

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING  
MONDAY, MAY 16, 2011  
Building Department Conference Room  
7 p.m.

Present: Barry Benepe, Josh Randall, Myles Putman, Michael Sullivan Smith

Excused: Susan Puretz

Ex Officio: Audrey Klinkenberg, town historian

Liaison: Jimmy Bruno, town board member

Chairman Josh Randall called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

1. Approval of minutes of April 25, 2011. Moved by Benepe, seconded by Smith to accept as presented. Josh, aye; Barry, aye; Myles, aye; Michael, aye. Unanimous approval.
2. Update on Historic House Tour. Everything is in order. The House Tour committee is meeting on Thursday. Barry showed a survey map of Wynkoop lands done by William Cockburn. He is planning to have the map duplicated to be sold.
3. Update on Guidelines. Michael Sullivan Smith presented an update of the historic guidelines pamphlet. He has worked the industrial timeframe section.
4. Discussion re Opus 40. Michael Sullivan Smith distributed a statement which he wished to place into the record. Moved by Myles to include the entire statement in the minutes, seconded by Barry Benepe, Josh, aye; Barry, aye; Myles, aye; Michael, aye. Unanimous approval.

COPY of statement: I'd like to read a statement to the commission and place that statement into the record.

"Late last month I was asked to resign from the Committee to Create Opus 40 Museum by its president, Vernon Benjamin. The reason was that Marjorie Block, president of the Saugerties Historical Society, had made a statement to Greg Helsmoortel, Town of Saugerties Supervisor, that I was involved in an inappropriate activity. Vernon wrote that this activity was, and I quote, "insidious behavior".

That activity was a discussion I had with Mark Smith, a vice president of the Historical Society, on the necessity for having a representative of the Society on the Committee to Create Opus 40 Museum after Marjorie had resigned from that committee.

The statement I would like to make is that this whole event and process has highlighted the attitude of disrespect held by both Marjorie and Vernon for not just the knowledge, experience and contributions I have brought to this community but, by extension, to the associations I have chosen to volunteer my services to: this Commission and the Village Review Board.

I wish, therefore, to complain to the commission, the official body under the laws of the Town of Saugerties with the responsibility to preserve and protect the physical historic heritage of the Town of

Saugerties, that Marjorie Block and Vernon Benjamin have the ability to present themselves as representatives of the policies of the Town of Saugerties, vis-a-vis the preservation and protection of landmarks, through organizations that do not act within the legal framework of the Town of Saugerties; as is the case with the Historic Preservation Commission. They have acted in controlling positions of organizations that have asked for and received public funds from the Town of Saugerties for agendas they are permitted to pursue independent of the consent or oversight of any commission or elected board of the Town and do so as if they have been endorsed by that funding to be agents of the Town. They have represented their respective organizations and their organization's missions as if empowered by their organization's association with the Town of Saugerties to attempt to damage the reputation of an individual that actually does represent the Town of Saugerties.

Marjorie has persisted in making overt disrespectful statements concerning me as an individual and Vernon's request without merit for my resignation has simply added an endorsement to her freedom to spread this disrespect. Both of their behaviors have tainted my effectiveness to communicate the true agenda of both the commission and the board, duties I honor and respect. This should not be condoned.

This statement is made at a regularly scheduled public meeting held on Monday, May 16, 2011 by Michael Sullivan Smith as member and vice chair of the Town of Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission.”

Michael Sullivan Smith volunteered to write the historic designation request for Harvey Fite's Opus 40. The designation will include the home, museum and the physical contents of both and all of the property. This will ensure the integrity of the site.

5. Old Business: We have some areas and homes for possible designation. We have been working on Fawn's, quarries, and Palatine areas. Michael mentioned the possibility of some type of an owner's association for the owners of designated property. Barry stated that we need to find persons who are interested in preservation.

6. New Business: None.

7. Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50. Barry Benepe moved to adjourn, seconded by Myles Putman.

Audrey Klinkenberg  
Secretary