

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
April 8, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joshua Anderson, Roberta Eckman, John Kabli,
Joe McCormick, Frank King

TOWNSHIP STAFF: Justin Smiley, Township Planner
Phil Yocum, Historic Consultant, Commonwealth Heritage Group

I. Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. New Business

- A. Applicant: Elizabeth and John Witmer**
Historic Site: Site 211, Class II Historic Resource, Valley View Farm
Address: 435 North Whitford Rd., Exton
Request: Review and advise on replacement of windows and door at the historic resource to receive building permits

Elizabeth and John Witmer gave a brief history of their historic home located at 435 North Whitford Rd. Ms. Witmer explained that the house was built in three sections with the oldest portion being closest to the road. She reviewed the plan for 12 replacement windows, noting that the current windows are not original and are not functional. The plan proposes to replace all of the windows in the oldest portion of the home with Anderson 400 series double-pane, tilt-out replacement windows. The Witmers have retained Wendall Design and Construction firm to do the renovation. They also plan to replace doors, making them all consistent with one another.

Ms. Witmer then described the windows in the remainder of the house noting casement windows in the rear that are also nonfunctional. They propose a fixed window that looks like a casement window over the sink. The window framing needs to be replaced. All windows in the house are not being replaced at this time due to the cost, but they will repair and paint the remaining windows in the house.

Mr. Yocum gave his review of the project and was in agreement with the proposed plan, noting that the existing windows in the oldest section of the house are not original. There was then a general discussion of windows and the history of the house. Historical Commission members provided suggestions for other windows in the home and options for replacement/repair/enhancement.

The Historical Commission was in agreement with the window replacement plan of the Witmers for Site 211 and thanked them for their efforts in maintaining the historic property.

- B. Applicant: Church Farm School – North Campus**
Historic Site: Site 345, Class I Listed National Resource, Greystock Hall
Site Address: 201 Church Farm Ln., Exton
Request: Review and advise on the proposed addition to historic resource to receive building permits.

Daniela Voith of Voith & Mactavish Architects, LLP, introduced Andrew Lipschitz, Project Architect; Karen Wertz, Director of Finance and Operations at Church Farm School; and Ned Sherrill, Head of Church Farm School. Ms. Voith reviewed the proposed plan and presented renderings and elevations of the proposed addition to Greystock Hall. The proposed addition will help reinforce the School's desire to change the major entrance from Lincoln Highway to Valley Creek Boulevard and will provide a safer, pedestrian-friendly campus for students and visitors. Ms. Voith presented technical drawings of the floors of the building and the doors and windows, all of which are Marvin double-hung, aluminum clad windows.

Mr. Yocum provided his review of the project noting that it is a very positive step that totally transforms the building with the modern addition enhancing the historical portions.

The Historical Commission was in agreement with the proposed addition.

C. Cory Kegerise, PA Historical and Museum Commission – Certified Local Government Program Presentation

Mr. Kegerise of the State Historic Preservation Office and Community Preservation Coordinator for the eastern region of the State, gave a presentation on the Certified Local Government Program and provided summary sheets on the program which was established by the National Park Service and managed by the State. The program is a government to government program designed to engage municipalities of all sizes in local historic preservation efforts. New guidelines were issued in 2018 and applications are now being accepted for communities that want to be a Certified Local Government. The Program is concerned with what makes an effective historic preservation program and the parts needed to do preservation well. A Certified Local Government community has the parts and pieces needed to do preservation effectively and follows best practices.

Mr. Kegerise reviewed the certification requirements and performance standards of the Program. Benefits of being a Certified community include: bonus points for grant applications, pro bono assistance from a staff architect, and planning services, among others. The application process is open-ended and an evaluation is conducted every four years to be sure the community is meeting the performance standards. The complete application process through acceptance into the Program takes three to four months.

Mr. Kegerise said the biggest issue the Township would have to change to become a Certified Local Government community is its classification structure for historic properties. The Township's current process references the National Historic Register. Mr. Kegerise said that assigning Class 1 to a structure assumes that it is more significant than a Class 2 when in reality, it may just be that someone has made the effort to go through the nomination process. Just because a property is not on the National Register does not mean that couldn't be if someone went through the process. Also, Mr. Kegerise said there could be some legal issues regarding due process and eligibility related to using the National Register. He noted that a lot of decisions can and do happen without the property owner's knowledge. He added that it is important that the decision to place a property on the Township's historic inventory be made at the Township level and not the State level. If a property is deemed not eligible, the Township's ordinances cannot be used to protect it. The reasons that make one property more significant than another need to be legally defensible. He said it is the distinction between the classes that is important.

There was then extensive discussion regarding the classification system. Mr. Kegerise said that while there are some benefits to classifications, he believes that having just a list is cleaner. There also needs to be a process for adding buildings to the list/register, and this should be spelled out in the ordinance. He cited East Pikeland Township as an example.

Mr. Yocum asked if the Township redesigned its classification system, would Mr. Kegerise review it. Mr. Kegerise said he would, but suggested the request be made in writing to make it formal.

IV. Old Business

A. Waterloo Reserve Interpretive Marker Text Discussion

Ms. Eckman said she received comments from everyone and incorporated them as she saw fit. Mr. Anderson will put the corrected text and photos into an electronic copy for sending to the developer who will then make and erect the sign.

B. Historical Resources Maintenance Discussion

This matter was tabled.

V. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of March 11, 2019, as amended by Roberta Eckman (Anderson/Eckman)

Vote: Passed, 5-0

VI. Historical Commission Concerns

A. Township update – Justin Smiley

- **Ivy Cottage** – Mr. Smiley said Neal Fisher of the Hankin Group invited the Historical Commission members to tour the renovated Ivy Cottage before it is leased out at the end of the month. The Commission members gave Mr. Smiley two dates (April 12 and 19 at 10:00 a.m.). Mr. Smiley will see which suits Mr. Fisher and let the members know. It was pointed out that the Ivy Cottage is an excellent example of an adaptive re-use scenario turning the space into two residential rental apartments rather than the office space originally proposed by the Hankin Group.
- **Arrandale Barn** – Mr. Smiley reported that there are two potential buyers for the Arrandale Barn; one is for a commercial use and the second is Collegium Charter School for use as classrooms/laboratory.
- **VPP Grant: History of West Whiteland update** – Mr. Smiley will check on the status as there is still nothing on the County's website regarding this matter.
- **Commission Vacancies** – one application has been received to date.
- **Community Development Coordinator Position update** – an offer letter has been made to a candidate, and she has tentatively accepted the position but due to a death in her family, no start date has been set yet.

- **SharePoint Update** - the new site has gone live and while there are still a few issues with permissions, etc. the roll-out is going fine. Everyone should have external access very soon.
- Ms. Eckman remarked that the Historical portion of the Township's website has improved with the addition of maps and listing of properties. She further reported on a workshop she and Mr. Yocum attended in West Chester on windows.
- Ms. Eckman asked if anyone has suggestions for getting historical information out to the public beyond the Township's website. Mr. Smiley said the Township's Facebook page is always looking for stories to post. It was suggested that the Commission make a monthly submission to the Township's Facebook page.

B. Update on consideration of clarifications for HC Ordinances – Matthew Morely

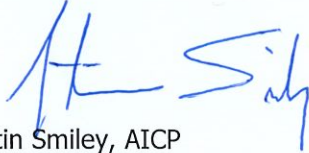
This matter was tabled.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. (Eckman/Anderson)

Vote: Passed, 5-0

Recording Secretary,



Justin Smiley, AICP
Township Planner