

Palmyra Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2015

Present: Chair Ellie Drake, Vice Chair Jim Elliott, Commissioners Chris Daly, Michael Haskins, Rebecca Remington. Alternate John Robbins.

Absent: Architect Consultant Mark Vande, Village Board Liaison Vicky Daly.

Guests: Speaker Cynthia Howk from the Landmark Society, Business Owners John Martens, Dean George. Resident Linda Wright.

The meeting started with a Ninth Period History presentation given by Cynthia Howk regarding the benefits and limitations of National Register for Historic Places listing, at 7:05 pm. She spoke about the history of and changes to the NRHP listing program. She recommended that our commission catalog and publish information about all the cobblestone buildings in the town of Palmyra. She told those present that although there were no grants for being NRHP listed, there were two programs that could be helpful: (1) income producing buildings could get up to 40% tax credits for rehabilitation, 20% federal, 20% state. The state preservation office must be involved from the beginning. (2) homeowners of a NRHP listed residence must spend minimum of \$5000, 5% of which must be on exterior. This program is user-friendly, and doesn't take too long for processing. This program is through the state, and NYS has extended it through 2019. The residence must be in a census tract that is below the median income. Ms. Sloane Bullough of SHPO administers this program. The property owner must start the process by contacting SHPO.

Cynthia also talked about two Church programs: (1) Partners for Sacred Places, which is a clearing house of information relating to the re-use of houses of worship, and how to do a capital campaign relating to the continuing use of a church structure. (2) Sacred Sites Grant is sponsored by the NY Landmarks Conservancy for NYS buildings that are owned by religious organizations, and have official landmark designation (local, state or federal). It is a matching grant that offers \$50,000 to \$100,000 grants. This grant can be received as often as every 3 years.

Cynthia said that NRHP listing application is like writing a college research paper. Consultants can be hired for around \$2,000. She mentioned Bero Architects and Saralinda Hooker as two consultants who do this work

Cynthia brought applications for the Landmark Society Conference in April. She said that scholarships were available, and to contact Caitlyn Mieves at the LSWNY. She mentioned that May was Preservation month. One of her audience asked her advice regarding the derelict row house on Main and Clinton, and the absentee landlord situation. She recommended contacting Erin Tobin at the Preservation League of NY for two reasons: She may know of a similar (hopefully resolved) situation in NYS, and the Preservation League has an attorney.

The business meeting started at 8:36 pm.

John Robbins was introduced to the group as the new alternate.

Ellie Drake updated the commissioners on her work on the inventory. She has 442 lines on the excel spreadsheet, including no longer existing structures. There was discussion about quoting descriptions from the Thomas Cook book, but Jim Elliott said that the book didn't really describe the properties, and it was difficult to correlate the references in the book with current street addresses. Ellie Drake said that some of the survey materials already had descriptions from the book included in the survey description. Ellie said that all the houses were on the inventory, but they are not all scanned yet. Ellie speculated that over the next 10 years we might be able to get all the village structures photographed, or look for a grant to have it done.

May Preservation Month: Jim Elliott said he would talk to Vicky Daly about setting up and advertising tours of the Village buildings in May. Chris will spotlight the bandstand in May, and make reference to the upcoming Preservation Month with the April spotlight, the Village Hall.

Ninth Period History Class: Rebecca Remington said she made contact with Reginald Neale who is willing to speak 4/16/15. A news release should go out in early April. Michael Haskins volunteered to ask Deanne Foley, the watercolorist, to speak in October or November. John Robbins told the group about Ken Artle, the cobblestone mason from Williamson, who does give talks on the subject. Chris Daly said she would ask if Vicky Daly could contact Mr. Artle to speak. Ellie Drake volunteered to ask Dave Young of the Colonial Craftsman in Newark if he would be willing to speak in the fall (November?).

The meeting closed at 9:26 pm.

Addendum: Ellie Drake did some research and found that the National Trust theme this year is "New Age of Preservation: Embark, Inspire, Engage."

2013: "See, Save Celebrate"

2012: "Discover America's Gems"

2010: "Old is the New Green"

2008: "This Place Matters"

Ellie also found that on Valentine's Day 2015 many buildings were "heart-bombed".

Respectfully submitted by Christine Daly.

TO DO LISTS:

Ellie Drake: contact Dave Young about speaking to our group.

Jim Elliott: To plan May tour(s) of Village Buildings with Vicky Daly.

Chris Daly: To do April and May spotlights: the village hall and bandstand, respectively. To ask Vicky Daly whether the Garlock house was included in one of the NRHP districts.

Michael Haskins: to ask Deanna Foley if she would speak in the fall. (note: Michael said she agreed to it.)

Rebecca Remington: to put together a press release for Reginald Neale's talk on 4/16/15 in early April.

John Robbins: to contact Ken Artle to see if he would be interested in speaking .