

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Town of Saugerties was held May 23, 2005.

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

Additional Attendees: Eliner Trumpbour, Marti Randall, Peter Sinclair, Pete Schaller, Ron Dombrowski, Ralph Deitrick, Karin Yerry

Guests: Christina Plattner, Jeanne Goldberg, Blanche Duffy

The Minutes of the meeting of April 25, 2005, were read and adopted with amendments.

Cultural Resources Survey

Barry welcomed Christina Plattner, Jeanne Goldberg, and Blanche Duffy, who were present to speak about the Cultural Resources Survey.

With a \$15,000 grant from the Historic Preservation League and approximately 2,000 volunteer hours, Karlyn, Barry, Michael, Eliner and Bill, Blanche, Jeanne, and Bill Reinhart surveyed the town for structures predating 1946. Leeanne helped them get a computer and a place to work. There were three components to the survey: screening analysis, field work, and writing/compiling the report. All stone structures, schools, and religious properties (there were 211) were ranked #1 (i.e., having high historical significance). One hundred forty-one properties were unranked because owners would not allow photographs to be taken, or because there was not enough information. Over 200 properties were determined to be eligible for the National Historic Register. Maps, photographs, and narrative descriptions of architectural and historical significance of 155 properties were also included (probably ranked #2). *brick & wood frame*

Barry asked Christine if information about the properties eligible for listing would be forwarded to the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. Christina said yes. Barry asked whether we would need to follow up; Christina replied that it wouldn't hurt. Barry then invited the team volunteers to comment on the experience [of performing the Cultural Resources Survey.

Leeanne asked what the reaction of property owners had been. Christine answered that a few had not wanted their property photographed. Bill Trumpbour said that most of the owners were very interested.

Barry said that the Saugerties Historical Society is interested in exhibiting some of the report as part of History Day. Jeanne suggested that the Commission members be a panel. Barry asked the members if they would be willing; Josh, Bill, and Michael said yes, and Barry said he would be willing. He stated that he hoped Karlyn and Peter would participate.

Christina remarked that the criteria for listing on the National Register can include “the feeling” you get while at the property.

Bill said that the property where ^{Edie} Edie O’Connell now lives should be put on the National Register (it’s just after Kaatsban 4 corners, set back from the road).

Susan asked the team what reasons property owners might have had for not wanting to participate in the Survey; Christina, Jeanne, and Leeanne all said that it probably had to do with their concern about assessment and property taxes.

Christina explained that listing on the national Register of Historic Places is honorary, and the owner must agree. The owner may alter or even demolish the property. Jeanne added that eligibility does not restrict the property in any way; however, listing adds some protection to the property if the State wants to build a road nearby.

Ron Dombrowski asked about the Town’s designation process. Barry described it, and Jeanne mentioned the appeal process. Bill said that the idea of granting a Certificate of Appropriateness is not to give the owner a hard time but to guide the owner regarding appropriate changes to the outside of the house, to a sympathetic handling of an historic building, to get people who are knowledgeable about historic preservation to help the owner plan.

Ralph Deitrick, who repaints the Kaatsban Church every August, invited the Commission members to come watch. ✓

Christina said that when team members were invited into a property owner’s home, they went in, but they didn’t ask to go in; in some cases, because they couldn’t see the interiors, they didn’t make a decision about the historical significance of the property. She said that in addition to the stone houses, the town also has important brick buildings, not all of which they saw. Barry mentioned an early 20th-century log house in West Saugerties on the road to Mullen’s house [Cole Bank Road}. He pointed out that if an “historic district” is designated, the Commission must help the owners understand what features are important to preserve. Christina said that she may do a slide presentation at the library next month.

Winston Farm

Barry asked whether the Commission should pursue holding a hearing regarding designation of Niger Road? Michael and Josh both said we should not yet.

Pete Schaller said that his father (Ferdinand) bought the side with the barns first. Leanne asked him when the main house had last been lived in; Pete answered that it was in the 1950s. He said that around 1961 his father bought the half with the mansion.

Discussion followed about whether the Commission members have enough information about the historical significance of the property. Josh cautioned that we must not be

some of the precipitate. Michael suggested that we go back and look at the procedures from NYC and follow those. He said that Winston bought the farm after the Ashokan Reservoir was done; more than 1,000 mules that were used in the building of the reservoir were ^{medical} kept on the farm. Leeanne talked to a man in his late 70s recently who had grown up here who said there was an African-American cemetery there; he didn't know of any documentation for it. She asked if anyone knew anything about this, or was it just a rumor.

Bill read from the 1804 deed of Kingston Commons; he said we need to know exactly what the wording means.

Barry said he is still trying to get permission for a walking tour of the property. Leeanne asked whether permits were needed for the Woodstock '94 Festival. Barry said that they were; he said that Bill Reinhart did archeology research. Michael said he's heard that the main house was built on top of an older house. Bill asked Michael to distill all the information we have into an organized, concise set of data. Leeanne suggested that Bernie Ellsworth might have information. Michael said that between 1898 and 1926 it was to a town's benefit to have a lot of roads because the town got money from the state. Barry asked Michael how old the quarries were; Michael said they were started around 1832.

Procedures

There was discussion about a document identifying the members of the Commission, with their respective terms of office penciled in (done at the first meeting of the Commission on April 16, 2004). Marti said that the document wasn't legal because it wasn't entirely written by the Town; Josh said that there was no record of members' terms in the Town records. He said the Town Board must remedy this.

Leeanne said that the Town Clerk wants a formal vote from the Commission that Letters of Designation be filed with the County Clerk's office and the fees and filing charges be taken out of the Town of Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission budget. A motion to do this carried unanimously. *done*

Barry said he was arranging for a training session (to be by ^{Daniel} David McKay of the NY Preservation League) on procedures and asked the members which days were convenient for them. Four members voted for the training, 1 voted against.

Josh passed out some draft rules and regulations and asked if the Commission could discuss the Historic Property Guidelines working draft that had been given out by Barry in January (2005).

Barry asked how often we should change officers?

An argument ensued between Josh and Barry about how to put together the agenda. Bill reminded everyone that the Commission had started out doing emergency business and

hadn't gotten down to procedures. Leanne suggested that a portion of the June meeting be dedicated to a discussion of procedures and that members be asked for input to be included on the agenda under New Business. Ralph Deitrick suggested that the Commission put its Mission Statement (Section 1 of the Ordinance with the 4 subsections) on the Town's website.

follow up

Josh said that the Certificate of Appropriateness issued for the Wynkoop house has an incorrect section block lot number; the correct number is 36.

New Business

Karlyn said that two weeks previously Barry had told her that a person had told him that her family was racist; she was very upset and wanted to go on record as saying that neither she nor her family were racist.

Barry said he had been told by two people (Vern and someone else) that one theory about the origin of the name "Niger" Road has to do with people avoiding the toll house on 212 by taking the road that became known as "Niger Road" because they were "niggardly" (stingy). Another story is that African-Americans who were pushed out of the village went to "Nigger" Road. Karlyn said that that theory was based on a passage in the Simmons diary that Vern read; the relevant passage apparently disappeared from the diary afterward, according to Vern.

Dorothy Carlson

Barry said that he had personal reasons for designating Niger Road. First, it is a beautiful place to walk in its original unimproved state, and second, it represents an important part of history.

The next Commission meeting will be July ²⁷25, 2005.

The meeting was adjourned.

Susan B. Walker

* Confirmed by Dorothy Carlson 8/8/8
at John + Denise Wrozenski House
She was told this by her uncle, Floyd
Edwin Van Wert