



Meeting of the Plymouth Township Historic District Commission

Thursday, August 24, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

PROPOSED MINUTES

Next Meeting date October 26, 2023

1) CALL TO ORDER 7:00 PM

a) Roll Call

Present:

- Carol Souchock
- Ben Eikey
- Wendy Harless, Chair
- Steven Bassett
- Dennis Cebulski

Also present: Supervisor Kurt Heise
Planner Laura Haw

Excused: Sybil Hunter
Colleen Azimi

2) APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 24, 2023, CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by C. Souchock and supported by S. Bassett to approve the Consent Agenda of the Historic District Commission for the meeting of August 24, 2023, with the addition of one item on a Shearer Cemetery episode to the podcast updates.

All Ayes

Motion Passed

3) ENACTMENT OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

a) Approval of the June 22, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Moved by D. Cebulski and supported by S. Bassett to approve June 22, 2023, meeting minutes with amendments. ~~“inaudible”~~—The inaudible comment was that the Plymouth District Library is celebrating its 100th anniversary.

All Ayes

Motion Passed

4) BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS



C. Souchock met with Mary Ann MacLaren from the Environmental Committee about the Plymouth Canton Community Schools (PCCS) Back-to-School Event in August. She found there wasn't enough time to plan for the Historic District Commission (HDC) to have a table at this event, but that the two committees might consider that for next year and have some type of activities to draw people to the table.

5) PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments

6) NEW BUSINESS

No new business

7) OLD BUSINESS

a) Planning for the 200th Anniversary - *Supervisor Heise*

Supervisor Heise shared some ideas for a 15-member Bi-Centennial Commission to be created and start in 2025. This would allow 2 years to plan for the 2027 Anniversary Celebration. He mentioned Judge Lowe and Jack Dempsey as potential candidates for the new commission and asked for members to recommend other Plymouth Township candidates. Ideas included a publication, a one-time community event, such as a picnic, special letterhead specifically for the bi-centennial, a time capsule, some type of historic display at Township Hall, an art show, or perhaps a Board of Trustees Meeting with members dressed in 19th-century period clothing. Supervisor Heise provided an update on the Tibbitt's house which suffered a fire that seemed to be isolated to the 2nd floor or attic. The complete extent of damage was unknown. He also shared that the new owner of the property next to the Shearer Cemetery did not want to sign an easement agreement, but he gave verbal access to the cemetery through his easement.

b) Podcast updates - *Ben Eikey*

1. Intro to the HDC

B. Eikey indicated the first podcast will include a description of the work of the HDC as an introduction to the community. C. Souchock recommended that Jack Dempsey be featured, as he started the HDC. W. Harless will reach out to schedule that interview.

2. Salem Train Wreck

B. Eikey also shared that his focus on the Salem Train Wreck event would begin with an introduction, and a narrative, end with the aftermath, and describe its impact on train regulations. W. Harless found 3 people from the Ionia Historical Society, who could be remotely interviewed. One episode with different perspectives would include Liz Kerstens from The Plymouth Historical Museum, someone from The Salem Historical Society, and someone from Northville.

3. Shearer Cemetery

He felt this would be more urgent and more doable. W. Harless recommended interviewing ~~Darin Sylvester~~, who found the cemetery and has done the most research. Darrin Silvester

c) Fall Colors will be October 8 at Township Park- *Wendy Harless*



1. The HDC will have a booth again this year.

W. Harless commented that the display from last year can be used again at Fall Colors this year. W. Harless also suggested that information about Shearer Cemetery, Phoenix Mill highlights, the Township apple orchard history, and some of the native flowers at Shearer be made available to attendees. Planner Haw gave the time of the Fall Colors event as 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM. B. Eikay said he could prioritize the Cemetery Podcast to have it out by October 8th, so that the Fall Colors could be highlighted, as well.

d) Shearer Cemetery - *Wendy Harless*

1. Fall clean-up date needed.

W. Harless needed suggestions for dates to pick up leaves and weed at Shearer Cemetery. October 21st, 11:00 – 2:00 was recommended. The State has gotten some new ground penetrating radar equipment and will be out as a training exercise, probably in Spring, at “no charge.” This may help locate graves and possibly where there were previous graves. There was a discussion about a bench and an informational sign.

2. Cemetery boundaries and trillium.

Planner Haw was asked for assistance on exact boundaries. ~~The white trillium was found to not be a protected species, allowing for the removal of it by the owner on the property line.~~ White Trillium has limited protection in the State of Michigan. Only owners of the property where it grows can remove it or kill it.

3. GFL guidelines for yard waste pick up at Shearer.

GFL requested that the bags be lined up on North Territorial Road near the sidewalk, The Township will be called, and they will notify GFL for the pick-up.

e) Triangle Park marker - Wendy Harless

1. Review of the latest design proof.

W. Harless brought photos before the commission for the selection of photos for the marker. A decision was made for the “Clark Sly Steer” and the large 1904 apple tree from an 1827 apple orchard in The Township. A photo of a Native American hasn’t been found yet for this marker, but they are looking for contacts to find one.

2. Update about Colony Farm and their barn

The owner of Colony Farms bought the Root Barn, disassembled it, moved it across the road, and reassembled it at Colony Farms. ~~W. Harless did not find any proof in the photos, as there were several barns.~~ All photos will be available on Google Drive. A photo was found of the Root House, and W. Harless hoped that could be used on the Triangle Park marker.

3. W. Harless was able to view these to help identify if the photo in the HDC brochure is

indeed the Root Barn. There were a lot of photos showing the agricultural heritage of the area. It could not be established that the barn that still stands is in fact the Root barn. Photos from the Root family photo album were inconclusive.



f) Reprinting our historic sites of Plymouth Township brochures. - *Carol Souchock*

1. We are down to 50 copies. Do we want to print more?

C. Souchock talked about the need to update and print more, add them to the Plymouth Township website, or both. D. Cebulski said that previously the brochures were very well received. S. Hunter investigated pricing. Updates to the brochure, including the Root Family photos were recommended. D. Cebulski suggested adding information to the website and doing more for a Bicentennial Edition.

Moved by D. Cebulski and supported by C. Souchock to update the brochure with the current photo of the barn at Colony Farms and print 500 copies for a cost of \$969.

All Ayes

Motion passed.

g) Pursell House updates- *Dennis Cebulski*

D. Cebulski gave updates on the Pursell House. It received a cluster housing option approval. However, the developer will be proposing to split the lot into two, build two houses, and sell the rest. That would then take away the cluster housing option and the anticipated twenty thousand dollars. This is not final yet, and he will be going before the ZBA, on September 7th.

h) Any new Plymouth historical facts for the Township newsletter?

1. Present ideas

C. Souchock commented that new historical facts can be presented to the Township for the e-newsletter monthly, which could use better photos and longer stories. New facts may also be published in the winter edition of the printed newsletter but limited to 6 sentences and a small photo. That would be needed by November 1st at the latest. Heather from the library will be submitting something for November. Perhaps for the next newsletter, if there is space available, a new photo from the Bentley collection could be added. The deadline would be February 1st. E-News would likely have availability each month. The submission deadline will be investigated. The Sly Steer, the apple tree, and the Root House were all suggested for photos and articles to be included.

8) ADJOURNMENT

Moved by B. Eikey and supported by D. Cebulski to adjourn the Historic District Commission at 8:46 p.m.

All Ayes

Wendy Harless, Chair



The public is invited and encouraged to attend all meetings of the Historic District Commission of the Charter Township of Plymouth.