

TOWN OF NEW PALTZ HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes for December 5th, 2005

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by R. Miller at 7:40pm

Commissioners Present: R. Miller, S. Stessin, M. Lodge, R. Solinger

Item 1: Approval of Minutes:

There were no minutes (yet received) from November's meeting.

Item 2: Smith Property Designation: Open Hearing:

Received an email from Mr. William Hurst (attached).

The Smith's do not want to landmark the entire property. They are proposing to landmark 370 feet - the cartilage that surrounds the buildings (house and barns) which amount to 1.6 acres (see attached map outlined in yellow).

Silas Smith reads, and submits, a summation that he has written in regards to the Town's proposed designation. He also submits photographs of the house and barns taken in November 2005, the spring of 1992 and the fall of 1984 showing various states of deterioration and needed repairs (see attachments).

Stuart Glen, attorney for the Smith's, reads, and submits, his points of view regarding the Town's proposed designation as well. He also submits an email received from Peter Fairweather, a Town resident (see attachments).

R. Miller made a motion to table discussion. There will be no designation made tonight. Miller made a request of Silas to review the larger barn on site, since the photo submitted seemed

to show extreme blowing of the South-West corner. The request was not answered.

R. Miller reminded the owners that the commission had indicated in the (July or August) 2005 minutes that they had no problem with the repairs proposed, and that it was a misunderstanding by the owners that no work could be done on the house until it had been formally designated. R. Miller indicated that a C of A is not generally required for repair work.

R. Miller made a motion to table any designation of the property until a future meeting, and the commission has had time to review Silas' written comments. Seconded by S. Stessin and the motion carried.

Item 3: Public Comment:

Barbara McNeeny, David Lent, Robert McKenna, Ann Barber-Smith (Huguenot Historical Society Board member) and Toni Hokanson:

All are Town residents. The meeting started late (Richard had to go and pick up Susan and Martin, due to the inclement weather and health reasons. Byron was not able to attend due to health reasons). Several comments were made about the meeting starting late. Mr. Miller indicated that since the owners came from NYC, it was necessary to pick the two commissioners up, in order to get a quorum of voting commissioners on this project, to be able to move ahead with it. R. McKenna stated that he was involved in preservation and that in his experience the commission needed to be very careful and be sensitive to the owner's requests. Toni Hokanson stated that she felt the commission should move on choosing one of the sketch proposals submitted by the owners as the areas of the property to be land marked. Barbara McNeeny and Ann Barber Smith expressed frustration that the commission had not yet addressed the request of the owners, and that the process was taking so long, and that they should fire their lawyer, Mr. Hurst, for taking so long to get back

to the commission. B. McNeeny stated that all commissioners should have PHD's to be qualified.

R. Miller made a motion to close public comment. Seconded by M. Lodge and the motion carried.

R. Miller stated that Mr. Hurst acted in an advisory capacity to the commission, that he was not the commission's lawyer, and that he had been on paternity leave. Further, that the commission had only recently (in the last several weeks) received, from Mr. Glen, a copy of the e-mail sent by Mr. Hurst to Mr. Olson during the summer, indicating that due to the power lines, landfill, and thruway severely impacting the Smith property to the East, it would be legal and appropriate to landmark an area at the West portion of the property where the structures and cartilages are situated.

R. Miller reminded the large audience that none of them had come to our meetings on this designation previously, and that Richard and Susan first discussed with Kate Smith, the boys mother, working with the family to landmark the property in July of 2004, that the mother had requested that they not act for six (6) months, and then requested an additional three (3) months. S. Stessin indicated that the commission was not made aware by the owner that they should rush ahead with the process in the last three (3) months, in fact, quite the contrary.

Item 4: Points to be considered:

The entire audience left immediately, and Silas Smith, his brother Luke Smith and their attorney, Stuart Glen joined together with us at the table to discuss the following points (that were brought up in Silas' letter, and had been discussed previously):

Point 1: Area to be land marked should be 1.6 acres (Option 2), as per the smaller proposed area of two dimensioned

sketches submitted by the owners. M. Lodge questioned the owners as to which option they preferred, and they indicated that the smaller option was preferable.

Point 2: Economic Hardships - 140-121 Section I Powers & Duties: Is the language in for all of the barns?
Should they not designate the barns?
Have them (the Smith's) come up with the wording for such.

Point 3: Cosmetic repairs:
Gates: It is okay to put up a gate at the entrance of the property.
Plantings: Want to replace the trees in the front of property.
Pathway to the kitchen needs to be widened.
Stones piled up on the east side needed to create a larger terracing - from the northeast and east to meet up with the back patio.
Construct wooden ramp (in back).
Provide railing to rear (small) kitchen.
Replace wooden gutters on both the west and east sides with aluminum one to match existing one.
Repair fences.
Install metal gutter on the north side of granary.
Install perimeter drains around main house.
Replace railing on front porch on each side of the steps. Silas and Luke stated that they will provide information on the design to the commission prior to installation.

S. Stessin made a motion to approve Point 1: the 1.6 acre area as the area to be land marked. R. Miller seconded and the motion carried.

R. Miller made a motion to approve Point 3 repairs (1-11) as indicated. Seconded by S. Stessin. All in favor.

Point 4: Additions: The commission acknowledged receiving various sketches prepared for additions to the house. The owners agreed that any future additions would probably be different in design from the sketches. The commission cited two other land marked properties for which additions had been approved, and those additions at the rear of a structure, rather than at the front, would allow the view from the public road to remain intact.

Point 5: Remarks on Landmark Designation form:

The owners and their lawyer will attend our regularly scheduled February meeting on Monday, February 6th, 2006 at 7:00pm. Prior to that meeting the owners and the commission will fine-tune the designation form, via e-mail to everyone's agreement. It was noted that Silas and Luke, and the commission, all indicated that they were very pleased with the outcome of the meeting.

R. Miller made a motion to continue the Public Hearing until the next meeting, and to the February 6th, 2006 meeting. Seconded by S. Stessin. All in favor.

Next scheduled meeting will be held on January 2nd, 2006, at 7:00pm. The commission meets on the first Monday of each month, and is required to meet "bi-monthly".

R. Miller made a motion to adjourn meeting at 10:01pm. All in favor.