

Caln Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom, Wed May 20th, 2020 (7:00-10:00 PM)

Historical Commission Member Attendees: (7 – Quorum)

- Catherine Callahan, Chair
- Lorraine Tindaro, Vice-Chair
- Mark Evans, Secretary
- Dawn Coughlan
- Leah Jennings
- Paul Stephens
- Tony Wagner

Historical Commission Member Non-attendees (2):

- Patty DeFroschia (Not Excused)

Historical Commission Guests (8):

- Paul Mullin
- Kristen Denne
- Mike Bedrick
- Cheryl Spaulding
- Mark DeYoung
- Tony Disario
- Licia Carini

OPENING:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cathy Callahan at 7:05PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, Members Roll Call, and Introduction New Member and Introduction of Guests

OLD BUSINESS:

1. MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDENCE

Discussed rescheduling BOC interviews for prospective members via Zoom. Mike Bedrick and Dr. Judy Freed are prospective members.

2. GRIFFITH / SPACKMAN FARM UPDATE

- a. There was extensive discussion of crucial need for the Barn Roof to be replaced. It was agreed that Mr. Stephens and Township Engineer Bryan Kulikowski meet via Zoom to work together to get the roof repaired for as little cost as possible. Mr. Stephens agreed, Mr. Evans offered to set the up meeting and to send Paul's specs to Brian.*

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- b. There was extensive discussion of recent acts of vandalism at the Farm, and how to make the location less desirable for vandals.***
- i. Ms. Denne stated 72 total panes needed to be replaced. Mr. Evans suggested "Landscape Lighting" be installed at the Farm to illuminate the house and its surrounding area to make it harder for vandals to get close to it without detection. Adding that it would be necessary to install a switchbox and reroute the house's incoming power line directly to it. Mr. Mullin asked if solar lighting might be a good option if there is no electric. Mr. Stephens liked the idea, but added that with solar you still need to have electric backup. Ms. Spaulding suggested boarding the house up to keep the windows from being broken until such time as "real preservation" work is to be done. Mr. Stephens stated that in his experience, if kids want to get in, boards won't stop them. Mr. Bedrick suggested adding some potted plants to the porch to give the impression that someone is actually living there. Ms. Callaghan offered to take plants and a rocking chair to the porch for staging. Ms. Denne commented that the police have been keeping an eye on things when possible. Ms. Spaulding commented that the house used to look good, but since the exterior was allowed to be overgrown, it is obviously vacant. Mr. Evans asked Ms. Denne to confirm that the exterior of all Farm buildings had been cleared of growth, and she confirmed. Ms. Callaghan wondered why this is happening now, Licia Carini commented that kids are out of school due to Covid-19, and have more time to act out. Ms. Callaghan said she will drive by every night. Ms. Denne expressed concern that someone could get hurt going up to the house due to poor condition of driveway. Mr. Bedrick offered to help Ms. Callaghan get material up to the porch. Ms. Denne said to let her know when and she will have Mike Fragale open up the drive.***

It was agreed that within one week, Ms. Callaghan would contact Ms. Denne to coordinate getting items to the porch, and that it will be completed within one week (5/27). No vote needed.

- ii. In response to a question by Mark DeYoung, the conversation returned to Barn Roof replacement. Mr. DeYoung asked how the township would pay the \$70-\$80K estimated for the project, especially considering the new financial reality presented by Covid-19. He wants it to be done. Mr. Evans noted that was the next item on the agenda, and asked Ms. Denne if insurance would cover the repairs. She replied that it would not, and would most probably need to be financed. Ms. Spaulding stressed the importance of fixing the roof. Mr. Evans stated that we***

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would find the money to fix the roof, other things like rewiring the house will most probably not happen this year, possibly not next year. Mr. Stephens noted that electric could be run to an outside switchbox inexpensively and that we did not need to do wood shingles yet, that cheaper fiberglass or barn tin would work for now while we budget for later. Suggested coming up with a plan to “protect” the building without breaking the bank. Cathy reiterated that this has been going on for a long time. Mr. Evans reiterated that this is a new start, not to look back at the past, and keep moving forward. Mr. Mullin recommended to prioritize what needs to be done first.

- c. Mr. Evans suggested a sub-committee to explore the creation of a non-profit “Friends of Griffith Farm” to raise funds and promote awareness. Asked attendees if there was anyone with non-profit and grant experience who would volunteer to spearhead the sub-committee. There were no volunteers. Mr. Stephens said there were Keystone grants available, and will get the contact information and an application form. Cathy will call Karen Marshall.*
- d. Discussion of need to make an official decision on whether to call it Griffith Farm or Spackman Farm, as using two different names is too confusing for residents who are not part of the Hx Com. Leah said Spackman, Mr. Stephens and Cheryl Spaulding said it was only Griffith Farm for a short time. Mike Bedrick suggested we add “of Caln Township” to the name. That idea was tabled for now so as not to limit field of potential donors.*

Motion by Mr. Evans to use “Spackman Farm” as the official name moving forward, seconded by Dawn, vote called by Ms. Callahan. Vote passed 7-0.

- e. There was a discussion of how to direct funds from the Farmer’s monthly rent for exclusive use by HX COM for needed preservation projects, and the proper process to achieve that. Ms. Denne said the \$ are currently added to the Recreation Fund and that Hx Com could access it. Cathy asked how much \$, Ms. Denne said it’s more than \$10K/year.*

A motion was proposed and rescinded to you improper procedure, as Mr. Stephens questions if we have the authority to spend money. Ms. Denne suggested the proper way to go about this is to approach the Finance Committee and request they ask the BOC to re-direct those funds to the HX Com.

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An amended motion was proposed for Hx Com (working within Township finance rules) to approach the Finance Committee and request for them to ask the BOC to re-direct any incoming funds from farmer at Spackman Farm for the HX Com to use for repairs as needed.

Mr. Disario asked if the Barn could handle the weight of a new roof. Mr. Stephens confirmed, and that there would also be a contingency plan. Mr. Disario asked if all Grants need to be matched. Mr. Stephens stated that in-kind labor could sometimes be used as a match. Cathy expressed frustration that we can't use volunteered professional labor, but that she understood Township legal concerns. Ms. Spaulding brought up old plan for major park at location. Mr. Stephens said we could send out RFPs to prospective investors now, just to get an idea of what options are out there, that we need to sit down and plot out a viable business solution, and if we lose the roof we lose those options. Dawn C said that she likes what she's hearing. Ms. Denne said we need to start a "Foundation" or "Friends of" society, with a fundraising arm. Discussion expanded to condition of Spackman Farm House and Barn, and what funds were needed to return it to original grandeur. The group agreed that kind of money would not be available any time soon, if ever, due to financial fallout from Covid-19. Mr. Disario asked how much it would cost. Mr. Stephens suggested that over time, approximately \$3-400K to do everything, but that the Township should not be spending the money, rather obtain funds through an investor/\$0 lease. Mr. Stephens led a spirited discussion of how Valley Forge had gotten an outside investor to make the investment and turn an historical property into an Event/Wedding space. In return for their investment, they were given a 20 year/low rent lease. He said there are many ways a deal like that could be done. Licia Carini asked how other surrounding Chester County Townships are doing this because they have it together. Mr. Stephens responded that the sub-committees are the key.

The Motion was repeated "amended motion by Mr. Evans for Hx (working within Township finance rules) to approach the Finance Committee and request for them to ask the BOC to re-direct any incoming funds from farmer at Spackman Farm for the HX Com to use for repairs as needed". Motion by Mr. Evans, seconded by Cathy, vote called by Ms. Callahan. Vote passed 7-0.

3. SCHOOLHOUSE UPDATE

a. The Schoolhouse has been painted, and the Township has received one quote for the School House Roof for \$4750. Working on two more quotes.

4. 30-60-90-DAY PRIORITIES

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- a. Only 3 members had delivered their wish lists for 30-60-90-Day Priorities. They were presented and discussed. Asked that anyone else who wants to submit priorities to do so.
- 5. MEETING WITH THE OLDE CALN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 - a. Discussed if it feasible that OCHS could meet via Zoom? Dawn offered to reach out to Olde Caln to see if they wanted to meet via Zoom as previously scheduled joint meeting was cancelled due to Covid-19.
- 6. WEBSITE
 - a. Mr. Wagner presented his initial findings for Website needs. Asked if it would be possible for us to manage our own sections of the Caln Website. Dawn said Abbey is who he should talk to. Tony spoke to cleaning out the layout of agendas, correct meeting time, page that lays out all Hx sites in Caln, URL does not seem to be linked on our page, fixing links, reformat of OCHS initial page to be more user friendly (all link go to PDF) and maybe show thumbnail of property and a blurb by the link. Dawn loved the ideas. Mark said he would connect Tony and Abbey the following week due to National Holiday.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. PROPOSED FORMATION OF SUB-COMMITTEES
 - a. FRIENDS OF SPACKMAN FARM
 - b. FRIENDS OF LLOYD FARM
 - i. Mark threw out the idea that with the economy down the developer might sell 3-4 adjacent lots to create a Lloyd Farm Hx District. for \$750K each, asked that everyone think about how to come up with the money.
- 2. POLICY STATEMENT
 - a. Update needed? Mark suggested that he work with Dawn to update the policy statement.
- 3. ZONING TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS
 - a. Mark asked that members think about what they would like to be seen in the Historic Ordinance as part of the upcoming Township Zoning Update. Dawn mentioned that the East Brandywine Ordinance is a good foundation.
- 4. OTHER BUSINESS
 - a. Cathy brought up Edge's Mill Hx District and that there was one final hurdle to cross that would require \$5K Township expenditure, and importance of getting it done. Mark reiterated the importance of getting the roof done first. Cheryl Spaulding asked if it was legally possible to have 2 Historic Districts in the

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Township, that if Edge's Mill is completed, will we legally be able to create an Overall Hx District across the Township? Asked that we investigate it. Paul S did not think it would be a problem, but that it was worth asking. Mark said he would ask Karen Marshall. Cathy asked what the downside would be. Cheryl said that if it were true, then we would only have Edge's Mill His District.

Everyone expressed their pleasure with the meeting. Jim Spaulding was thanked by the group for all of his work in 2019. Mike Bedrick suggested a bullet point action plan to be distributed before the next meeting. Mark said he would get one out. Cathy said maybe we would meet in person next time. Mike B said June 4th was yellow phase. Mark E explained case count and that we are a long way off.

Paul S made a motion to adjourn meeting, and that everyone stay safe. Lorraine T seconded. Vote called by Cathy C. Vote passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned by Chair Cathy Callahan at 8:42 PM.