



**TOWN OF SAUGERTIES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JUNE 21, 2021 MEETING**

Present: Commission Chair Stefan Yarabek, Commission Vice-Chair Susan Puretz, Commission Members: Ken Myer, Jr., Alba LaFiandra and Peigi Mulligan, Town Historian Audrey Klinkenberg, Town Board Liaison John Schoonmaker, Town Board Member Peg Nau, Members of Public: Phyllis Clark, Tad Richards and Arick Manocha (Owners of Fite House), Kevin Durkin (Developer Rebuilding 2nd Brink House), Secretary Jeremy Russell.

Excused: Commission Alternate Jason Nelson.

(Minutes appear in chronological order. Numbering of items refer to the agenda for the meeting, which is attached)

The Commission met virtually, on the platform Zoom (zoom.us), ID #969-987-8583.

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 PM by Stefan. Susan suggested asking each guest to identify themselves and their business at the meeting.

Minutes: No comments were made on the minutes of April, 2021.

Susan made a motion to accept the minutes of April, Alba seconded the motion. The minutes of April were accepted as submitted, 5-0, with no one opposing.

OLD BUSINESS:

1) Asbury District Update: Stefan reported having a lovely conversation with Chelsea Towers, the area representative of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). He said that she asked Stefan why the Town was moving forward with a local designation. The office felt it would be better to proceed with the State and Federal first, and because of this, SHPO decided to have the hearing during their September meeting. Stefan summarized the rich agricultural history of the area, and said that 85% of the property owners offered positive support for the designation.

Because SHPO was moving forward, they informed Stefan that they would be carrying the ball with the public hearing for the proposed district. Given the legwork done by the Commission to this point, the State decided it was not necessary to hold a formal introductory meeting. Stefan expects a State and National District by the end of the year.

2) Malden Survey Update: Stefan had not been given an update from Neil Larson on this work. Stefan outlined the work saying the Malden District is on the northern end of the Town, and that Neil's consulting firm is

documenting the history of the area for the Commission so that it could make recommended designations in the future.

Stefan said that he'd unintentionally ignored Susan's request at the beginning of the meeting, and then asked each guest to identify themselves and summarize why they loved the Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission. Phyllis Clark said that she lived in West Camp, around the corner from the Kocherthal/Eligh House and German Church, down the road from the Asbury District and just up the street from the Malden District. She said that she was a newcomer to Saugerties (9 years) and looking to catch up on the Town's history.

NEW BUSINESS:

3. 599 Kings Highway/2nd Brink House: At this point, Stefan asked Kevin Durkin to report. He said he was the person working on the stone house buried in the back of the main residence located at 599 Kings Highway, and that he wanted to report on it. Additionally, his wife's family was from Saugerties, and he said that his wife's cousin's husband was a partner in the project taking place at Winston Farm and Snyder Farm, and he'd asked Kevin to report to the Commission what he'd found at the stone house and the old Dutch Barns. He said that the owner of the 2nd Brink House did not want it the stone house there – it was falling apart, and Kevin said he thought since it was collapsing, it was the next best option. He said that he did not want to hold up the agenda, and Stefan said he was very intrigued.

Stefan asked if there was anyone else in the meeting, and no one responded. (An Arick was listed in the meeting. Tad Richards and Arick Manocha were on camera.)

Stefan said he'd love for Mr. Durkin to continue. He said that the State commended the Commission on its favorable decision to allow Mr. Durkin to proceed, and, Stefan apologized for the time it took for the decision to be reached. Kevin said it was quite timely and did not infringe his plans at all.

OLD BUSINESS:

3. Historical Markers Committee Update: Peigi apologized for interrupting, and asked to quickly give an update on the proposed Snyder Farm historical marker. She had spoken to John Mullen, and sent him a link to the Pomeroy Foundation website. She had not spoken since then.

5. Winston Farm Update: Continuing, Peigi said that the Snyder Dutch Barns and given John Mullen the works of the Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture relative to the barns. She offered to help out with anything concerning the property. Kevin reported that the house still has the 1828 cornerstone, and believes it's correct. He said that there was an addition to the house built later on. He thought the interior was quite original, and Peigi and concurred. Kevin thought the barn was not original to the site, but that it was common for the time. Kevin thought the barn needed to eventually be placed on a new foundation. Peigi said she thought the barns were designated by the State, and the State would need to be involved (It is locally designated, and has no State or National Register listing). Kevin said that would be in time.

NEW BUSINESS: Returning back to the Brink House, Kevin said that he was originally from Windham, and his wife from Saugerties. He has been travelling the country working on and restoring old barns and homes.

He said that he believes the date 1743 is correct, referring to the date it was thought to be built. He said he's seen photos of the addition of the right side that had collapsed. He said Jim Boice had provided that there was a later

porch added that has also collapsed, and what remains is the original structure, 26 X 40. Those main tie beams are collapsing, and it's very dangerous inside. Kevin's team has started dismantling. He said it had a major remodel when there was a major addition added on the right, which he guessed to be around 1820. He said one could tell by the use of later cut nails. The original 1743 work had hand-forged crows-head nails. Kevin said that following the track, it appeared there were two Dutch Jambless Fireplaces at each end. There was a fireplace in the cellar, with a crane, which meant it was a cooking fireplace. Behind it were two arches in brick, which was the support for the hearth and jambless above it. Kevin concluded it was a beautiful pre-Revolutionary War house.

Continuing, he said the walls were original. He said behind the fireplace on the second floor had plastering completely behind it – an 1820 English Jambled Fireplace. Above it were large high-beams, perhaps the largest in Ulster County according to the HVVA (now known as Mohawk-Hudson Vernacular Architecture), all of which supported a jambless hood. He said the two center windows at the front of the house were once doors. The two windows to either side had been changed at some time, as they were 12 x 12 pane windows, which were early 19th century. He said the HVVA mentioned finding a window jamb found in the fireplace. Kevin found that, and said it led to a casement window of leaded glass. Those were used up to 1750.

Kevin said that the house is being moved to Windham on 10 acres of land. His crew will rebuild to the original dimensions and return it to the 1743 look, with the two Dutch doors and hinges. He said the floorboards of the right side of the house are original, and will be reused. The floorboards on the second floor are not. The roof rafters are all original, though some are rotted. They will use hand-hewn material to use again. The staircase is original. There is one original door there. Many of the moldings, which he'll number and remove, are original. He also noted that there are dormers that are not original. He believed that around 1820, all the dormers were removed, stripping the house down to the rafters using collar ties, forming a truss, then moved the rafters to make wider dormers. All the rafters are marriage marked with Roman Numerals. The rafters contained disintegrated plates with Rosehead nails. The boards on top of them are cut nails. He said it was a simple beauty in construction that the walls were plastered. He said the walls were even lathed with wood lathe, then replastered. He plans to plaster the walls on the interior. Stefan asked if it was all horse-hair plaster. Kevin said it was, and that there's a modern plaster that looks and feels very much like the original horsehair plaster. He said he's located leaded glass at a salvage yard in New York, up north, and will restore that. Kevin believes he will not be making an addition.

Kevin thinks he's going to live in the house when he's in the area, and open it for an Air BnB when he's traveling. He has a furniture woodshop and plans to reproduce Dutch style furniture. He's been studying, and stopped at the Navy (Maybe) House. He plans to put in both jambless fireplaces at the ends.

Peigi asked what he meant by "marriage-marked." He said that it was how they married the building together, before the use of "square-ruling." He said that it was not always Roman Numerals were used. Kevin then remembered and stated that everything was being documented for a television program for the Magnolia Network, part of the Discovery Plus package. It will likely be airing in December. He continued answering Peigi's question, and said that "square-ruling" indicates people were beginning to think like industrialists, using interchangeable parts for mass production. Peigi thanked him.

Kevin said he thought that the building should be done, in Windham, in the late fall. He said they'll use cedar shingles on the roof. He'll weave modern utilities throughout. Peigi asked if Kevin thought the trees that he had to cut down to get to the property had been holding the house up. Kevin thought this was likely. He said he didn't think it could have been restored with the beams as they were at all – The 7 overhead beams were hand-

plained Eastern White Pine, and the rest were oak, 8 x 14, and hand-hewn. He'd wanted to put the hearth in the cellar, but had to vent a flue, with a jambless above it. There was a column on the first floor for a flue. He said that he plans to partner with Cornell University to produce a Dendrochronology of the materials in the house to truly know the age of the remodel, which he believes is around 1820. Stefan commented that large White Pine planks might have been illegal at the time, as you weren't allowed to harvest them – they were to be used by the Royal Navy. Kevin said there were moisture issues in some of the beams.

Susan asked Kevin how he had heard about the house in the first place. He couldn't really remember. He said that he pays attention to houses in the Hudson Valley. He'd just moved a 1783 Cape from Middlebury, Vermont to Idaho. He thought it was the HVVA report that he'd read. He said that there were relatively new owners of the 2nd Brink House, and they wanted to see a restoration, but just were not prepared to do so. Stefan congratulated him, and said that the HPC should team up with the Windham Historical Society to have a dedication. Kevin encouraged everyone to stay in touch, and that he would keep all updated. The takedown, he thought would be done soon. He thanked everyone for his help. He didn't really think it would ever come this far, and can't wait for it to be seen by millions of people. The show will be opened on July 15th on Discovery Plus.

[Kevin left the meeting]

OLD BUSINESS:

3) Historical Markers Update (cont.): Peigi said she was just waiting to hear from the owners. They'd asked if there were plans to locally designated Snyder Farm, and she said that there weren't. Audrey told her that the property had already been designated. Peigi said she thought it was the barns that were designated. She mentioned the barns having received a grant from the State to restore the barns. She thought the HVVA was supposed to revisit the barns to further document work. Peigi said that there was wording in a deed that stated proof of the designation and/or covenants and restrictions. *(Author note - There is only a local designation on this property, but, because of alleged subdivisions, grants, etc., the true status is not fully known at this time.)*

4. Map and Ramble Update: Jeremy said that he had not had much time to work on the map, and had set a deadline of the next HPC meeting to send to everyone. Audrey said that she had not contacted anyone in regards to the Ramble. Audrey said she was surprised to hear that the Arm-of-the-Sea project at the Tina Chorvas Waterfront park would be done by the end of July.

5. Winston Farm Update: Peigi said that she had been putting together information on the Wynkoop Family. She was looking at the four stone residences. The property by the Thruway entrance, she believes, may have been a Myer House. She thinks a house taken down in 1873 was the original Wynkoop Stone House. Peigi said that she'd like to have Kevin review the material and see what he believes.

6. Cemetery Update: Audrey said that she still hadn't heard from the Benson Steel representative. Stefan suggested reminding him of the Ramble event in September. Audrey asked if anyone had received the Ramble event registration form from Greenways. Jeremy said he had, but couldn't remember the due date. Audrey asked if a date had been chosen, and Jeremy said September 18th.

7. Wynkoop House and Lamb Center Update: Audrey said that Michael Sullivan Smith and Katie Cokinos had been discussing using the Lamb Center as an extension of the library. Jeremy said he was just waiting to set up an appointment for the Director of the Library to visit. Susan recommended removing Wynkoop House from

future agendas. Jeremy mentioned that Suzanne Bennett, of the Saugerties Arts Commission and a non-profit Shout Out Saugerties, is coordinating a showing of exhibits focused on the Esopus Creek during the month of September. Stefan asked that Jeremy highlight the exhibit in the registration form. Audrey said that the Lamb Center would be used as the home base for distributing maps for the Ramble.

8. Staples Brickyard/Bristol Beach Update: There was no update.

9. Esopus Creek Update: Stefan reported that Harvey Flag had penned a great report against the releasing of turbid waters by the DEC. Stefan noted that the Town should start action against the NYC DEC and DEP, but nobody seems to want to take up the task. Stefan said that they are in violation of the Clear Water Act and the Hudson River Protection Act. He said it was the law Pete Seeger used to sue the entities when they were polluting the Hudson River. He said that the DEP cannot say that it is too costly to filter the water and pollute the river, just as General Electric had earlier in the 20th Century. Susan asked Stefan if the HPC should write a letter to the Town asking for more aggressive action against the DEC and DEP. Stefan wasn't sure if it was in the Commission's purview, but, it seemed there was nothing else that would be done. Stefan said that it was an egregious and immoral act to continue polluting the creek and river.

Susan made a motion to ask the Town Board members present, Peg Nau and John Schoonmaker, to present the HPC's dissatisfaction of the lack of action against the NYC DEC and NYS DEP to the Town Board. Peigi seconded the motion.

Peigi, adding to the motion, said that her husband was an avid fly fisherman and fished the Esopus. He said he was involved with Trout Unlimited, and mentioned that they sued (entity not mentioned) quite recently and lost. She apologized for not knowing the technical information. Alba asked John if he had found been given any scientific data from the DEP or DEC. John said he hadn't; he said Vernon made the argument that there have been no studies performed on the impacts in his letter during the public comment period. Alba said that no one knows the true quality of the water. Peigi said that there is nobody measuring the impact of the temperature changes on the aquatic life. Alba said that there was four feet of silt built up on her property, and no one has ever made the argument about silt buildup. Stefan said that it doesn't make sense that the citizenry must prove scientifically that they are being harmed, and that turbid water release should be stopped until its proven that they aren't harming the environment.

With no further comments on the motion to taking a firmer stand on the Esopus Creek, the vote was approved 5-0, with no one opposing.

Stefan said that we need to approach this with less trepidation. Peg said that the responsibility falls on John to bring this to the Town Board, but, she would back him up 100%. Stefan offered to write a letter if it was requested. Jeremy asked Stefan if he thought that designating the creek was possible, and if it offered any protections. Jeremy said he didn't know of any waterways that have been designated, but, he couldn't understand why they couldn't be. He then asked if there were any instances of a multi-CLG or multi-municipality designation, and if it would be possible. He then also asked if Simon Sidamon-Eristoff, a former resident of Saugerties, was involved in this type of litigation, as he thought it he might take this type of case *pro bono*. Stefan said that Michael Sullivan Smith had e-mailed, in a thread on the matter, that there currently are protections on the Creek, but it was worth exploring further, perhaps at the State and Federal levels.

10. Laurent Perron Update: The only update was that Laurent would be visiting with family in September, and Susan plans to invite everyone to her house for refreshments.

11. K/E House/Clovelea Update: There was no update on the K/E House. Audrey said that Nina Schmidbauer (owner of Clovelea) had knocked on her door and they'd talked about numerous things. Audrey said Nina is very excited to restore the mansion to its former glory. She had asked Audrey for information on the Sheffield Family, and she gave her a name of someone living in Montreal. She'd asked about other Mills in Saugerties, and she gave her Caleb Lang's name. Finally, she'd asked about brickyards in Saugerties, and Audrey couldn't remember Sal Misasi's name at the time, but said she'd call her to tell her. Peigi said that brickcollectors.com is an awesome resource for brick information.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. HPC Finances: Susan said that she had e-mailed Fred Costello, Town Supervisor, about the lack of funds given to the HPC. She had received a lengthy reply, which she'd circulated with the Commission. His reply was that the money raised during the last Stone House Tour was still in Town coffers and available, and that he'd really opened up the lines of communication between the Commission and Town Board.

2. Opus 40: Susan said that she was concerned with activities going on at the Fite House at Opus 40. Susan said that the house is not part of the State or Local designation, but it may come under the auspices of the Commission as part of the viewshed of a designated property. She said there was an article in the newspaper about the neighbors protesting the activities taking place at the Fite House, and that Arick Manocha (owner or resident at Fite House) had published a reply pointing out incorrect information in the article. Susan thought that an Air B'nB would be one thing, but to have events was another thing, and she hoped the Zoning Board of Appeals would act in some way to protect the landmark. She said perhaps the HPC write a letter to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Stefan said he wasn't sure if it was in the HPC purview. He said that as the property develops, that it should maintain its historic integrity. In terms of an affront to neighbors, Stefan didn't think it was an issue of the HPC, but thought it should be highlighted that non-designated parts should not be altered so as to preserve Harvey Fite's full legacy.

Tad Richards, owner and resident of Fite House, said that since the house has been built, he has lived there and always have had events there. Stefan reiterated that he didn't think it was in the Commission's purview to challenge events. Tad said that he has never messed up the architecture, and never intends to. Stefan thanked Tad for he and his family's contributions to the Town, and Tad returned the thanks to the community, saying it's meant a lot over the years. Susan said she understood Tad's sentiment, but questioned the types of events that were happening at Opus 40 after hours. She'd received advertisements promoting fires and dance. Tad said that there are new age types of events that are thrown by skilled professionals. He said they've had quiet and respectful crowds. Susan said that it doesn't calm her to know that potential things could happen. Arick asked what she thought would happen. Susan said that with drunkenness, there is always potential for harm. Tad said that there has never been drunkenness on the property. Susan said that she would follow Stefan's recommendations.

Arick said that he's felt the assumption, when Arick promotes an event, is that dangerous people in their 20s will fall and hurt themselves, but that is a stereotype that is wrong in this situation. He said that Opus 40 Inc. has alcohol at musical events and movie nights, but no one ever says anything. He apologized for not being more clear in promoting his events, and thought it wasn't fair to be stereotyped. Stefan said that the HPC's role is to

preserve the Fite legacy, which is not only a national treasure, but a global treasure. Stefan said he always looks to partner with the family to assist in preserving the magnificent monument. Tad said that the bed and breakfast has been operational since 1980, to which Stefan said that Tad's mother was a B'n'B pioneer. Tad and Arick thanked the Commission. Stefan said if they had ever considered designation, he would meet with the family and go over the benefits.

[Tad and Arick left the meeting]

REPORTS:

1. Town Board Liaison's Report: John said that there were two laws being discussed, a commercial signage law, and a property maintenance law. John summarized both. He said, in regards to the property maintenance law, that it will have some changes, but the idea is for the allowance for the Town to take care of nuisance properties. It would allow the Town to clean properties by doing it themselves and charging the property owners. He said it would also alleviate fines and jailings as the current law calls for. Stefan said it was an important law to consider. Stefan said he could think of a certain property on 212 with a derelict boat that should be looked at. He said that possibly, there could be a "green squad." John said that there will not be a dedicated department that will be looking for problems; it will be a department that responds to complaints.

2. Town Historian's Report: Audrey is now in possession of an 1811 book of the Commissioners of the Highways of the Town of Saugerties. They had discussed Rt. 212, Lighthouse Drive, Glasco Turnpike, etc. It described lists of aggrieved people for the building of roads, with reasons, and also described the aggrieved for which roads were not built. Audrey told a story about Catherine Post, living on Mynderse Street. She said the first writing was Andrew Brink, the Town Supervisor at the time. He was also the first captain of Robert Fulton's first steamboat, *The Clermont*. Audrey thought Brink's handwriting was to die for. She said the book is now at Hudson Digital being scanned. She is very excited for the digitized version to be produced, and she thinks there will be so many unknown stories will be uncovered here.

Stefan said that he would love to have a copy of one of the pages as an exhibit for the Ramble. Audrey said she had a call from the Pelham Historical Society claiming to have Henry Barclay material, and they would be sending things to Audrey.

[Susan left the meeting at this point, due to lost connection]

3. Secretary's Report: Jeremy said that he thought that Snyder Farm had been designated by the Town, and also at the State and National level (It is not designated at the State level). Audrey remembered there being a Certificate of Appropriateness needed for a trailer on the property.

Jeremy said that he had taken the contents of the third drawer in the Town Hall for scanning, and returned the survey material, stone house tour material, and other documents back into the HPC designated area at the Town Hall. He said he's found nearly all the original letters of designation, and many of them will have to be recorded with the County, with a new letter confirming the authenticity of the old letter.

Jeremy recommended putting together the verbiage for the Snyder Farm historical marker ahead of time. Stefan thought if it was sent ahead of time, it might encourage them to get it.

Jeremy said that Alba had hosted he and Barry Benepe to see the Funicular Railroad at her property. He thanked her for the opportunity. Alba said that she would love to have someone pull the weeds from the tracks and clean it up. Stefan told her to get some goats. Alba said that some time in the fall everyone could meet there so everyone could have a look at it. Alba said that Barry was very interested in the house, and she said it never made it into the survey. She said everyone was really interested in an unusual fireplace.

Peigi asked Phyllis her last name – she said Phyllis Clark, at 12 West Camp Road. Stefan thanked her for joining the meeting. She said the stories are always amazing.

Audrey said that someone asked, at the Town Board meeting in which she presented the Highways book, how it would be preserved. She said her answer was, “There was a discussion with the Town Board about housing and preserving our archives, but COVID came and it never really went anywhere.” Alba said she really hopes to find information on when Glenerie Lane was built. Audrey said that it might not be in the book as it only goes up to 1856.

With no further business to discuss, Alba made a motion and Ken seconded to close the meeting. There were none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Russell

TOWN OF SAUGERTIES HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Supervisor - Fred Costello
Town Board Liaison – John Schoonmaker

Contact

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Members

Stefan Yarabek - Chair
Susan Poretz - Vice-Chair
Alba LaFiandra
Ken Myer, Jr.
Peigi Mulligan
Jason Nelson (alternate)
Audrey Klinkenberg -
Town Historian, ex officio

Covid19 Web-Meeting, June 21st, 2021 at 5:30 pm

Agenda

Zoom info: Link – <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/9699878583>

Room ID: 969-987-8583

Phone Number to call: 646-558-8656 then dial Room ID

***Please note: The order of items on the Agenda are subject to changes as the meeting progresses to accommodate guests and schedules**

Welcome to Guests

Call to Order

Minutes: April 2021, May 2021

Old Business:

1. Asbury District: Update
2. Malden Survey/District: Update
3. Historical Markers Committee: Update
4. Map and Ramble: Update
5. Winston Farm: Update
6. Cemetery: Update
7. Wynkoop House and Lamb Center: Update
8. Staples Brickyard/Bristol Beach: Update
9. Esopus Creek: Update
10. Laurent Perron: Update
11. K/E House/Clovelea: Update

New Business:

1. HPC Finances
2. Opus 40 B & B
3. 599 Kings Highway/2nd Brink House
4. Miscellaneous

Reports:

1. Town Board Liaison's Report
2. Town Historian's Report
3. Secretarial Report

Next meeting scheduled for July 19th, 2021 at 5:30 – via Zoom

Adjournment

June 21st, 2021 Minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Town of Saugerties