

Subj: **Minutes for 8/23/04 Preservation Commission Meeting**  
Date: 9/20/2004 11:00:39 AM Pacific Standard Time  
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## MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Town of Saugerties was held August 23, 2004 at the Town Building.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Barry Benepe, with the following Commission members present: Barry Benepe, Michael Sullivan Smith and William H. Trumpbour. A list of everyone attending the meeting is attached.

The first order of business was the Katsbaan Church, parsonage, hall and cemetery. George Nieffer and Bill Nieffer, members of the Consistory for the Church, presented some of the factual information they have on the complex. The Church, parsonage and hall are all on the same deed, and the cemetery is on a separate deed. There was discussion among the church members about building a parsonage in 1881, and in 1885 it was made available for the minister to live in. There are soldiers buried in the cemetery from all wars since the French and Indian Wars. The Church has the oldest 2 keyboard organ in the United States which has not been used for 20 years. It came from the Reformed Church in Saugerties in 1898. In the early 1990's a restoration was started which was never completed because of lack of funds--it has been disassembled and is waiting to be put back together. The Church was built in 1732, rebuilt in the 1860's and is now as it was in the 1890's. Barry said there are grants available from private organizations for funds to put the organ together again. George and Bill said the Church had a grant recently to redo the vestibule.

The Nieffers said that their main concern about the Church property at the present time is what to do with the parsonage. They need information to present to the Consistory about how to go about repairing the parsonage so that it could be made into a rental. One of the problems is that the exterior is finished with asbestos siding. Josh Randall was able to offer the possible solutions as to how to handle the asbestos because it can be a very expensive proposition to dispose of it if it is decided to take it off. Some other possibilities, in lieu of removing the asbestos, would be to put clapboard over the asbestos or leave it in place and paint it.

In 1855 the Church hall was moved from the old Lutheran Church in Pine Grove to Katsbaan. The Lutheran Church got it from the Methodist Church in Cairo years before.

There was discussion about separating the parsonage from the Church property, but it was concluded this was not a good idea. Barry suggested if they did do that they might end up with a modern ranch house in the midst of the Church complex. He also explained that the next step to be taken for designation would be to hold a hearing. At that point Bill Nieffer asked him what control the Preservation Commission had over what went on with the Church property. It was explained to him that there are no controls over inside work, other than the fact that the Commission would want property

owners to feel free to ask advice about any changes they plan to make inside a structure. However, they do have the delegated authority to designate historic properties and issue certificates of appropriateness on planned changes to those properties. The Town Board may act to modify or nullify such designations within 45 days from the date of designation.

A presentation was then made by Mary Alice Lindquist on property owned by her on Schoolhouse Road on which there is a stone house. She knows that the farm where it is constructed dates back to 1786, and that 1792 is a date on the house itself. There followed an interesting discussion about the possible meanings of stone carvings on many of the old buildings. In 1936 the property was sold to her husband's family and was used as a rooming house. She and her husband restored the house. It is in the waterfront overlay because it is bounded by the Plattekill Creek. The barn was burned down by an arsonist recently, and the older house was required to be removed by the insurance company. When Barry questioned her about a decision to have the property designated, she said she would have to have input from her husband before making that decision. She also wanted to know how they would go about having their property listed on the Federal and State Register of Historic Places.

The Commission proceeded to discuss the Kodsi property in West Camp. Barry pointed out that subdivision and development of the 26 acre parcel is subject to the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Law administered by the Planning Board, though the Commission would also have a role in reviewing and approving the plan for development and the designs of houses on the landmark site. For this purpose we will have to develop clear and objective standards. Josh Randall brought up problems associated with impeded drainage and a low water table. Barry will see if a proposed subdivision of this property is on the calendar of the Planning Board which will meet on Tuesday, September 21st.

Neil Larsen and Peter Sinclair then gave a report on the Kocherthal/Eligh (Kodsi) house in West Camp. Neil said there is a great deal of crumbling lime mortar in the exterior stone walls which should be repaired with the same mortar mix after cleaning loose mortar from the joints by hand, not with a pressure hose and portland cement mortar as suggested by caretaker, John Monaghan. He added that the traces of whitewash are probably not original. Bill Trumpbour suggested he speak to Chris Kraft about mortar mix because he has done such a great job with it on his stone house. He also said Dr. Kodsi's caretaker has backed off doing the house. Neil is to talk to Kodsi this weekend. There is still a lot of cleanup to be done. Neil said Dr. Kodsi is committed to restoring the house to its original condition. Neil has recommended to him that he form a not-for-profit corporation to restore the house. He also has suggested that the first thing to be done is to stabilize the house. So far as the barn is concerned, his suggestion is to preserve the foundation of the old barn. George Nieffer said he worked on the property as a young man and found on one of the beams in the barn the inscription from Oregon Territory. Part of the construction of the original barn was Dutch, although the current collapsed barn is a more recent English dairy barn.

There was then a discussion about where the Commission should meet next month, and it was decided to go to the Senior Citizen's Building and that we would discuss the schedule for the Katsbaan Church at the next meeting which will be Monday, September 27th, at 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting.

**Eliner W. Trumbour**  
**Secretary**