



**TOWN OF SAUGERTIES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 MEETING**

**Present:** Commission Chair Stefan Yarabek, Commission Vice-Chair Susan Puret, Commission Members: Alba LaFiandra, Ken Myer, Jr., Peigi Mulligan, Commission Alternate Jason Nelson, Town Board Liaison John Schoonmaker, Town Board Member Peg Nau, Town Historian Audrey Klinkenberg, Secretary Jeremy Russell.

**Excused:** n/a

(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.

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The meeting was called to order at 5:38 PM

**MINUTES:** After Stefan opened the meeting, Susan asked if everyone had received the minutes with edits. She marked the changes she had made on the December minutes. The first was page 2, eliminating the word “the” before Edward Clark; the second was on page 2, adding the sentence, “She was particularly concerned about the Smith House;” the third was on page 4, changing “said” to “had told her;” on page 4, after “nobody had time,” “but Susan,” was added, on page 5, the word “was” was added, and on page 7, the word “the” was added.

*Susan made a motion to approve the corrected minutes of December, 2020, and Stefan seconded. The minutes were approved with a vote of 5-0, none opposed.*

Stefan then turned to the January, 2021 minutes. Jeremy said he’d send out new copies of the December minutes with the correct pagination. Susan began on page 2, by adding “was free;” on page 3, the word “about” replaced “of,” on page 4, and, a sentence regarding Susan’s comment on the Village Historic Review Board joining a Town Historic Commission Meeting was added. Finally, “said” was changed to “Sad.”

*Stefan made a motion to approve the minutes of January, 2021, and Peigi seconded. The minutes were approved with a vote of 5-0, none opposed.*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Budget Update: Susan asked for the privilege to speak. Susan asked if John Schoonmaker was present, and John answered in the affirmative. Susan told John that she’s e-mailed him a question about the funding for the Saugerties Historical Society. John said he didn’t know on the 2021 budget. Susan then said she is outraged about the Town’s budget process, the role of town liaison, the town’s actions, and the liaison’s role and participation in the town’s actions. She said she viewed it as a betrayal to the importance and value of the

Historic Preservation Commission. She asked if there were any other Committees or Commissions that had been budgeted for zero dollars. John said he couldn't answer the question off the top of his head.

John then said that he had raised the issue when he was co-liaison to the HPC that the budget was significantly more than any other Commission budget. Susan responded saying it didn't make much sense to go from a large budget to no budget, then she continued.

Susan said she was really upset with the decision to bring the budget to zero. She felt there was a concerted effort to stymie the plans of the Commission beginning two years ago. She said the Commission was well on its way to acquiring storage space in the loft at the Town Hall, and Lifespring: Saugerties Adult Learning Community -- a town sponsored Lifetime Learning Institute donated \$1,000 to the Town to further this venture. Then, everything stopped. She made the point that the HPC had recently awoken from a bit of a slumber of the past few years, to a flurry of activity, and she thanked Stefan for his leadership. She said that recently the HPC had taken up various projects and won several grants. She finished by saying that she thought it was understood that there would be ramifications resulting from COVID this year, but, she felt the HPC was being singled out.

Stefan added that Susan had lost connection when John had presented the budget during the last meeting, and only became aware of the situation when she'd read the newspaper article (from *Hudson Valley One* <https://hudsonvalleyone.com/2021/02/19/saugerties-historical-society-questions-funding-cut/> ). Stefan thought that the reporter (David Gordon) reported the story accurately, and then explained the reporter had received numerous e-mails from concerned citizens about the zeroed-out budget. Reviewing the matter, Stefan stated that the Town Board had asked the Commission to submit vouchers that acted as requests for funding. He thought it would become an onerous task, and that it seemed to convey the questioning of his leadership. Stefan said he didn't know how to go about covering basic expenses. It was explained to him that a voucher form would be submitted as it normally would, but it wouldn't have, up front, a dollar amount.

Stefan asked John if he had anything to add. John said that he and Fred (Costello, Town Supervisor) stated, at the Town Board meeting, that the Town had not lost confidence in the HPC. John said he had reservations about giving such a "large portion" to the HPC last year. He said the Historical Society was kept at \$6,000.00 because COVID had prevented any fundraising opportunities. Conservation Advisory Commission was at \$2,000.00, and it had come from a grant they had won that they weren't able to utilize. The Saugerties Traffic Advisory Council was given \$300. And the Saugerties Comprehensive Planning Committee, because they have a lot of work jobs (*sic*) was at \$10,000.00.

Susan asked for the Historical Society's budget again. John said it was \$6,000.00, the same as the year before. Susan asked if they had to document how the money was spent. John said they didn't, because it was essentially a donation to a non-profit organization – similar to the Boys and Girls Club in the Town. He believes the Town is going to change the process of how non-profits are funded by the Town.

Stefan said he appreciated the fact he was able to take the full amount of time at the Pre-Board meeting of the Town Board. He thought that given what John had just presented, the Town should have at least given the HPC the budget to cover basic operating expenses as had been done in the past, and, if the Conservation Advisory Committee was given a grant match, then the Town should have done the same with the HPC. Stefan said that he was assured that when the funds were needed, they would be granted, but, he added that he hoped the frustration was understood. Susan added anger, as well – to a laugh.

Stefan did not know what direction the Town wanted to move in. He said that the HPC was deliberate on how they wanted to proceed.

John said he wanted to reiterate that the HPC has the full support for the ongoing projects of the HPC. He said that he'd reported that working out a joint space for town committees at the Lamb Center was a wonderful idea, and hoped the money would be there. He said he knew it had the impression that money was being taken away, but, it was truly more about oversight. The HPC members were left with the impression that "oversight" implies that the HPC has been doing something outside of the norm that needed "supervision" – thus it was a loaded statement!

Susan remarked that the Town Board, regardless of what the intention was, was treating the HPC like infants. A zero budget and having to itemize everything didn't seem right to her, and she was bothered that John didn't fight for the HPC. John said that every other committee has to come Town Board for funding. Susan asked if they had zero budget. John said that STAC had \$300, and that many other committees weren't listed, because it was zero. John said ultimately, he understands that people will be upset, and takes partial blame for that. He thought that the entire message wasn't conveyed correctly.

Jeremy asked permission to ask a question. He said he was under the impression the budget and the process had been changed permanently, and was possibly something all commissions and committees will be going through. He asked if that was the case. John said he wasn't really sure. Susan asked if the Board would be making a decision on what the HPC will spend its money on. John said, yes, for this year, the larger projects would come before the Board. Susan asked if the Town Board is monitoring what the HPC does, as opposed to allowing the HPC to act independently, thus limiting what projects the HPC can take part in. John said it wasn't the intent to limit, but to act on what funding the Town has.

Stefan offered, for perspective, that the HPC worked really hard on a budget that was initially, justifiably rejected, trimmed and then accepted by the Town, and then, for the final budget, was completely zeroed out. He asked if the projects that were accepted prior to the final budget could be assumed to be projects that could continue on. John simply said yes. Stefan said that helped a lot – all the Commission members put in a lot of work and research, and that it would become quite alarming and frustrating to put in work for a project that will be rejected. Stefan said the Town is mandated, by the State, to do this type of work, unless the Town wanted to give up its Certified Local Government status.

Stefan said that the HPC was keen on working for and with the Town. Stefan said that a positive upshot of his attendance at the Town Board meeting was that Town Board member Lianne Thornton recommended working on the Bristol Beach project, and Stefan accepted this on the Commission's behalf. He said it would include the landmark designation process. He said she asked about signage, and he said that the consultants the Town was using were not up to the task of providing historical interpretation. The HPC, he continued, would see it as a privilege and honor to provide the information for the interpretative signage. He said that the HPC has a good track record with state agencies in securing grants and would likely get more. He stated that the HPC got almost dollar for dollar the amount they were allowed to manage the year before. Stefan thought we needed to list priorities at the next meeting. John reiterated that the budget submitted was a good one, and that the projects listed would get his full support.

Stefan asked if there were other comments. Peigi said that she wanted to say something the Kiersted House and Historical Society. She said that it was a beautiful and historic home, in this Town, and that to protect it, she

understands the funding, and tries to look at it from that perspective. Stefan agreed, and said that it was a beautiful perspective. Susan said she agreed as well.

2. Asbury District: Update – Stefan said that Larson & Associates is moving along smoothly. They had finished the building inventory, and Neil was currently working on the narrative description, and would be ready to present soon. Stefan said that the HPC will have to do some homework to present a budget and timeline for the Town to finish the funding of this project.

Jeremy reported that he'd received an Interim Report from the State that was to be submitted by the Town. He wasn't sure who was supposed to complete it – Stefan, Kathleen Grey, himself, Fred Costello, or Neil. Stefan said that the Town had about 1 month to complete this, and that they were copied into an e-mail conversation Jeremy had sent. Stefan thought that Vernon and his office is probably paid to manage the grant, and they should do it with the HPC's assistance. Stefan said that if the grant requirements were not met in a timely manner, the Town likely would not receive assistance in the future. He said the e-mail had not been responded to by Fred or Vernon. John asked if he had been included. Stefan said that originally, Fred, Vernon, Stefan and Jeremy had been included on the e-mail. John said that he would try to help. Stefan suggested having Fred sign the interim report and submit it along with Neil's proposal, once it is completed.

3. Malden District: Update – Stefan said that there was an issue with the location of a 2005 document that had been resolved. John Ham would be moving forward with the field survey work in Malden, and the project would be moving quickly in the spring. He said that Malden is not currently a grant-funded project, but the Commission could apply for grants in the future.

4. Historical Markers: Update – Stefan confessed that he'd received the wording to the signs, but lost it in the ether of his e-mail inbox. Alba said she'd drafted the copy, but in speaking to Peigi, thought it had to be redrafted. Alba thought there was confusion on who owned the actual stone house. Peigi showed documentation claiming Justin Brainard owned the house, and others gave information supporting that Silas had owned the house. Alba thought there might have been multiple houses and one building may not have existed anymore. She asked for Peigi's interpretation.

Peigi said that in the deeds, when Silas bought his part of the property, it didn't seem to be in Centerville, though close to it. She also thought that Justin's deed mentioned "Lot #1." The Stone House alluded to in Silas's deed was actually lived in by one of the Van Valkenburgs, and was used to measure the distance from Silas's property, and not necessarily something he occupied. Alba asked if Justin was just an uninvolved nephew. Peigi thought Silas got more credit, but couldn't tell if he was actually more or less important to the bluestone industry than any other Brainard family member. Alba and Peigi both suggested calling the stone house in question simply "The Brainard House." Peigi said she'd like to collaborate with Alba on writing both markers. Peigi included the Trustee's map in her research. Alba mentioned that she didn't know where the stone house is today. Peigi explained that it was on Centerville Church Road, and it has a for sale sign in front of it.

Jeremy said that he'd thought about some comments from the previous month about focusing on the hamlet as opposed to the house, primarily because the house didn't seem to be on a well-traveled road, and thus, not many would see the marker. Peigi said that the property faces Rt. 212. Jeremy said that he contacted Catskill Castings, and the price quote was about \$1700 for the verbiage on the Porterville sign. He suggested giving one sign more written material, and focusing on one. Stefan said that the HPC should honor the work already done by the Commission, submit the wishes of the Commission, and let the Town decide. Peigi thought that she and Alba

could be more brief with the wording. Stefan thought the marker could be about Brainardsville, noting the different family members. Peigi said that the name Brainardsville only lasted a few years.

Alba began discussing the Porterville marker and possible alterations or additions; she said that it was thought to be named after Wellington Porter, and suggested adding the names of the Brickyards nearby that the residents worked for. Alba also mentioned the Icehouses, but Peigi thought that the ownership was too varied. Alba and planned to get together and work out the details.

Stefan then proposed having multiple signs with a brickyards theme. He added the thought of having a ‘Brickyards River trail’. Alba said you could start at Hutton Brickyards and go to Flatbush, Portersville, Glasco, etc. She said she found an obscure listing of all Brickyards from Westchester to Troy. The Saugerties Brickyards – Washburn, Lent, Porter, Mayone, should all be, in some way, honored. These brickyards, Alba found, were all just in Portersville. Jeremy asked Alba if she’d seen anything about the Brigham Brickyards, in something of a non-sequitur.

Alba said it would be a fabulous idea to look into reproducing the Guy Wall painting of the suspension bridge near Glenerie Falls as signage near the site. Alba said she’d been looking into the ownership of the area as well. She noted that the owners of some adjacent lots near the Glenerie Falls Lead Paint Factory were in their 90s, and the assessed values of the lots were very nominal considering the acreage, Alba would plan to speak to the Esopus Creek Conservancy and Friends of Esopus Creek to see if they’d be interested in purchasing. Ken asked Alba to send a picture of the painting.

5. Map and Ramble Update: Stefan asked Jeremy if there was progress on the map. Jeremy said that the next step would be to cull all the potential historic sites the Commission would like to see on the map. Jeremy then asked whether everyone thought there would be a Ramble this year. Alba said there likely wouldn’t be one. Stefan said that the construction of the map should proceed so that the grant can be closed out and the Town be able to apply for new grants. Stefan asked if anyone would be interested in helping Jeremy. Jeremy said the work has been done more or less, through the surveys and stone house tours, for example, it was just a matter of putting it all into one resource. Stefan suggested sending Greenways a progress report on the project, and to ask what the chances are in putting together a windmill.

6. Winston Farm Update: Stefan did not have an update and did not think it was urgent.

7. Cemetery Update: Stefan asked Jeremy if he knew whether the check had been sent from the Town to the Church. Jeremy said that he’d been told it was. Audrey thanked Ken for his work in creating a fabricated sign about Henry Barclay, to be placed near his gravesite. The sign was currently out for anodizing. Audrey had contacted Benson Steel about working on the iron fence with sections missing. She had not heard back. Ken said that he’d like to go over there once the weather gets better. Audrey said the Boy Scouts and John Stegmeyer will be ready to help with sodding in the spring.

Stefan tried to contact the Schiavano family, who had worked on the iron fence in front of the Courthouse in Kingston, which had been replicated from an 1840 postcard. Unfortunately, they were out of business and had moved back to Italy. Stefan said he had pressed to get them to help, but they’d figured that shipping the iron back would be too expensive. Audrey had said Benson Steel had worked on the American Legion railing recently.

8. Wynkoop House and Lamb Center Update: Stefan asked Susan if she'd spoken to Mark Colligan. Susan reported she'd not reached out yet, and wanted to get together with Stefan before proceeding. Jeremy said that Suzanne Bennett from the Saugerties Arts Commission had toured the Lamb Center, and was very impressed and had generated several ideas. She said she would bring it to the other Arts Commission members. Stefan asked if they were interested in sharing the space, and Jeremy said he presumed so, though it was too early to say definitively how it would work. Jeremy said he'd keep everyone updated.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. Staples Brickyard/Bristol Beach: Stefan said he'd work with Jeremy to scout out upcoming grants, and submit a plan for the Commission's approval and then to the Town. Stefan asked if it was ok to proceed in continuing to work on the district work, and then work on signage for the park and the grant work necessary for the signage. Everyone agreed that he should continue working on this.

Jeremy asked for a summarization as to what was happening at Bristol Beach. Stefan said that it was an initiative of the Town, and they were looking to develop it into trails, an access road and parking near the beach. John said that it had previously been State land that was basically given to the Town to develop trails and public access. A large sum of money was donated from the Winston Farm Alliance. A parking lot had been installed near 9W heading to Catskill, and the Highway Department had been clearing trail space. The goal is going to be to make it a major recreational area for the Town. John said he'd walked back there and noted some old, vacant buildings from the days of the brickyards, and he believed the hope was that the Historical Preservation Commission would be involved in helping restore and promote. One wonders if that was to be with or without oversight.

2. Esopus Creek: The DEC had an open comment period on Esopus Creek, particularly on the New York City's decision to discharge waters from the Ashokan Reservoir. Stefan discussed the possibility of writing a letter on the Commission's behalf. Susan asked Stefan to do that for the Commission. Stefan said that the time was up on the DEP destroying our community and its resources.

Alba asked John if, as a Town Board member, he had been shown any data on the effects of the releases on the Creek by the DEP. John said that he hadn't, but he was sure the effects were detrimental. Alba said that she had asked for biological and ecological data and scientific research showing the effects of the discharges after the very first releases, about ten years ago. Alba said that in living on the creek, she has silt on what used to be dry land over four feet, all from the discharges. She said there are barely any fish in the creek. Alba said she has never been given an answer as to why they can't dredge the basin of the Reservoir – when even the Hudson had been dredged.

John said he believes the entire Town Board shares the outrage, and that it's a classic situation in which New York City feels it can dictate how it treats Upstate New York and its residents. John said a filtration system has to be put in. Peigi mentioned that there have been lawsuits on the issue since they built the Ashokan Reservoir. Finally, Alba said that her father, in the 1930s, when he first bought the property in Saugerties, installed park benches from New York City. Now, the benches are buried, and they can't be found. Stefan said he was riled to write a letter.

3. Roger Donlon/American Legion: Jeremy received a call the weekend prior from a family member. They had considered for a long time, the proposition of having a historical marker on their property. It was agreed that they

would really like to do it, and now wanted to pursue it. In speaking with the family member, it was decided that having it done through the American Legion would be the best route to take.

4. Augusta Savage Research: Jeremy had connected with someone on Facebook doing research on Augusta Savage, and wanted to know if anyone had information. Peigi said that it was suggested to reach out to John Finger, who had known Augusta while she lived here. Stefan thought that the “park and ride” near the Thruway exit might be an enviable spot for signage about her. Stefan also thought the New York Historical Society had produced a catalog of her work. Peigi and Ken had been to a Saugerties Historical Society exhibit, and Ken thought he had photographs.

Stefan asked if there was any further new business. Jeremy said that Susan’s term was almost up. ***Stefan then nominated Susan to a new four--year term, beginning April, 2021. Peigi seconded. The motion passed 4-0, and Susan accepted her new “contract”.***

Jeremy made a point to say that adjustments were made, for the record, to Peigi and Jason’s terms to reflect four-year terms; at the previous Town Board meeting. The adjustments were made to reflect the members were serving four-year terms. John confirmed this.

#### MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. Town Board Liaison’s Report: John said the Police Reform Commission had submitted their first recommendations. It was submitted earlier than expected.

Susan asked John if he could work on getting the Local Law covering the HPC posted to the Town website. She said that it would be helpful to have the law posted on the Historic Preservation Committee’s section of the Town website. John said he’d also have it filled in alphabetically on the left section where one sees all sections of the website.

2. Town Historian Report: Audrey said she continues working on her projects. She said she really liked the work Peigi submitted on Porterville. Audrey mentioned Martha Porter Fellows – indicating that she knew her when Audrey was a teenager. Audrey made the point that she hated the name Martha so much that she decided to go by Porter Fellows only.

3. Secretary’s Report: Jeremy had a problem sharing the archive with Neil Larson, and decided to purchase cloud space from Google. He said the entire archive has been uploaded, and is accessible to anyone with a link. He sent a link to everyone on the Commission, and some active past members. He said he’d continue updating the archive through Google Drive, Dropbox and Mega.nz. He also reported finding the Saugerties edition of “Pictuuresque Ulster” in a Newburgh Antique Store. He asked how many there were. The collective answer was that each town had an edition.

Stefan then thanked everyone present, and left them with this quote, from Vaclav Havel:  
“Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism; It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless of how it turns out.”

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***With no further business to discuss, Alba made a motion to adjourn, and Susan seconded. None were opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 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

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## Covid19 Web-Meeting, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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

#### Old Business:

1. Budget & Town Board Meeting: Update
2. Asbury District: Update
3. Malden Survey/District: Update
4. Historical Markers Committee: Update
5. Map and Ramble: Update
6. Winston Farm: Update
7. Cemetery: Update
8. Wynkoop House and Lamb Center: Update

#### New Business:

1. Staples Brickyard/Bristol Beach
2. Esopus Creek
3. Roger Donlon/American Legion
4. Augusta Savage Research

#### Miscellaneous Business:

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

**Next meeting scheduled for March 15, 2021 at 5:30 – via Zoom**

**Adjournment**

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 Minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Town of Saugerties**