

Lower Gwynedd Historic Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 15th, 2022

Committee Members Present:

Mike Brockway
Gloria Jones
Allison Klingler
Joseph W. Langella Jr.
Matt Metcalf
Linda Sacks

Supervisors Present:

Danielle Duckett
Janine Martin

Lower Gwynedd Staff Present:

None

Call to Order:

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:07PM.

Public Comment:

None.

August Meeting Minutes:

The Meeting Minutes from August 18, 2022 and all previous minutes will be incorporated into the record. Paper copies will be given to the Township, but may be amended per discussions and further research.

Nomination and Election:

Mr. Metcalf nominates himself to be Committee Chair, Ms. Jones seconds. Committee unanimously votes for Mr. Metcalf to be Chair.

Mr. Metcalf nominates Ms. Jones to be the Committee Vice Chair, Mr. Brockway seconds. Committee unanimously votes for Ms. Jones to be Vice Chair.

Business:

Discussion of Ingersoll Visit and Next Steps:

A second tour of the Ingersoll House on October 6, 2022, at 4PM was organized for those who could not make it to the previous outing.

Potential uses for Ingersoll House discussed included a venue, restaurant, Township use, or use by the Historic Society. Another option is to fix up the building to lease it, but it would have to be

verified to be structurally sound and a habitable place. Any changes will require coordination with zoning and permitting and see what they would require for an occupancy permit. It was also noted that Ingersoll is not hooked up to public water or sewer; the residential neighbors may be concerned with an increase in traffic; and a gifted property like Ingersoll might have been gifted with specific conditions on how the property is used. All of these would be potential concerns for renovation.

Ms. Martin had written to Bill Kibble at Heritage Building INspections and received a proposal for work. Committee debates whether to request the Board for funding, providing this work cannot be done by Township. Ms. Klingler notes the proposal is for a "readily visible" inspection, which tends to mean a less in-depth survey. Committee decides to ask Mr. Kibble if he can clarify if he typically does residential or commercial inspections; if he can appear at Committee meetings for questions post inspection; and if these items will affect his pricing and proposal.

The Committee discussed the historic registry, which has a Local, State, and National level. Funding can come from both levels but only if the Committee is a certified local government (CLG), which would require the Committee to become a Commission. This funding would allow for sensible rehabilitations and would not lock the house into complete preservation.

Ms. Duckett notes that a Commission it is worth considering, but want to know what are the implications? How long is the process? What are the financial obligations? Ms. Duckett also wants to know if the Township can put the historic properties forward on behalf of the Committee. It is believed that the Township can only do this if the Township is a registered CLG. Mr. Metcalf and Mr. Langella know how to work with the National Registry and will coordinate with the local contact (Megan McNish) to see if there are non-Committee options.

There was also discussion on selling / leasing the property, how could it still be protected after? Zoning ordinance 1298.19 would delay demo and require research of a potentially historic building, but the permit office would not know which permit requests were for historic buildings and which were not. How can the Committee make sure permits get checked? Could a conservation easement be used / set up for historic buildings? Could it be used on private residences? Mr. Metcalf to verify with Licenses and Inspections about these kinds of requirements.

Discussion of Prior Historic Committee Files:

On September 15th, Mr. Metcalf of the Township's Historic Committee reviewed documents at the Lower Gwynedd Township building related to the work of previous history-focused committees. Per our request to Ms. Martin, BOS committee liaison, Michelle was able to pull material for review; she believes this is the totality of material maintained by the Township.

Mr. Metcalf noted that the previous records included historic maps, ordinance drafts, letters, and meeting notes. The pictorial guide will be added to the Township files.

Additional Items Discussed:

There was discussion on the addition of blue signs, by the Pennsylvania Historic Museum, to mark historic areas such as for the Foulk Mansion. Mr. Metcalf will look into what requirements there are for such signs and bring information to the next meeting.

There was discussion on how to garner community support. Ideas included surveys, social media, and pamphlets or another type of literature. There was also discussion of involving / partnering with the schools and the Wissahickon Historic Society, hosting events and getting people to historic sites. Ultimately, the Committee needs to know what the community wants us to recognize.

Closing:

The meeting was called to close at 7:48PM. The next meeting will be at the McCormick House.

**Meeting Minutes prepared by:
Allison Klingler**