

West Brandywine Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes April 14, 2003

West Brandywine Historical Commission (WBHC) Members (attendees in bold)

Susan Bowar, Joanne Conti, Judy Domanico, **Howard Lambert**, Amy Mills, **John Vilcheck, Jr.**, Jerry Wilmnzig, **Andy Woods**, **Gail Woods**

Dr. John Vilcheck, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM, the minutes from the March 3rd meeting were approved.

Catania Property

Dr. John Vilcheck visited the Catania property on April 6th and took digital pictures of the site; the property has deteriorated since his last visit in October 2002. Attendees reviewed pictures taken in April and October 2002 and April 2003. Since the site is being donated to the township and will become part of a park, WBHC needs to look into either grant, and/or county money to fund whatever restoration is done to the ruins on site. At this time stabilization of the property may be the best objective. Dr. John Vilcheck suggested using the ruins to create a picnic pavilion, by stabilizing the existing three walls and adding some kind of a roof.

A motion was made to ask the developer to construct a fence around the ruins to protect the site from further vandalism and also to protect the public from injury. The motion was approved unanimously. Dr. Vilcheck will submit this motion in writing to the township Board of Supervisors.

Irish Oaks

Historic barn on this property, WBHC prefers new construction use the same framing. In addition plans must specify that rebuilt barn will not be demolished at some point in the future. WBHC agrees that the barn can be torn down, and a duplicate built using same design. WBHC recommending old materials be sold for reuse. New barn will have same dimensions as the existing barn. Stone for the bank barn should be preserved.

Bentley

Bentley Property – John Sheldon and Gordon Property -- includes Cedar Post Farm.

A motion was made to send copy of the letter WBHC received from Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC) to Board of Supervisors along with an objection that the WBHC was not notified of the change in date and location of the last meeting with the Planning Commission when this project was discussed. The motion was approved unanimously.

Bentley Developers must complete the required paper work for the PHMC. A representative of the PHMC has informed the WBHC that buildings on this property were built when money was scarce suggesting the owners must have had substantial wealth.

Because the site is largely in tact PHMC stresses the importance of maintaining the buildings.

Howe Turkey Farm

Howe is requesting permission to demolish the barn on this property. The owner of record is listed as Mary E. Howe. WBHC states that application must be complete before it can consider the request. WBHC will request permission from owner to visit the site on May 10th at 10:30 am.

WBHC New Business

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catholic Cemeteries Office submitted a request to demolish the springhouse on the farm located on Horseshoe Pike that is part of the All Souls Cemetery. The Archdiocese states its intent to maintain and use the house, barn and any other outbuildings on the property. At this time the Archdiocese rents the property, but the opinion of WBHC members is that it is not well maintained. The house on this property is believed to be one of the oldest standing in West Brandywine Township. WBHC must decline this request until the Archdiocese complete the proper paper work.

Mission of the group:

- Record historic sites in township
- Make recommendations when changes are proposed by developers or current property owners

Meeting adjourned 9:00 PM