

Smith-Harris House Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2017

Present: Gary Lakowsky
Kathleen Sasso
Robert Seifel
Barbara Odgers
Richard MacDonald
Maggi Prokop

FILED

Jan 30 2017 AT 12:10 AM/PM
Sullivan, ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: Joanie DiMartino, Smith-Harris House Director
Donna Massung, President of the Friends of Smith-Harris
William Clark
Daniel Cunningham, Ex officio

I. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lakowsky called the Smith-Harris House Commission January 25, 2017 Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Mr. Lakowsky asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the Smith-Harris House Commission November 16, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

The following corrections were noted: Under also present: Kathleen Patterson's title is Collection Clair lady. On page 2, the third paragraph, the first sentence to be revised as follows: "Messrs. Massung and Lakowsky installed the 30 amp electrical plug on the outside of the house."

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to approve the November 16, 2016 Smith-Harris House Minutes, as amended. Ms. Prokop was not present. (4-0-1) Motion carried.

III. REPORTS.

A. Public Delegations. Ms. Massung informed the Commission that February 10 is scheduled for Organizing Day at the house from 10 a.m. to noon. All Commission members were asked to help.

The Friends and the Commission plan to have a joint meeting on March 10 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Landscape Cleaning Day will be held on April 22.

Mr. Clark asked for a town trail map which he would like to post.

B. Ex-officio Report. Mr. Cunningham reported the Selectmen are going into the budget season.

C. Director's Report. See attached report.

D. Agenda Additions. The Commission was asked if they had any additions to the Agenda.

MOTION: Mr. Seifel moved to delete Nominating Committee as item 1, and replace it with Election of Officers. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

E. Chairman's Report. Mr. Lakowsky reported he attended the Preservationists' Potluck Dinner and felt the speakers were wonderful.

He met with Bob Ramsey who is Chairman of the Friends of the Samuel Smith Committee and discussed the transfer of the spinning wheels. Mr. Lakowsky sent Mr. Ramsey a copy of our Temporary Custody Receipt.

Mr. Lakowsky also met with Don Danila who would like to donate some items to the Samuel Smith and Smith-Harris houses.

Mr. Lakowsky received a telephone call from Eagle Scout Cole Ryan. He would like to remove broken limbs from the house grounds.

He also spoke to Butch Foster of Old Farm Orchards. Mr. Foster is willing to volunteer his time and equipment if the Commission needs it. Mr. Lakowsky plans to have a future meeting with Mr. Foster to determine whether he is able to remove the stump by the corncrib and help with the slate project. Mr. Foster is also willing to donate his portion of the cost of music to the house.

Mr. Lakowsky reported the hot water to the old kitchen has been shut off.

Ms. Odgers informed the boy scouts of an area at the house that needs clearing.

Bob Patterson removed the front sign and moved the side sign to the front. He will repaint and repair the front sign.

Ms. Sasso suggested that the house consider having a Facebook page. Jay Allan Sanford posted a photo of the Smith-Harris House in December entitled "You probably are from East Lyme if you remember when". He also posted a photo of the Old Stone Church.

F. Financial Report.

1. Status Update. Mr. MacDonald has no update.

2. Presentation of Bills. Ms. DiMartino requested reimbursement for office supplies in the approximate amount of \$18 and \$11 for stamps.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to reimburse Ms. DiMartino an amount not to exceed \$40. Seconded by

Ms. Sasso. (6-0) Unanimous.

3. Barn Rental. There was no report on barn rentals.

a. Review Budget and Planned Expenses. Mr. Lakowsky reported at a recent meeting with the First Selectmen the subject of alcohol use in the barn and on town property was discussed. Ms. DiMartino stated she attended a STepCT meeting at which a lawyer discussed alcohol. A bartender with a proper license and insurance would be needed.

4. Budget Planning Committee.

a. Ms. DiMartino reported the Fire Marshal felt the house telephone needs to be replaced. She is unable to use the house computer and as a result Past Perfect which we have had for a year cannot be used. Mr. Sheer is looking into getting a computer for the house that the town is not using.

The Commission and the Friends have agreed to each contribute \$500 for the school program.

Mr. Lakowsky reported fiberglass insulation is needed for the basement ceiling.

Ms. Odgers reported the oil cloth carpet in the Sitting Room has curled. Mr. Lakowsky suggested periodically turning the carpet 90 degrees.

Ms. Odgers suggested having the Chippendale window repaired.

G. Collections Committee.

a. Permanent Loan Policy to Other Historical Houses. Ms. DiMartino reported in order to give an item to other historical houses we will need to prove that we legally own it.

H. Correspondence.

1. A letter of thanks was received from Care and Share.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Garden Fence and Maintenance. This matter will be discussed at the Friends/Commission Joint Meeting.

2. Front Walkway. This matter will be discussed at the Friends/Commission Joint Meeting.

B. Museum Development

1. STepCT Report. (See attached Director's Report) Ms. DiMartino suggested considering joining ALFLAM for a cost of \$60.

V. New Business

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Porch Repairs. To date no bids have been received. Mr. Lakowsky plans to maintain it.

B. Museum Development.

Ms. Prokop arrived.

1. Election of Officers. Mr. Cunningham asked for nominations for Secretary of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

MOTION: Mr. Lakowsky moved to nominate Maggi Prokop as Secretary of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there were any other nominations for Secretary of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017, and there were none.

A vote was taken and Ms. Prokop was unanimously elected Secretary of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

Mr. Cunningham asked for nominations for Financial Officer of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

MOTION: Mr. Lakowsky moved to nominate Richard MacDonald as Financial Officer of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017. Seconded by Mr. Sasso. (6-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there were any other nominations for Financial Officer of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017, and there were none.

A vote was taken and Mr. MacDonald was unanimously elected Financial Officer of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

Mr. Cunningham asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

MOTION: Ms. Odgers moved to nominate Gary Lakowsky for Vice-Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017. Seconded by Ms. Prokop. (6-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there were any other nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017, and there were none.

A vote was taken and Mr. Lakowsky was unanimously elected Vice-Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

Mr. Cunningham asked for nominations for Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

MOTION: Mr. Lakowsky moved to nominate Robert Seifert as Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017. (6-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there were any other nominations for Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017, and there were none.

A vote was taken and Mr. Seifert was unanimously elected Chairman of the Smith-Harris House Commission for 2017.

C. Upcoming Events.

1. Bike and BBQ 2017. No date has been chosen for the Bike and BBQ 2017. The Bike and BBQ Committee is scheduled to meet on February 6 at 6 p.m.

2. Middle School Program. Ms. DiMartino reported the third grade class is studying local history. She will contact the Middle School to determine whether or not there is interest in a Middle School Program at the house.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to adjourn the Smith-Harris House January 25, 2017 Regular Meeting at 8:50 p.m. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

Director's Report

Smith-Harris House, January 2017

Other

Submitted "Spirit Voices: Victorian Mourning & Spiritualism" for an Award of Merit (education program) with the CT League of History Organizations.

Programs

2016 wrap-up

Visitor totals for 2016: **798** (down slightly from last year, but we had fewer students)

How those numbers break down:

- Volunteer Cleaning Day: **15**
- Legend Trips Ghost Tour: **25**
- Historic House Trails brochure launch: **110**
- Open-House Museum Day: **25**
- 40th Anniversary Celebration: **23**
- Motorcycle Show: **40**
- Quilt Tea: **24**
- Preservation Bike Ride: **22**
- Spirit Voices: **55**
- Trick or Trunk (Creepy Tales): **117**
- Cemetery Preservation NEMA workshop: **13**
- Holiday Open-House: **77**
- Afternoon with the Belsnickel: **11**
- High School Anthropology Class (spr/fall): **36**
- Civil War: Home & War Middle School: **180** (last year was 294 due to class rotation)
- summer tours: **25** (up slightly from last year)
 - Friday: 7
 - Saturday: 10
 - Sunday: 8

12:30: 14 1:30: 6 2:30: 5 3:30: 0

19 people filled out survey at end of tour OR program—

Visited with:

Families w/ children (total people): 4

Own: 5

Adult family members (total people): 8

Adult Friends: 4

Ages (top 2): 56+ / 40-55

How did they hear about us: newspaper (2), event, website, signs/drive-by (3), recommendation, Historic House Trail brochure (3), other (1 unspecified, 1 "live in area," 1 "Jim Littlefield")

First visit: 25

Members: 0

Male/Female: 12/16

Comments:

- “so glad we did this instead of lunch!”
- “beautifully maintained gem!”
- “great!”
- “wonderful tour & tour guide Mindy!”
- “I believe my mother was active in volunteering here.”

Smith-Harris House goals—2017

- Apply for STEPS-CT grant for the creation of our first strategic plan.
- Continue developing STEPS policies to improve governance and stewardship.
- Major focus will be collections management: inventory, preservation, processing donation requests, etc.
- Replacing porch to include permanent accessibility ramp; preferably with grant assistance.
- Refreshing our website, adding donation buttons, and updating images and content.
- Increasing school programs, and continued great education program to general public, including collaborating with other organizations in East Lyme.

Upcoming Programs Scheduled for 2017

- Landscape cleaning day 4/22
- Annual Plant Sale fundraiser 5/6
- school program (middle? elementary?) May or June
- Museum Open-House Day 6/10
- Legend Trips ghost tour fundraiser, summer
- possible participation in Florence Griswold Museum’s Mid-Summer Festival, Jun/Jul?
- summer tours, Jun-Aug
- Teddy Bear Children’s Tea 9/10
- Preservation Bike Ride 9/23?
- Explore History! 10/10
- Spirit Voices 10/21
- Creepy Tales/Trick or Trunk 10/25
- Wreath Sale Fundraiser 12/2
- Holiday Open-House, 7th —9th of Dec.

Professional Development

- NEMA webinar— “7 Ways to Stay Organized at Work” 1/10/17
- Mystic/Noank Library— “Backing Up Files” 1/23/17

Meetings Attended

- Phone meeting with Donna Massung, Friends President, 1/11/17
- Commission meeting, 1/25/17

Upcoming Meetings

- Historic Sites & Historical Societies meeting, 1/31/17 at 9:15 am; leads into Historic House Trails brochure update meeting at 10:15 am. Charter Oak Waterford location. All welcome.
- “Book a Librarian” File Backup information session, 2/3/17. Let me know if you’re interested.
- STEPS-CT Open-House, Deep River Historical Society, 2/6/17 1 pm to 4:30 pm. All welcome.
- House Cleaning/Organization Day, 2/10/17 at 10 am to 12 noon. All welcome.
- Friends of Smith-Harris House meeting, 2/14/17 at 2 pm, EL Public Library. All welcome.
- **date not confirmed—Sarah Griswold plans to visit us in early- mid-February to review Landscape STEPS Unit & discuss Interpretation.

Submitted by:

Joanie DiMartino, Director
Smith-Harris House, 1/25/17