

**Historical Commission of Birmingham Township
Minutes of the meeting of September 22, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Birmingham Township Historical Committee was called to order by Chairperson, Mike Forbes at **7:22pm** via Zoom.

PRESENT: HC Members: Kelly Fleming, Mike Forbes, John Ponticello

ABSENT: Matt Bedwell

Others present: Dan Hill

Mr. Forbes made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 25, 2020 meeting. Ms. Fleming seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion/Evaluation of Additional Interpretative Sites for the Brandywine Battlefield Heritage Interpretation Plan

The proposed preliminary interpretative sites in Birmingham Township are:

- Birmingham Friends Meetinghouse
- D. David House
- Darlington Farm
- Dilworth Farm*
- Dilworthtown Historic District*
- J. Dilworth House
- Jones Ford (future)
- Lafayette/Birmingham Cemetery*
- Osborne Hill
- Sandy Hollow*

These sites are different than the Heritage Center that was discussed at the August HC meeting. Those potential Heritage sites were: Barn at the Dilworth Farm, Dilworthtown Center, Birmingham Hill (log cabin) or perhaps something in conjunction with Thornbury township at Spackman Farm. These locations will be discussed in detail at the joint work session on Monday September 28th. However, in preparation for that meeting, Mr. Forbes wants to discuss the proposed additional interpretative sites from the following perspectives: (1) do we want additional interpretative sites; (2) if yes, which ones and how do we qualify them. If we have additional sites, they will need signage that explains what took place at that location. The signage will need to be homogenized to match the rest of the signage related to the Battlefield Interpretation Plan.

Ms. Fleming notes that when she initially looked at this list of sites, she compared it to the list of Historical Resources in the township. She noted one of the proposed sites is not on that list and wanted clarification on where the J. Dilworth House is located. Mr. Forbes thinks that the J. Dilworth house is the white section of house with the well (James Dilworth) that is attached to the Inn Keeper's Kitchen. Mr. Bedwell would be able to confirm this. Mr. Forbes agreed that her approach is good idea and a worthwhile exercise to allow the group to see if there are any additional sites that have a key component to the battle that should be included in terms of interpreting the battle. If a site has

battlefield significance and doesn't end up with a sign, perhaps it can be referenced at the Heritage Center. For instance, the Friends Meetinghouse played a significant role in the battle, but it would be wrong on many levels to place a sign there. Discussion ensued about each of the locations and the two most significant locations in Birmingham are Sandy Hollow (which already has signage) and Birmingham Hill. If Birmingham Hill is not chosen as a Heritage Center location, then it should be selected as an additional interpretative site. Mr. Forbes notes the significant battlefield activity locations in the township are: Osbourne Hill, Birmingham Hill, Friends Meetinghouse, Sandy Hollow, Brinton's Run meets Creek Road (this is where Washington sent troops across the Brandywine). The places in Dilworthtown are primarily the line of retreat for the troops and not places significant to the actual battle.

Mr. Forbes would like to outline some Criteria for selecting the additional interpretative signage locations would be:

- To avoid any private property or property that would have moral sensitivities;
- A location that has clear road access an area where a car or two can pull over safely to view the sign;
- The location needs to be a place where significant battlefield activity took place;

If these three criteria are applied to this list for additional interpretative sites, it makes these locations possibilities: highlighted in yellow above.

Ms. Fleming asked for clarification about what the Monday work session discussion will be about. Mr. Forbes thinks that Monday discussion will be the Heritage Center location. Ms. Fleming also indicates that the other item that needs to be discussed on Monday is that Birmingham Township is in agreement with the proposed goals and objectives notes in the proposal from Brandywine Conservancy.

Mr. Forbes sent an email to Kathleen McCaig and copied Shelia Fleming on it to let her know that the decisions need to go through our township process before we can give her a response to this request.

New Business

Mr. Forbes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08pm. Seconded by Mr. Ponticello and voted unanimously. The next meeting will be October 27, 2020 at 7:15pm (via Zoom).

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Boorse
HC Secretary