

Historical Commission of Birmingham Township
Minutes of the meeting of August 23, 2022

The regular meeting of the Birmingham Township Historical Committee was called to order by the Chairperson, Mike Forbes at **7:03pm** in the township building.

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

ABSENT:

Others present: Dan Hill (BOS liaison), William Sawyer and Carolyn Hicks (homeowners)

Mr. Forbes made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 26, 2022 meeting. Mr. Ponticello seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (with Ms. Fleming abstaining as she was not present at the July meeting).

Review Application for renovation of 1215 Creek Road (HR#67)

Mr. Sawyer is present this evening about putting a new roof on his house. He shared a photo of their garage/studio project from last year – the roofing materials that he is planning to use on the house are already on the garage/shed. Thus, the committee can see what the proposed roofing project will look like when finished. He is replacing the former roof with a new synthetic slate material.

Mr. Bedwell stated that he is pleased to see the photo of the roof on the garage/studio building. He believes that the consistency between the two buildings will look very nice aesthetically. Mr. Bedwell asked if they are happy with the roof on the other building? Mr. Sawyer stated that they are very happy; the new synthetic slate material is long lasting and truly looks like slate. Mr. Bedwell asked if the slates on the garage were put directly on top of plywood? Ms. Hicks said yes, as that was new construction. Mr. Sawyer stated that for the house, they will simply remove the cedar shakes and install the new roofing. Mr. Bedwell asked if there is any venting gable or ridge vent on the existing roof? Mr. Sawyer said no – that the roof on the house was originally built in 1713; there were subsequent additions in 1933 and 1953. The newest part has plywood on it, but the other part does not. Mr. Sawyer had a new roof installed years ago and that was not installed on top of anything either as there were two layers of asphalt which he removed in order to install cedar shakes.

Mr. Bedwell noted that cedar breathes but he is not sure if the new synthetic material will breathe. He suggested that Mr. Sawyer have a conversation with his contractor to see if it would make sense to install plywood underneath the roofing materials. He noted that old houses were designed without ridge vents and the materials used (cedar) allowed for the house to breathe through the materials used. Mr. Bedwell doesn't know enough about this specific synthetic material to say if it will allow the house to breathe. Thus, he suggested it is worth the conversation with the contractor or a building scientist. Mr. Sawyer thanked Mr. Bedwell for the suggestion. Mr. Sawyer stated that the attic is not a finished space but that it does have a wooden floor and also very old soffits.

They provided proof of the required neighbor notifications that were sent out to properties within 500 feet of the Historic Resource. They sent out four letters. There are no neighbors in attendance this evening.

Mr. Forbes completed the required Form during the meeting.

Mr. Forbes made a motion to recommend that the BOS approve the application submitted for a new roof on the house located at 1215 Creek Road, Historic Resource #67. Ms. Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Sawyer will attend the BOS meeting on September 6, 2022.

Status of Historical Marker at Birmingham Hill

Ms. Fleming stated that the Historical Marker was officially ordered when the down payment was paid to Lake Shore. They are producing it currently and it should be completed and shipped by September 29, 2022. The Birmingham Township Historical Marker will be shipped via a combined shipping rate with the Newlin Township Historical Marker directly to Newlin Township. At that point, the HC will need to coordinate pickup of the Birmingham Township Historical Marker from Newlin Township. Mr. Bedwell stated that he should be able to pick up the Marker.

Ms. Fleming asked who for the township will do the installation of the actual Historical Marker. Mr. Hill stated that Chief Nelling will complete the installation. Ms. Fleming will contact him directly to arrange installation once the Marker is here.

New Business

Mr. Forbes stated that he has been in communication with Ms. Nelling about an invoice received from the Brandywine Conservancy for their consultation on the Brandywine Battlefield Heritage Interpretation and Connectivity Plan. Apparently, Birmingham Township (the lead municipality) is still awaiting letters of approval from some of the other partner municipalities before submitting final approval to Chester County to receive reimbursement. Mr. Forbes stated that he has been in contact with Ms. Spears at the County Commission (she took on this project knowing that Sheila Fleming was retiring), she is reaching out to the other townships/municipalities for their approval letters. Once all the letters are received by the Birmingham Township Historical Commission, a recommendation will be made to the BOS to accept and approve the plan. At this point, Birmingham township will add their monies for the project to those from the other townships. The final step will be to file for reimbursement for the project from Chester County. The timing should be in the next two to three months.

Mr. Forbes also noted that tomorrow evening, August 24, 2022 at 6:30pm there will be a meeting at Spackman Farm regarding the upcoming Battlefield Reenactment that will take place September 24-25, 2022 at Sandy Hollow. They are looking for volunteers. If unable to attend the meeting tomorrow night, there is also an option to sign up for the event on the township website.

Mr. Forbes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38pm. Seconded by Mr. Ponticello and voted unanimously. The next meeting will be September 27, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Boorse
HC Secretary