

HISTORIC PROPERTIES BOARD

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE
335 ROUTE 202
SOMERS, NY 10589

EMIL ANTONACCIO
CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

August 4, 2011

The meeting was opened at 4:30 p.m. Supervisor Mary Beth Murphy, Somers Architectural Review Board Member Mark Brown, Somers Historical Society President Emil Antonaccio, Somers Parks and Recreation Board Chairman Jim Papa, resident Architect Ken Bond and Town Historian Doris Jane Smith were present.

Minutes – A motion was made by Mr. Papa and seconded by Mr. Bond to accept the minutes of the May 19, 2011 meeting as submitted. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Papa and seconded by Mr. Bond to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting held on July 7, 2011 as submitted. All were in favor.

New Town Historian – Doris Jane Smith, the newly appointed Town Historian was introduced and welcomed. All are looking forward to working with her.

Mt. Zion Church Updates

Sugar Maple – A budget transfer in the amount of \$2,047 was made by the Supervisor and the severely decayed sugar maple in the cemetery area of the Mt. Zion Church was removed by The Care of Trees on June 7.

Wright-Reis Homestead

Ruts in Driveway – The driveway from the parking lot to the Homestead had some severe ruts that needed to be leveled and covered. Arrangements were made by Mr. Papa to have the Parks and Recreation Maintenance Staff do the work. Their assistance was most appreciated.

Summer Kitchen – The Historical Society will purchase the paint and Marty Stole will be painting the summer kitchen in the fall.

Ice House Foundation – The ice house foundation is caving in. There is a hole underneath the floor. The flooring needs to be removed, the hole filled and packed with Item 4. This will stabilize the foundation and then it can be repaired. The Highway Department has Item 4 that can be used, but not as much that is needed to do the job. Mr. Papa will make arrangements with the Parks and Recreation maintenance staff to help with the work and provide the necessary equipment needed to do so when the project is ready to begin.

Broken Attic Windows – There are four broken windows in the attic of the Homestead. Mrs. Schirmer will make arrangements to have Mr. Stole fix them.

Mailbox and Saw Horse – The mailbox at the top of the Homestead driveway and the saw horse on the side of the driveway have to be removed. Mr. Papa will make arrangements to have the Parks and Recreation maintenance staff remove them.

Tomahawk Chapel

Projects Update – As reported at a Special Meeting held on July 7 with Tomahawk Chapel volunteer Geoffrey Parker, painting of the Chapel is still a work in progress, and weeding, branch and rubble removal at the Chapel and Cemetery is ongoing. All the hard work and effort that is being done is very much appreciated.

At the June 9 Town Board meeting, the Supervisor was authorized to execute an agreement between North County Electric and the Koegel Foundation for the installation of a new underground electric service to the Tomahawk Chapel in the amount of \$5,000 and the cost of the electric usage for the next three years per letter dated June 3, 2011 from William F. Koegel.

In addition, on June 24, 2011, the New York State Board for Historic Preservation recommended the addition of 27 properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places, including Tomahawk Chapel, under its original name, the West Somers Methodist-Episcopal Church.

Elephant Hotel

Eagle Scout Project – At the Special Town Board Meeting on May 19, authorization was given to Cameron Sheehan to landscape around Old Bet as his Eagle Scout Project. He will notify the Historic Properties Board when he is ready to begin his project.

Old Bet Repair – The money to repair Old Bet was received from the insurance company. A decision has to be made as to whether or not a repair or replacement of the stone will be done. Supervisor Murphy is waiting for a proposal.

Emergency Door Railing – A handrail has been installed by the emergency room door in the Meeting Room. Mr. Stole did a great job on this project.

3rd Floor Library Fireplace – The Parks and Recreation Maintenance staff helped Mr. Stole remove an old radiator that was in front of the fireplace in the Library on the 3rd floor. Once removed, it was determined that the fireplace had never been plugged up and hot air was coming down the chimney. Mr. Stole wedged a piece of foam at the bottom of the chimney to prevent the hot air from coming into the room.

3rd Floor Alarm System – Both the window next to the fire escape in the Library and the window closest to the roof line in Mrs. Schirmer's/the Somers Historical Society's office has been wired by the security alarm company.

3rd Floor Air Conditioning – The air conditioning on the 3rd floor is working well and Supervisor Murphy indicated that it has helped keep the entire building cooler.

NEW BUSINESS

2012 Budget – A spreadsheet of the budget for the past three years was prepared by Mrs. Schirmer for Board review and comment. Salaries must remain the same, and a decision was made to increase contractual by \$5,000 to cover the cost of unexpected projects, tree removal, etc. that might occur at the Mt. Zion Church or Wright-Reis Homestead, as well the Ice House foundation project at the Homestead.

Town Historian Report

Mrs. Smith is delighted with her new appointment as Town Historian. She is in the process of organizing and getting herself acclimated. A meeting was held earlier today to create a program on the Civil War for next spring.

Somers Historical Society Report

A written report was submitted by the Historical Society and Wright-Reis Homestead Committee, as well as copies of the 12th Annual Hudson River Valley Ramble schedule. The Society will be sponsoring a program as part of that event.

On June 25, representatives from Somers Point, New Jersey, birthplace of Richard Somers visited with Supervisor Murphy and members of the Somers Historical Society. They had lunch at Reis Park, a tour of Somers and then tea at the Homestead. All were delighted to show them the Town that was named after Richard Somers. On September 17, representatives of Somers will go to Somers Point to engage in similar activities.

Scott Urgola and Friends performed at Mt. Zion Church on the evening of July 23. The concert was well responded to and a good time had by all.

Donations have been received from the estate of Florence Oliver for the Wright-Reis

Homestead. The Collections Committee is in the process of accessioning the items.

Upkeep of the Herb Garden at the Homestead is on-going, and the area around the Outhouse was cleared of invasive weeds and the lilac shrub was pruned. Not only are there invasive weeds around the Outhouse, but also at the top of the Homestead driveway.

In the fall, colors will be decided on and paint purchased for the Summer Kitchen at the Wright-Reis Homestead.

Consideration is being given for a fall harvest type program at the Homestead. Co-sponsorship is being sought as well.

Holidays at the Homestead will be held in early December, as part of the Town's festivities. There will also be a Society Trustees/Historic Properties Board holiday dinner that evening at the Homestead.

The interior shades at the Homestead are in the process of being replaced.

A fall/winter project includes restoring the signs for the Homestead outbuildings.

The Northern Westchester Water Color Society continues to meet at the Homestead.

Efforts are being coordinated with the Town Historian to develop programs to be held at the Town owned historic properties.

The pond at the Homestead needs an immediate assessment regarding its health. It is quickly becoming a bog. If the Historic Properties Board is agreeable, the Homestead Committee of the Historical Society is willing to seek pro bono professional consultation.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 17 at 4:30 p.m. in the Map Room at the Town House.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Historic Properties Board

cc: Town Board
Town Clerk
Somers Historical Society