

Historical Commission of Birmingham Township
Minutes of the meeting of July 25, 2023

The regular meeting of the Birmingham Township Historical Committee was called to order by the Chairperson, Mike Forbes at **7:02pm** in the township building.

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

ABSENT: Pat Kelly

Others present: Dan Hill

Ms. Fleming made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 27, 2023 meeting. Mr. Ponticello seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Review recommendations for updating the Historic Resources List

Mr. Forbes reiterated that three of the HC members did conduct a drive around the township in mid-July to clarify the 17 properties that were identified as being ambiguous in terms of what exactly was considered the Historic Resource under each HR reference number. Mr. Forbes created a document outlining these 17 historic resources and exactly what was considered the historic resource – this list is attached to these minutes for reference.

Additionally, Mr. Forbes referenced an email he received from Kas Kennedy – apparently since Radley Run has applied for National Registry certification for the Mansion House, they are interested in designating some additional buildings to the Historic Resource list in order to create a Radley Run Historic District. Currently, the following buildings are on the Birmingham Township Historic Resource list: HR #4, The Doll House; HR #5, The Mansion; and HR #6, The Lye House (which are ruins).

There has been a discussion going back to 2016 that the Kennelman's House, The Huntsman's House, and something called the Dairy Master's Cottage should be considered to be added as Historic Resources. On the driving tour the other week, the HC members could not locate the supposed "Dairy Master's Cottage". These are the three buildings that Ms. Kennedy's email referenced adding to the Birmingham Township historical resource list. However, the HC Committee wants to hold off on considering adding any new historic resources until after the new HC ordinance is adopted and then use the new process, which is more objective than the current process, to determine if they qualify or not. Her email indicates that they are trying to add these additional buildings and thus to create a new Historic District. Mr. Forbes noted that this is a bigger discussion than simply adding new buildings to the Birmingham Township Historic Resource list. Mr. Forbes is planning to call her tomorrow to get a better idea of exactly what she wants the HC to do.

New Business

Mr. Forbes asked if the BOS will take action on the ordinance in any fashion at the August meeting. Mr. Hill indicated that he believes that the ordinance is currently with the Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) for review at this time. Mr. Forbes asked if the draft will come back to the HC for another review? Mr. Hill noted that if the CCPC comments are de minimis then, the BOS can then take action. Mr. Hill also noted that Mr. Shiring was planning to speak with someone from the state Historical Commission and that has not occurred yet. Mr. Hill noted that once all the administrative steps are completed, they want to take action.

Ms. Fleming asked if there is any update on the application that was supposed to be reviewed last month. Mr. Forbes simply stated that they were not on the agenda this month and they have not begun any work at this point.

Since Mr. Bedwell is in attendance this evening, it seemed appropriate to discuss the Maintenance and access of the Historic Resource google drive. Ms. Fleming asked Mr. Bedwell if he still wants to be responsible for maintaining the drive? She also noted that even though she has access to the drive, she is unable to grant access to the drive to others on the HC. Is this something that only Mr. Bedwell can do? Mr. Bedwell noted that he can change the permissions to allow Ms. Fleming to have more access.

Mr. Bedwell feels that the more people that use the drive, the more likely it is to be kept up-to-date and be used as a township resource. Mr. Forbes agreed and noted that there needs to be a process by which the information is updated when historic resources change owners. It would also be a convenient place to when applications are approved for updates to historic resources, it would be beneficial to have pictures of the updates added to the file for the historic resource on the google drive. Ms. Fleming is willing to create a form that the township office can complete when a historic resource transfers ownership and send that form to Ms. Fleming who will edit that information on the google drive. Mr. Forbes suggested that the office and BOS should also have read-only access to the drive so that they can use it as a resource also. Currently only Mr. Bedwell has access to the main email that the google drive was created under which is BirminghamHC@gmail.com. This was the only way that Mr. Bedwell could create a free account for the electronic file.

The takeaways from this discussion are: (1) that the township office should be granted read-only access to the google drive; (2) Mr. Bedwell is going to review the current permissions granted to the members and make sure that the appropriate members have edit, comment or read-only permissions; (3) Ms. Fleming is going to create a google form for the office to complete when historic resources are transferred to new owners and then she will update that information in the google drive. Ms. Fleming is also willing to add HC applications to the appropriate files on the google drive and thus maintain an accurate inventory of the updates that have been done to various historic resources. Mr. Forbes would like to eventually highlight a couple of the historic resources on the township website.

Mr. Forbes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm. Seconded by Ms. Fleming and voted unanimously. The next meeting will be August 22, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Boorse
HC Secretary

Birmingham Township List of Historic Resources

Recommended Changes 7-25-2023 Updated

HR#	Tax Parcel	Historic Resource	Change
9	6501 00010000	Fernbank Farm	House only
10	6502 00020000	Osborn Hill	House & Barn Only, not pool house
14	6504 00040300	Daniel Davis House	House & Barn Only, not shed
15	6504 00100200	Linden Jones Farm	House, Small Barn, Large Barn, Spring House
21		Orthodox Friends School	House Only
25	6504 00420000	Bennett-Beatty Farm	House, Spring House
27		Davis Farm	House, Spring House, Ruins
39	6504 00630000	Abramson House & Barn	House & Barn
41	6504 00960000	Edward Brinton 1726	House & Ruins
44	6504 00406200	Thos. Darlington House	House [Leave listing as is until site can be seen]
48	6504 00330000	Brandywine Farm	House Only
50	6505 00050400	Creek Road Farmhouse	House Only
57	6504 00360000	Darlington Farm	House & Stone Barn
61	6504 00390000	Firethorn Farm	House, Main Barn, Garage
63	6504 00210000	Wind O'Hill Farm	House & Main Barn [AKA Strawberry Fields]
72	6503 00140000	Townsend (Steele) Farm	House Only
73	6504 01000000	Townsend Tenant Farm	House & Spring House