

Smith-Harris House Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2015

Present: Gary Lakowsky
Kathleen Sasso
Richard MacDonald
Maggi Prokop

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
Apr 27, 2015 AT 3:55 AM/PM
Kathleen Sasso
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: Joanie DiMartino, Smith-Harris Curator
Donna Massung, Friends of Smith-Harris President
Barbara Odgers

I. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lakowsky called the Smith-Harris House Commission Meeting of April 22, 2015 to order at 7:03 p.m.

Mr. Lakowsky introduced Barbara Odgers, a former member of this Commission, to the present Commission. She is willing to become a member of this Commission.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Mr. Lakowsky asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the February 25, 2015 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to accept the February 22, 2015 Meeting Minutes of the Smith-Harris House Commission, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

III. REPORTS

A. Public Delegations. Ms. Massung reported the Friends Plant Sale will be held in the barn on May 9, 2015 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Friends Annual Meeting will be held on June 6 at 10 a.m.

The Honey Tea will be on June 28, 2015 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Mr. Dinsmore, President of the Connecticut Bee Association, will be the Friends' featured speaker.

The Motorcycle Show will be held on the Smith-Harris House grounds on August 9, 2015, from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., rain or shine.

B. Ex-officio Report. Mr. Wilson was not present, and there was no report.

C. Curator's Report. (See attached)

D. Agenda Additions. The Commission was asked for any additions to the Agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to add under Collections Committee item G. 2. Donation to the House. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous.

E. Chairman's Report.

1. Sign-Up Sheet. Mr. Lakowsky asked Commission members to sign-up for dates they are available to give summer tours at the house. Ms. DiMartino is working on a new tour script.

F. Financial Report.

1. Status Update. Mr. MacDonald reported we have currently unexpended \$3,289.64.

2. Presentation of Bills. Ms. DiMartino presented a bill for \$6.69 for name badges she purchased from Staples.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to reimburse Ms. DiMartino for supplies from Staples in the amount of \$6.69. Seconded by Ms. Prokop. (4-0) Unanimous.

3. Barn Rental. Ms. Prokop reported she has an event scheduled in the barn on May 3. She asked for help to clean the barn on May 2. Ms. DiMartino and Mr. Lakowsky agreed to help.

4. Transfer Funds. Mr. Lakowsky informed the Commission the Finance Office has informed him that \$888 is due for the Smith-Harris House electric bill. A transfer of funds will be needed. He suggested that \$900 be transferred from Landscaping into Utilities. He felt a transfer of \$570 is needed from Building Maintenance to Museum Programs.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to transfer \$570 from Building Maintenance to Museum Programs. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to transfer \$900 from Landscaping to Utilities/Electric. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

G. Collections Committee.

1. Cindy DeHann tree. Ms. DeHann wishes to donate a boxwood shrub for the Smith-Harris House grounds. The boxwood greens have been used for the Wreath Sale.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to accept the boxwood shrub. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

2. Slate for the Smith-Harris House. Mr. Lakowsky reported we need two or three pieces of slate for the walkway. Ms. Prokop informed the Commission that an individual is willing to donate some slate for the Smith-Harris House.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to accept the donation of slate to the house, if it meets the Smith-Harris House requirements. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

H. Correspondence. Ms. Prokop reported Darlene DeLaura's father passed away, and she sent a sympathy card from the Commission.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Garden Fence and Maintenance. Mr. Lakowsky reported on May 2, he is planning to work with a youngster on painting the garden fence.

2. Front Walkway. The front walkway will be completed when all supplies are available.

3. Lighting. The lighting for the house will be delayed until the next fiscal year. Mr. Lakowsky estimates the cost for labor is \$400 and \$300 for materials.

B. Museum Development.

1. Educational Programs.

a. Middle School Program. (See attached Curator's Report).

2. STepCT Report. Ms. DiMartino reported Sarah Griswold, Peer Advisor, will speak at the next STepCT meeting on April 27.

Ms. DiMartino read the following Mission Statement for this Commission:
The purpose of the Smith-Harris House Commission is to maintain the Smith-Harris House. The House serves as an historic house museum that engages the community in the history of domestic and agricultural life through education and preservation of the Avery, Smith and Harris family stories.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to accept the Mission Statement, as presented. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Barn Roof. The barn roof has been postponed to 2016.

B. Museum Development.

1. Educational Program. See attached Curator's Report.

C. Upcoming Events.

1. Antique Motorcycle Show. Ms. Sasso prepared a flyer for the Antique Motorcycle event. Mr. Lakowsky has contacted motorcycle groups to invite them to participate. He showed a sample trophy. He suggested that display bikes arrive from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The show will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and prizes to be presented at 3:30 p.m. He suggested a 50/50 raffle. The Lions and the Rotary will have available food items from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. The parts vendors will show their wares from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. There will be music in the barn. The portapotties will be located behind the barn. The Friends have agreed to purchase signs. Mr. Lakowsky asked Parks and Recreation to cut the lawn on August 6 and August 7 and prepare the line markings. Mr. Lakowsky will borrow the Lions PA system. Ms. DiMartino spoke to Leos and asked them to bring ideas to this Commission.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to adjourn the Smith-Harris House
April 22, 2015 Regular Meeting at 8:20 p.m.
Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

Curator's Report--April, 2015

Submitted to the Smith-Harris House Commission

Upcoming Meetings

- STEPS-CT on Thursday, April 23 at 3:30 pm at the East Lyme High School Library. All Commission Members and Friends Board who wish to attend are welcome.
- STEPS-CT half-day wrap-up for MVG with Donna Massung on Monday, April 27 from 1 pm to 4:30 pm in Hartford. Added attendees can participate at \$40 per person.
- Friends Board on Tuesday, May 12 at 2 pm at the East Lyme Public Library.
- Commission Meeting on Wednesday, May 22 at 7 pm in the Senior Center.

STEPS-CT

The current STEPS-CT Committee: Donna Massung, Kathleen Patterson, Kathleen Sasso, Maggi Prokop, Gene Medley, and curator Joanie DiMartino have been meeting to continue with STEPS-CT work.

- Donna Massung, Gary Lakowsky, Gene Medley, and myself represented the Smith-Harris House at the Deep River Historical Society's hosting of the open-house workshops with peer advisor Sara Griswold.
- The Committee has agreed to meet on a bi-weekly basis to hammer out language and generate documents and policies as needed to reach at least Bronze Level for STEPS. Our upcoming meeting dates for May will be determined tomorrow. (at the High School Library): I will post them shortly. Time is 3:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.
- Our upcoming goals will be both a Conflict of Interest and a Code of Ethics policy.
- Donna & I plan to attend the final MVG meeting in Hartford on Monday, April 27.
- We will need to slate our next person for the Audience section of the program to attend sessions with me.

Programs/Education

- Wil Reed's students (19 total) toured the house on Friday, April 10th, at 7:30 am. Special thanks to Maggi Prokop for all her assistance.
- The "Novel History" program held it's first session; 10 people toured the house and attended the discussion. The second session is scheduled for May 8th.
- The Afternoon Honey Tea is scheduled for Sunday, June 28th; local apiarist and President of the CT Bee Association will be our featured speaker and will provide honey for tasting. His honorarium is \$100 to cover the cost of supplies, which I believe will be funded through the Friends, however, they will need to vote on this.
- We're starting to publicize for Museum Open-House Day, Saturday, June 13th. We're publicizing with the two other Houses in East Lyme; we might still have a passport and basket giveaway. We are no longer hosting the DAR, so we may want to consider another use for the Barn. We'll be offering House tours, Games on the Lawn, and Refreshments provided by the Friends. New this year will be Maggi Prokop premiering her character, "Elizabeth Avery Henderson," Thomas's sister who owned a portion of, and lived in, the House.

- Middle School Program The Friends Board has voted to cover half of the cost of the program. We're all set for June 1st & 3rd, topics and presenters are as follows:
 - "Camp Cooking Demo" with Natalie Beckwith Livingston
 - "Averys, Smiths, and Harrises--Oh, My!" with Joanie DiMartino
 - "Abolitionist Struggles in CT" with Hank Savin
 - "Home & Front: Civil War-era Medicine" with Leslie Evans
 - "Still Around: Invented Then, Used Now" with Gary Lakowsky
 - "Union Female Spies During the Civil War" with Matthew Bennett
- Donna, Maggi, & I feel we should have an open discussion regarding how to approach the holiday season this year.
- Donna & I have agreed to give a short 20 minute presentation on STEPS=CT for the Friends Annual Meeting.
- I have begun publicity for the Antique Motorcycle Show, and generated a short evaluation form for our audience.

Summer Tours

- I've spoken with Cindy DeHaan; she is no longer interested in returning on Saturdays at the House. We will need to hire someone or have these hours covered by Commission Members.
- I will be covering Fridays; we'll need a Commission member for Sundays.

Publicity/Technology

- As we are gearing up for spring and summer, I've spent more time this month than over the winter working on publicity, including summer programs to the Parks & Rec brochure and information regarding the Plant Sale to the Boston Post Review.
- Stacey developed an "Around Town" button for the website where we can publicize events for the other two Houses, so do let members of their Boards know that we're happy to help publicize their programs/events on our website and also as part of our "Brookside Musings" E-Blast newsletter. The April edition went out yesterday.
- Kathleen Sasso has generously agreed to assist me in publicity.

Collections/Landscape

- Gene Medley has expressed interest in locating a period-appropriate bicycle for an upcoming bike race. According to our collections policy, the Commission will need to approve this. Things to consider are: appropriateness to event, security/insurance, and drop-off/pick-up before and after event. If approved I'll then create a condition report and short-term loan agreement for the donor/lender.
- We received a call from a SAR member offering us a square grand piano; I declined due to lack of space and storage and suggested he contact CT Landmarks instead, as they might be interested.
- Nearly all the books from the former Library have now been placed in Mr. Avery's Office; special thanks to Donna Massung and our junior volunteers Toni Massung, Lily Massung, and Dante DiMartino-Hart.

Meetings Attended

- 3/30-STEPS-CT open-house workshop with Sara Griswold at Deep River Historical Society
- 4/7-STEPS Sub-Committee meeting for MVG.
- 4/14-Friends Board meeting
- 4/22-Commission meeting

Submitted by:
Joanie DiMartino, curator

April 22, 2015