

Saugerties Historic Preservation Commission
January 19, 2015
Minutes

Present: Barry Benepe, Michael Sullivan Smith, Stephen Shafer

Excused: Susan Puretz

Absent: Stefan Yarabek

Town Board Liaison: Bill Schirmer

Secretary: Audrey Klinkenberg, Town Historian, Deputy County Historian

Guest: Neil Larson.

The meeting was called to order by Barry Benepe, Chairperson, at 7:05 p. m.

1. The minutes of the previous meeting of Nov. 17: Stephen Shafer moved that the approval of the minutes be postponed until the February meeting, seconded by Michael. Michael, aye, Stephen, aye, Barry, aye.

2. Stephen Shafer brought information about Anchorage Farm, and the need for buttresses for a retaining wall one two sides of the house. The farm is a land mark property. Stephen presented a map showing the location of the wall. It is unclear whether a Certificate of Appropriateness (C of A) is necessary.

Barry recommends that a C of A be submitted as the buttresses will be visible.

Barry moves that the commission approve a C of A for the 4 concrete buttresses on the west retaining wall, with the board forms (not plywood) and beveled edges. If the contractor is unable to fulfill these conditions, the C or A will be discussed again. Seconded by Michael. Michael, aye, Stephen, aye, Barry, aye. Unanimous

3. Presentation by Neil Larson on the update of the 2005 Historic Resources Survey.

Neil showed the paper reconnaissance surveys of Town of Poughkeepsie, New Paltz and other areas. These are printouts of a spread sheet made for the survey. The data base is very complete. The goal is to be comprehensive.

He discussed how the survey in the data base format is used. The data base makes the designation decision based on facts and documentation, rather than personal judgment, since it can be sorted on any one of the fields, to determine specific examples of a particular style. A building can be distinctive by its design, or other specific qualifications. The process for national designation has moved more to vernacular buildings. What the building represents to a place, a time, a history determines its historic value. The assessment of what is significant and what is not becomes very important.

Neil stated that the 2005 survey was comprehensive for the buildings included. There are other buildings which were not included, which would be included in this new survey.

Neil did designation reports on all the stone houses in New Paltz in 2014. Only one wanted to have the property designated after all that work. Neil's proposal is to make the survey already stated comprehensive to the town. It involves field work, the assessor records are not good enough. The information needs to be entered into some type of computer format system, which can be used and represents the survey itself. Once the data has been collected, and put it into the computer system, a map can be created, the data can be sorted for various types. In the town of Poughkeepsie the survey was done in two stages, with buildings built in 1860 and earlier included. The map would serve as a record of the survey, showing everything within the town boundary.

The next step after the reconnaissance survey is an intensive level survey, researching a specific property in greater depth, across time.

Michael asked how a survey can be used beyond the Commission, i. e. tourism grants etc.

The survey is really for incorporating the history of the town and village planning with the work of the planning board.

It is hard to translate a survey into economic development, the history and the view of the property, the desire to live here may assist property values. A driving tour could be devised, or an app.

The goal is to do a reconnaissance survey of the additional properties which were not previously surveyed approximately 1000 others.

Barry brought up the ranking system used in 2005. He wondered whether the houses ranked as 2, 3 and 4, would be surveyed. Neil said yes. Just because the house has been changed does not mean that it is not historical.

The survey can be funded by the New York Preservation League. They have a long history of supporting reconnaissance surveys.

The spread sheet, multi column. Neil will send a copy of a page.

The base map will be a parcel map. The entries in the data base have parcel numbers.

Neil asked if the Commission wants to phase the project. One option would be to start with the 1642 properties and get them into a spread sheet, recorded, mapped and into the system. It would be possible to divide that number in half for the first phase. Update the 155 and do the 1 and 1/2 rankings in the first phase, saving the 2, 3 and unranked for later phases.

Michael moved that the meeting be adjourned since Stephen has to leave. Seconded by Barry. Michael, aye; Barry, aye; Stephen, aye.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p. m.

Audrey Klinkenberg

Secretary