

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Town of Saugerties was held December 19, 2005.

Present: Barry Benepe, Josh Randall, Michael Sullivan Smith, William H. Trumpbour, Susan Walker, Leeanne Thornton, Karlyn Elia

Additional Attendees: Eliner Trumpbour, E. Mark Smith, Marti Randall, Ralph A. Marallo, Jr., Pat and Victor Feola, Susan Weeks, Andrea Cunliffe, Susan Bolitzer, Bernard F. Bolitzer, Esq., Terrence Gilbride, Esq., Mike B[-?], Carolyn Specht, Barbara Tice, Christine Bech[-?], Bill Cloonan, Jeanne Goldberg

Barry opened the meeting.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of November 28, 2005, were approved with amendments. Karlyn Elia's name was added to the list of commission members present. There were two corrections to the summary of Marti's presentation: the criteria that she read aloud for designation of landmarks and historic districts were those listed for the NYS and National Register of Historic Places; and added to the reference to the bluestone mansion that Betz built for Winston were the words "in 1923, replacing the Everett H. Wynkoop house of before 1865."

Candidate for secretary

Barry announced that there were two candidates for secretary; he will arrange a time for them to be interviewed by the commission members.

New Business

Barry asked if the commission members would agree to meet on the third Monday of the month rather than the fourth; all agreed, although the January meeting will be on the 4th Monday because the third is Martin Luther King Day.

Barry asked Karlyn if she had any more information on the original settling of the farms on the Winston property (3 farmsteads, including the Tobias Wynkoop house, also referred to as "the old fort"). She did not. There are reportedly three cemeteries on the property, one without stones. Karlyn said she would get what information she had about them to Barry.

Continuation of Public Hearing on Consideration of Designation of Winston and Snyder Farms

Marti Randall gave her presentation again (see minutes of the November meeting), first announcing that she had copyrighted it but had granted permission to the commission to use it as documentation in support of designating the Winston Farm. She showed some pictures of the bluestone mansion and the fields that had been taken in 1989; the mansion was not "in ruins" at that time. She also read from a letter written by Douglas Mackie,

State Archeologist at the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, in which he stated that the Winston Farm was eligible for the State and National Register; he also referred to the 22 archeological sites that were identified before Woodstock '94, saying that there may be others in areas on the farm not studied.

Susan Weeks asked whether there was any connection between Augusta Savage Road and Black history. All the commission knows, to date, is that at one time the road was known as "Nigger" Road; that reportedly that there were shacks along the road (housing estate workers?); that Winston's mule skinnners were from Alabama and probably Black. Barry said that he had spoken to Charlie Fuller, a 100-year-old man who once lived in Burn's Corners, who said he remembered Black men coming down the road on foot on their way to Woodstock.

Terry Gilbride, representing the Schaller family, asked that the letter from SRD Enterprises ("an entity that has the purchase option with respect to the property") that had been sent to the Town Supervisor regarding problems with historic designation be made part of the record. He asked if the hearing could be held open long enough for Paul Comeau's letter to be finished and read. Bill made a motion that the hearing be held open till the following month, which passed unanimously.

Terry said that the Schaller family was opposed to any historic designation. He said that to designate the whole site, every part and piece must be of special historic significance, not just some of it; the record, including Marti's presentation, shows that the site has had a colorful history, was interesting to local history, but does not show that each and every part is historically unique and special. What is significant is not what happened in the past but what might happen in the future, and that is why the property is getting the attention. Josh stated here that the commission was discussing designation of the Winston and Snyder Farms long before the first comment was made regarding what might go up there.

Terry then said that the commission has not promulgated criteria for identifying sites. [Secretary's note: criteria for identifying sites are listed in Section 5 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance; this needs clarification.]. He then referred to Section 10, "Compliance with State Quality Review Act," saying that any action the commission takes without completing the requisite environmental impact studies would be invalidated. He said that he does not see anything in the record with respect to an environmental impact statement or a discussion of it. He said it was a "serious procedural irregularity," that noncompliance with the statute would invalidate whatever the board [sic] does. [Secretary's note: The actions of the Historic Preservation Commission are Type II actions and therefore the statute does not apply (see Section 617.5(c)(32)).]

Barry asked Terry if he thought that there were any *parts* of the site (since he felt that the whole site was not of historic significance) that might be eligible for designation; Terry replied that maybe some bits and pieces have historic significance, but the commission hasn't asked about portions, only the whole site. Barry pointed out that without permission to go on the property to document what is of significance the commission

can't identify individual parts that are historically significant. Terry replied that there were other ways to document those locations, and that a lot of the things that we say are there, there's no physical evidence of; that he wasn't sure that a site visit would produce all the information that the commission is looking for. He said that "a lot" of it, for example, locations of property lines, will not come from a site visit but rather from someone going back and reconstructing historical records. He said that the record does not support designating the entire site, that if we want to designate portions, we must start the process over again. Barry again pointed out that to designate portions, the commission must be familiar with what is on the site. Terry repeated that they will not allow access because of issues already raised, there were issues beyond liability. Barry asked what the other issues were; Terry said that Paul had addressed them. He said he would make sure that Paul would address them in his forthcoming letter. He said that his client had no interest in allowing anyone access to the site.

Marti asked the commission if being "in jeopardy" made a property eligible for designation. Barry said no, and read aloud the 6 criteria in the ordinance. He pointed out that a property needed to meet only one of the criteria.

Josh asked Terry, wouldn't the commission need to go on the property to do an SEQQR; he replied, "no."

The next Commission meeting will be January 23, 2006.

The meeting was adjourned.
Susan B. Walker