

Smith-Harris House Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2015

Present: Gary Lakowsky
Kathleen Sasso
Maggi Prokop
Richard MacDonald

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
Jan 29 2015 AT 2:50 AM PM
Bradley D. Green ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: Joanie DiMartino, Smith-Harris Curator
Mark Nickerson

I. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lakowsky called the Smith-Harris House Commission Regular Meeting of January 28, 2015 to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. The approval of minutes was tabled until a quorum was established.

III. REPORTS

A. Public Delegations. Mr. Nickerson stated he appreciated the hard work of this Commission.

B. Ex-officio Report. There was no report.

C. Curator's Report. (See attached)

D. Agenda Additions. There were no additions to the Agenda.

E. Chairman's Report. Mr. Lakowsky reported Ed Ball, of Parks and Recreation, agreed to have volunteers from the Department of Corrections work on the house garden.

Mr. Lakowsky asked Mr. Putnam if he had storm fences, and he did not.

Mr. Lakowsky reported the Lions Club agreed to fund part of the Curator's salary in the amount of \$1,875. The Rotary Club has been challenged to also help fund it.

Mr. Lakowsky suggested having a Friends sponsored Antique Motorcycle Show with motorcycles from 1900 to 1980 as a fundraiser. The Lions and Rotary clubs could be asked to have food available.

Ms. DiMartino informed the Commission some shades in the house are in need of repair.

Commission member Maggi Prokop arrived.

Mr. Lakowsky asked for additions, corrections or deletions to the November 19, 2014 Smith-Harris House Commission Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to approve the November 19, 2014 Smith-Harris House Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Lakowsky asked for additions, corrections or deletions to the January 8, 2015 Smith-Harris House Commission Special Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to approve the January 8, 2015 Smith-Harris House Special Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Putnam, Director of Recreation and Parks, asked if this Commission would like to participate in the Memorial Tree Program.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to authorize Mr. Lakowsky to inform Mr. Putnam that the Commission wishes to participate in the Memorial Tree Program, and that the Commission will consider an area to plant historically appropriate trees. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to authorize Mr. Lakowsky to request that the Friends consider a location to plant historically appropriate trees at the house. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Lakowsky would like to put a flood light in front of the house and have an electrician install it.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to authorize Mr. Lakowsky to obtain pricing for a flood light and electrician. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous.

F. Financial Report.

1. Status Update. There was no report.
2. Presentation of Bills. There were no new bills submitted.

3. Barn Rental. There were no new rentals.

G. Collections Committee. An individual would like to donate a sampler to the house. Ms. DiMartino will determine if it is appropriate for the house, and if it is bring it before the Commission.

H. Correspondence. The Curator agreed to correspond with reenactors.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Garden Fence and Maintenance. Mr. Lakowsky suggested that this be a community service project.

2. Tree Limbs. Mr. Lakowsky reported the tree limbs have been removed.

3. Front Walkway. Mr. Lakowsky reported the front walkway is being developed.

B. Museum Development.

1. Educational Programs. Ms. DiMartino contacted the Middle School.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance. Ms. Sasso suggested that the Commission consider an outdoor classroom area. She agreed to bring photos for review by this Commission and determine its cost.

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

B. Museum Development.

1. Educational Program. There was no further discussion on the educational programs.

2. STEP-CT Report. See the attached Curator's Report.

C. Upcoming Events. Ms. DiMartino suggested a Honey Tea with a beekeeper and making beeswax candles.

Donna Massung will ask the Friends to consider a speaker for its Annual Meeting.

Ms. Prokop suggested contacting Elaine and Terry Joseph if their horses and carts can be used to bring Commission members in period dress down Main Street.

Ms. Prokop requested permission to borrow tea cups from the house for a non-profit event.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to allow Ms. Prokop to borrow the tea cups for a non-profit event. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (4-0) Unanimous

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to adjourn the January 28, 2015 Smith-Harris House Regular Meeting at 8:30 p.m. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (4-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

Curator's Report--January 2015

Submitted to the Smith-Harris Commission

A New Year, and we begin to work toward a new and improved Smith-Harris House, thanks to STEPS-CT! In December we learned that we were selected to participate in the 2-year intensive museum program, STEPS-CT, created by the American Association of State & Local History (AASLH), and administered by CT-Humanities. From revisiting our mission statement to developing a strategic plan, our time spent in reinventing and reinvigorating the Smith-Harris House will be a boon to the Niantic/East Lyme community.

STEPS-CT

- Donna Massung, President of the Friends Board, agreed to participate in the first STEPS-CT segment with me on Mission, Vision, and Governance. We attended full two-day workshop sessions in Hartford last week. It was intensive, informative, and eye-opening.
- Our first task is to develop a new mission statement & vision statement for both organizations, so we have a meeting scheduled for Thursday, 1/29 at 3:30 pm at the House. Maggi Prokop & Kathleen Sasso will represent the Commission, Donna Massung & Kathleen Patterson will represent the Commission, and I will attend as well. Other members of both the Commission and Friends Board are welcome to attend and participate. Our goal is to have written drafts to present to each organization at the February or March meetings.
- We will also need to publicize our participation in the program. I've received information on the language of the text for both press releases and notifying our legislators.
- We will need to schedule a visit with our peer advisor, Sarah Griswold, within the next two months. Considering a possibility of a Sunday brunch, where members of both organizations can meet with her.

Programs

- on-going meetings with Tara Borden for the Civil War book discussion group. We have confirmed two speakers, and are looking at two more. Possibly applying for a QuickGrant from CT-Humanities to cover cost of program. I will be meeting with Tara again tomorrow to try and finalize particulars. Dates currently are: Wednesdays, April 8th, May 13th, June 10th, and July 8th.
- Saturday, June 13th, is the next Museum Open-House Day.
- Donna & I also discussed the possibility of getting some people together to plan further programs for 2015. What would be the best way to proceed?

Collections

- Members of the Friends Board has worked with me over the past few weeks to remove the holiday decorations from the House. Special thanks to Donna Massung, Lorraine Blinn, Suzanne Badagliacco, Renate Longa, and Commission Member Maggi Prokop.
- Maggi Prokop received a donation of a sampler for the museum; I plan on contacting the donor to find out a little more about the item before it goes before the Collections Committee.

Professional Development

1/20--STEPS workshop session-- "Mission, Vision, Governance"
1/21--STEPS workshop session-- "Mission, Vision, Governance"
1/27--NEMA Webinar-- "Zen & the Art of Successful Negotiation"

Meetings Attended

1/8--meeting with Tara Borden from the East Lyme Library to plan book discussion group
1/8--Special meeting of the Smith-Harris Commission and Friends Board to confirm participation in STEPS-CT
1/13--meeting of the Friends of Smith-Harris Board

Upcoming Initiatives

- Continued STEPS-CT work
- Finish new tour script by February; offer training in March
- Continue program development for 2015
- Continue textiles closet work with Donna Massug

Submitted by:

Joanie DiMartino, Curator

CC: Friends Board