

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 14, 2021**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Julie Bauer, Joe McCormick, John Prendergast, Jonathan Martin, John Kabli (arrived late)

TOWNSHIP STAFF: Justin Smiley, Township Planner
Ali Cleveland, Community Development Coordinator
Phil Yocum, Historic Consultant, Commonwealth Heritage Group

I. Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:26 p.m. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the meeting was held virtually, via Zoom.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Old Business

- 1. Applicant: Eric Smith and Laura Mikowychok**
Address: 1416 W. Woodbank Way
Historic Sites: 044 – Ryerss Infirmary for Dumb Animals and Battle of the Clouds Historic District
Request: Recommendation to approve the revised renovations of the historic resource

Ms. Mikowychok explained that the project received approval from the Historical Commission in September of 2020. Due to structural issues and an increase in construction costs since that time, the plan has been revised. She presented images of the existing and proposed south façade. Revisions include deletion of new construction to the existing lower-level pony stall; existing wood stall enclosure will still be demolished but will remain open. New vertical wood siding will be installed on the existing exterior walls at the rear of the open stall area. The existing double door may remain if there is not enough clearance for the proposed single door and window. An additional air compressor will be added in the same area as the existing compressor if possible, and if not, it will be added in a tasteful manner in the pony stall area. Security lights will be added to the east façade, but no other changes are proposed.

Mr. Yocum said he reviewed the plan and found no adverse effect on the historic resources.

Motion: To approve the revised renovations as presented at the meeting.

Vote: Passed 4-0 (McCormick/Martin)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion on historical markers for Morstein Station, 1370 Kirkland Ave., and 1360 Phoenixville Pike

JoAnn Kelton and Thomas Hickey, members of the West Chester Borough Committee to Restore Rail Service, were in virtual attendance and gave a presentation on the history of the West Chester Railroad. They are seeking letters of endorsement from the Township to include with the application to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for historical markers at three 19th Century train stations/facilities. The Railroad began in 1832 and the three structures located in West Whiteland that still exist are:

- Woodland Station (later known as Morstein Station) located at 1401 Lewis Lane
- Halfway House located at 1360 Phoenixville Pike - this is the oldest existing structure in Pennsylvania associated with any railroad and was used to house workers and maintenance.
- Kirkland Station located at 1370 Kirkland Ave. - served as the station master's house.

Mr. Hickey and Ms. Kelton will provide guidance on the required contents of the letters and will forward a copy of the application packet for further information. Mr. Hickey said the letters will not be needed for a month or more. The Historical Commission will issue a letter, and Mr. Anderson will seek an additional letter from the Township Board of Supervisors.

V. Approval of Minutes for May 10, 2021

**Motion: To approve the minutes of May 10, 2021
(McCormick/Martin)**

Vote: Passed, 4-0-1 (Bauer abstained)

VI. Township Update:

Mr. Smiley advised that the plaques for the 2020 Historic Preservation Awards have been ordered, but an awards ceremony was yet to be scheduled. After discussion, it was decided to schedule the presentation in September. Mr. Smiley and Ms. Cleveland will draft brochures, prepare a Power Point presentation, and invite the recipients of the awards. A separate ceremony will be scheduled for the 2021 Awards, possibly in January.

Mr. Smiley reported that Commission members who are vaccinated can return to the Township building for meetings as of June 1, and those who have not been vaccinated can return July 1. The meetings will also continue with a Zoom link option for those not comfortable returning to the building or public who cannot attend in person. Members agreed to return to the Township building for a hybrid in person/Zoom meeting in July.

Lennar Homes has withdrawn its application to construct 95 single family homes on the Weston Tract. Lennar did not plan to save the old stable building located on the property as it was not listed on the Township's list of historic properties. Withdrawal of the application will give the Township a chance to add the stable to the inventory of historic resources so that it can be saved by future developers.

Mr. Smiley said Candace Strawley continues to schedule meetings with the 40 property owners that remained for the Inventory and believes she is on schedule to complete the project.

Mr. McCormick said he feels the new house being constructed across from Foley Cottage will not negatively impact the resource.

VII. Historical Commission Concerns

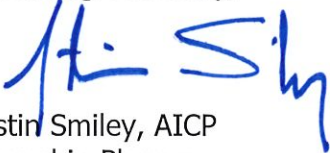
Ms. Bauer gave an update on the Witch's Cap. A number of people from Facebook Marketplace expressed interest, but at this time, no one has agreed to take the Cap. One woman was interested but was given a quote of \$20,000 to transport the Cap via helicopter. A man with an architectural salvage business in New Jersey indicated he would help transport the Cap within the immediate area. A member of a construction company with clients on the Main Line said he would see if any of his clients were interested and asked if he could have copies of previous design sketches. Mr. Smiley and Mr. Yocum both indicated that the sketches could be copied. Another person said he would be interested in reclaiming the wood for use in other projects. Mr. Yocum suggested that a condition be that all of the wood from the Cap be taken so that the Township is not left to dispose of anything.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. (Kabli/McCormick)

Vote: Passed, 5-0

Recording Secretary,



Justin Smiley, AICP
Township Planner