what information will be needed will be discussed on the basis of the initial budget request.
- It was agreed to request \$25,000 for the 2024 budget year. The final consultant scope will be tailored to the final budget allocation.
- The Commission agreed that a report of the Commission's activities should be prepared and forwarded to the Board of Commissioners. This report should be available for November when the BOC reviews the budget requests. Mr. Comly will prepare a draft for review at the next Commission meeting.

Update--September 5, 2023 \$25,000 has been included in the draft township budget for 2024 and a draft narrative has been circulated to the commission members. All are requested to review and comment so we can provide supporting information to the Commissioners for final township budget decisions.

Update—October 3, 2023 Discussion continued regarding the budget request and how best to emphasize the need. Previous draft narrative was

discussed and determined to be too long for the purpose. A shorter narrative will be prepared and circulated.

Update—December 5, 2023 The efforts and strategies outlined in item HC-36.1 are the focus of the strategy moving forward. Discussions from HC-33.1 and all previous discussions will now be part of HC-36.1

6) Citizen Comments

None

7) Assignment of Member Action Items

- **BOC meeting December 11—all are encouraged to attend**

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 6:45 PM on Motion by Heather Killinger, second by David Sands. **Next meeting date will be January 2, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the meeting room in the Township Library**

Respectfully Submitted

Albert M. Comly, Jr., AIA
Secretary