

Birmingham Township Historical Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of October 26, 2010

The regular meeting of the Birmingham Township Historical Commission was called to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Township Building with Chairman Will Snook presiding. Present were Scott Garrison, Mark Gross, Ed Zaloga, Betty Organt, Matt Bedwell and Lloyd Roach.

Minutes of the September meeting were approved after the following correction: After the second sentence in the RPOS paragraph, insert “Mr. Bedwell said he personally was not in favor of moving the canon.” (Roach, Zaloga, all in favor)

Windshield Survey: Matt Bedwell distributed copies of a map of the Township similar to the map that will be in the historical atlas being prepared by the County. The map showed dots for most of the Township structures built before 1960. Mr. Bedwell thanked Jacquie Roach for her help in completing the survey and said a pdf of the map would soon be available. Mr. Snook expressed thanks to both Matt and Jacquie.

Sandy Hollow Cannon: Lloyd Roach read a report of his research on the history of the cannon, noting the international participation in the 1915 event at which the Lafayette monument was erected. Mr. Roach said his research was inconclusive but that the cannons were in place before 1915; the RPOS brochure said they were placed in 1900; one account calls them naval cannons and another calls them Civil War siege cannons. Mr. Roach will continue to seek definitive information about the cannons’ arrival in Birmingham. Dr. Garrison said he had a relevant newspaper article that may answer the question. Mr. Bedwell said he had talked to a cannon maker who said the numbers on the Birmingham cannons indicated that they were British War of 1812 cannons, the numbers being hundredweight. The Sandy Hollow No. 27, marked 69-9-0, weighs 7,980 pounds. The Wylie Road No. 50, marked 69-9-2, weighs 7,982 pounds. Mr. Gross suggested having them authenticated by the Civil War Museum in Harrisburg or the British War Museum in London. Mr. Snook will scan Mr. Roach’s report materials and suggested a possible Bugle article. Mr. Roach noted that the Chester County Historical Society has a box of Birmingham information outside of what was shown the HC members from the drawer during their visit.

HARB: Mr. Snook reported that Radley Run Country Club Manager Joe Mendez had said he’d received conflicting information that led to a delay in the club’s re-roofing the Painter Mansion. Because the building is not in the Historic Corridor, the project must come before the Historical Commission, not HARB, before going to the Supervisors. Dr. Garrison suggested that HARB guidelines should be applied when the HC reviews applications. Discussion ensued concerning the apparently overlapping roles of HARB and HC. Mr. Bedwell said the Township ordinance is very clear. The HC members agreed that a Supervisor ruling is needed with regard to the responsibility of HARB versus that of the HC. Mr. Snook said he would draft an email to the Board of Supervisors regarding the apparent overlap in the review process. Mr. Snook said that the application process must be improved. All agreed to have a special meeting to review

the Painter Mansion roof if requested. Mr. Gross said the HC should produce a welcoming packet for purchasers of the historic properties on the inventory (Mr. Roach will help with this project) and that a subcommittee should examine the Township ordinance and make recommendations regarding conflicts between the HARB and the HC.

Informal Survey results: Mr. Snook distributed the responses to his informal survey about the role of the HC. Mr. Gross drew a flow chart on the blackboard proposing a process for approval of renovations to historic properties and/or properties in the Historic Corridor and Dilworthtown Historic District. The Township ordinance seems to direct that applications for buildings in the Historic Corridor and District must be reviewed by both the HC and the HARB. Mr. Roach suggested that applications having to do with newer buildings (not yet 50 years old) be reviewed by HARB and those for older buildings be reviewed by the HC. It was decided to continue the discussion at future meetings. John Snook, Supervisor from East Bradford Township, is expected to explain his township's process when he comes to the November 23 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 (Gross, Roach, all in favor).

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquie Roach

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