

**Lower Gwynedd Historic Advisory Committee**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**August 17, 2023**

**Committee Members Present**

Matt Metcalf  
Gloria Jones  
Joseph Langella  
Fawn Ostriak  
Michael Brockway  
Allison Klinger

**Committee Members Absent**

Linda Sacks

**Supervisors Present**

Janine Martin  
Danielle Duckett

**Lower Gwynedd Staff**

Michelle Farzetta (not present) Took minutes from recording.

**Call to order**

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. at the Lower Gwynedd Township building. Roll call was taken.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Mr. Metcalf asked for a motion to approve the July 20, 2023, minutes. Ms. Ostriak asked for an amendment to the minutes clarifying that the HAC does not recommend QR codes at this time on the marker signs. Ms. Ostriak made a motion to amend the minutes. Motion passed 6-0-0. Joe Langella then made a motion to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Allison Klinger. Motion passed 5-0-1. Gloria Jones abstained, as she had not received the minutes.

**Changes to the Agenda**

Mr. Metcalf stated that he is adding the new HAC website under old business and the marker application for Bethlehem Baptist Church under new business.

**Written Communication**

There was no written communication.

### **Audience Participation**

There was no audience participation.

### **Board of Supervisors - Liaison Report**

Ms. Martin stated that Reverend Quann has submitted an application for a historical marker for Bethlehem Baptist Church. He would like to have this marker for the anniversary gala in October. Approval of this marker is scheduled to be on the August 22 Supervisors agenda, therefore, the BOS asked for a recommendation in concept for this marker.

**Design update on markers** – Fred is working with vendors to obtain prices for the markers but is having a difficult time with specific language to base the pricing on. We want to make sure it is weather resistant and will last a long time. We are currently looking at temporary signs.

**Gwynedd School** – There will be a community event on August 23rd from 4pm-7pm to tour the Gwynedd School. The Park and Recreation master plan has been approved by the Parks and Recreation Board and that building will not be a part of the plan. We will be looking to honor the history of the site and develop a memorial to the school. The event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> will include a community discussion what will allow input regarding how to document the building's history. Ms. Jones shared that she has some information that could be included in a memorial to the building.

**Historic Survey** – This request has been shared with the BOS, however at this time this cannot be approved. Currently we are focusing on the comprehensive plan. We also lack the staff needed to get this type of survey completed.

**Speaker Event Funding**- This item can be approved. It will be on an upcoming BOS meeting agenda.

**Old Bethlehem Pike Bridge Update**- In 2018 our engineers completed an inspection on the bridge and decided a weight restriction was required and a repair plan. After reviewing the options, the BOS, at the time, decided to replace the bridge. This was the most expensive option, but the one that would last the longest. This decision cannot be revisited, as we are too far into the process. Grant funding is completed and will expire in June of 2024. If we would like to memorialize the existing bridge in the way of photos we can discuss that option.

**Table for Fall Fest** – A table has been reserved for the HAC. If you have any printed materials to pass out, let Michelle know and she will get them prepared.

### **Monitoring of Historic Properties**

No new issues of concern.

## Old Business

- **HAC Website** – Mr. Metcalf shared that the HAC page is up and running on the Lower Gwynedd website. Mr. Metcalf pulled the website up for all members to see.
- **Old Bethlehem Pike Bridge** – Mr. Metcalf shared that he has information from the engineers regarding the bridge. He will forward the documents to the committee members.
- **Spring House Innovation Park- Building #1** – Mr. Metcalf drafted a letter to Mr. Jason Rascoe inquiring about the plans for Building 1. He received a response stating that the HAC can arrange to have pictures of the existing building taken, but they will be moving forward with the plans they already have in place. Mr. Rascoe also offered to provide them with a copy of the original plans, however a release would need to be signed. There was some discussion regarding the records that the township has on file. Ms. Martin clarified that in the 1960's when that building was built, the required documentation was different, so we do not have drawings from then the building was initially constructed.  
Mr. Metcalf is going to respond to Mr. Rascoe's letter. He will arrange for a photographer and then get the release form for the drawings. He will then find out if the township should sign off on the release or a member of the HAC. Mr. Metcalf made a motion, seconded by Ms. Klinger, to move forward with the response. Motion passed 6-0-0.
- **HAC Recommendation 2023-03 Gwynedd School** – Mr. Metcalf asked for two volunteers to do research on the Gwynedd School. This information will then be used to help the HAC decide how to memorialize the school if it is taken down. Ms. Martin asked that they decide if a marker should be placed and what the wording would be. She also asked them to decide what they would like to educate the public about regarding the school. What are some facts or stories that people might not be aware of. Then incorporate these stories into the park. HAC members were responsive to the ideas and agreed to brainstorm. Currently there are three strategic plans our engineers have proposed for the parks. The BOS will be reviewing them in September. We want to have the information and stories we want to share, so that the architect can incorporate those ideas into any future plans.
- **HAC Recommendation 2023-05 Speaker Event** – The HAC will be partnering with the WVHS in 2024 for a speaker event. Mr. Langella stated that sometime in March or April would work best. They need to find a speaker though. Mr. Langella has reached out to a history professor at GMU to see if he would be interested but has not heard back yet. We would want the speaker to incorporate LGT history in their speech.

- **Historical Markers** – The Historical Marker information is now online. They would like to publicize the page with an e-blast or Facebook post. Mr. Metcalf is going to send this request to Jamie Worman. Mr. Metcalf is asking everyone to come up with one suggestion for a marker at the next meeting. Ms. Duckett reminded everyone that they need to make sure to have permission from the property owner before a marker can be installed. Mr. Metcalf reminded everyone that the HAC did not make accepting submissions contingent on property owner approval. The historical aspect comes first— if it is worthy of a marker, it is worthy of a marker for its historical value. Permission of the owner comes afterward if a submission is considered worthy. The Gwynedd School would not be an issue, as the township owns that property, however a location such as the Foulke mansion would require permission from the property owners.
- **Easement Templates** – The template was reviewed by our solicitor Neil Stein. This is a document that may or may not be used by a homeowner. Ms. Martin stated that this is a great resource for residents. A recommendation is going to be drafted and sent to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Mr. Langella made a motion, seconded by Mr. Metcalf, to send the recommendation. Motion passed 4-0-2. (Ms. Jones and Ms. Klinger abstained)

### New Business

- **Bethlehem Baptist Church Historical Marker Application** – The commission reviewed the application. It was decided that the marker was appropriate, however they would like to review the text for the marker and the historical context (which needed more background as it will be used as a template for other submissions). Ms. Jones agreed to supplement the research. Mr. Langella made a motion, seconded by Ms. Klinger to approve the historic marker application for Bethlehem Baptist Church, pending the approval of the marker text. Motion passed 6-0-0.
- **Ingersoll Property**– Mr. Langella gathered information related to the history of Ingersoll. Mr. Metcalf shared the memo that Mr. Langella put together. There was some discussion about the family that lived there. After the discussion they felt that the house should be called Springhouse Farm as that name would be relevant to its history. Ms. Martin stated that the HAC needs to explain why the house needs to be preserved and site the historical sources to make your case. The HAC will need to convince the BOS why it needs to be saved. If the spring in the basement is how Springhouse got its name, then we need documentation. Ms. Duckett stated that we have a staff member working the viability and next steps for the Ingersoll property. He is evaluating the property based on cost to maintain, repairs needed, possible deed restrictions, and possible easements due to the spring. His evaluation is not related to the property’s history, but the HAC can bring that

component to him to include. He will be presenting his findings to the BOS in September.

- **Historic Preservation Component of Comprehensive Master Plan** – Mr. Metcalf attended a meeting with the Montgomery County Planning Commission regarding historical preservation in the county. He is going to send information to Michelle to share in the meeting packet. The video can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNEYxAvEaDI>. The county's Planning Smarter MontCo 2023, through which the webinar was developed, can be found here: <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/1717/Planning-Smarter>
- **National Historic Register District: Penllyn Village** – This item was tabled due to time.
- **America250 Plans** – America will be celebrating its 250<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2026. Mr. Metcalf is not sure what plans Montgomery County has planned. He asked Ms. Martin to send any information she might have to him related to the history of Montgomery County or Lower Gwynedd.

### **Announcements**

Mr. Metcalf reminded everyone of the community meeting on August 23<sup>rd</sup> for the Gwynedd School. He encouraged everyone to attend. Fall Fest is September 23<sup>rd</sup>, he will work on getting some materials together to pass out. Mr. Metcalf also inquired about possibly getting the time capsule at the township building brought over to display at their booth. Ms. Martin will look into this.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Brockway made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 pm. Motion passed 6-0-0.