

Historic Sites Committee of Warren, NJ

February 11, 2021

Members attending: Rory Britt, Susie Boyce, Kari Quirós, Greg Fitzgerald, Michael François, Rich Disano, Debra Rebetje, Erica Sbarra, Nancy Micou, Alan Siegel, Karl Horster, Christy Cwynar, John Lindner, John George

Guest: Mick Marion

Minutes were read and corrected.

Old Business:

1. Baptist Meeting House
 - a. The work is mostly done for Phase 2. (There is still money from Phases 1 & 2.) Phase 3 will have \$200,000.
 - b. Waiting to paint the interior until after historical testing is done to find the original color.
 - i. The shades of green and blue were from the 1840s.
 - c. Lighting
 - i. The chandelier will most likely be removed (Bill Halsey researched and designed it).
 - ii. Oil lamps are the most historically accurate.

New Business:

1. Township archive material
 - a. Documentation grew from a 2" thick folder to enough to fill four filing cabinets (3 on the top floor of the Hoffheimer House and 1 is at Alan Siegel's house).
 - b. The information should be safely stored and be accessible to those who are interested.
2. Historic Sites Committee Headquarters
 - a. The town thought of having the Committee's headquarters in the house on Ferguson Road.
 - b. The Committee prefers to have the headquarters in the Hoffheimer House.
3. Hoffheimer House
 - a. Hoffheimer legacy
 - i. The Hoffheimer family contributed a lot to this community.
 - ii. Olmstead was the landscape architect for the property.
 - iii. The house is listed in the Library of Congress.

- iv. The House was the original design: the other buildings were fashioned after it. (Why destroy the original idea and inspiration?)
 - b. The Historic Sites Committee needs to get the 1st floor compliant and a success.
 - i. The 2nd and 3rd floors will be years down the road.
 - c. The Committee would like the documents stored in the new building but would like meeting and display space in the Hoffheimer House.
 - d. Warren already has a building that can be community center. There isn't a need to building another one. (It would probably cost more to tear it down.)
 - e. Mick Marion is working on getting support from the Town for the Committee.
 - f. The Committee does not want the House to be on the National Register—it wants the House to be a functional building.
- 4. The Grotto
 - a. The Elks own The Grotto.
 - b. Tax dollars may not be used to clean private property.
 - c. Half of The Grotto is in Warren and the other half is in Green Brook.
 - d. The water had been turned off because it had shut off the water to the golf course.
 - e. The Grotto used to be a copper mine but was not successful.
- 5. Coddington House
 - a. The building is in major disrepair.
 - i. The foundation has issues which would have an estimate of several thousand dollars to fix.
 - ii. The idea was given up to have it added to the National Register. The Committee will, instead, look at stabilizing the basement so that it doesn't collapse as long as it is at a reasonable price.
- 6. Red Schoolhouse
 - a. It is not an option to obtain the building at this time.
- 7. State grant
 - a. The money was released and checks may now be written.
 - b. Some money will be used for the walls of the Mt. Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery.

8. Mt. Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery

- a. The cemetery's association wants to give the upper part of the property.
 - i. How can the Committee take ownership because, if the association dissolves, the cemetery would go to the State.
 - ii. The law has changed to allow cemeteries be part of a historic building.
- b. The tombstones have problems which need to be corrected.
 - i. The people buried there were church members and were the founders of the community which include 6 Revolutionary War veterans
 - ii. The oldest tombstone is from 1791.

9. Anniversaries

- a. 250th anniversary of the USA
 - i. The County is going to have a map of all the places of 18th century sites.
- b. 50th anniversary the Warren Historical Society is in October (est. 1971).
 - i. The anniversary is around the same time as the Weekend Journey to the Past.

10. Priorities

- a. Subdivide the cemetery.
- b. Stabilize and mothball the Coddington House.
- c. Save the Hoffheimer House.

Meeting adjourned at 9:37pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kari Quiros, Rec. Sec.