TEANECK HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

March 21st, 2023

7PM MEETING VIA ZOOM

AGENDA

Topic: THPC

Time: Mar 21, 2023 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

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**Meeting Called to Order**

**Roll Call**

**Open Public Meeting Act Statement**

**Approval of Minutes**: February 21st, 2023

**Correspondence**:

None.

**New Business:**

* Discussion of a joint project with the Community Advisory Board in developing a guided tour of the town’s historical sites, parks, etc. Commissioner Lacey mentioned to this board that our commission had considered doing an historical tour and that, perhaps, the commission could expand the concept if the board chooses to join in such an endeavor.
* Since Vice-Chairman Force and Commissioner Valerio’s Google map is nearing completion (showing the township’s historic sites, parks, public art, memorials , and sites of local significance), it may be time to hold a discussion as to what the next steps should be in order to get it posted on the township and library’s websites.
* From the “Future Business” list, decide on one or two topics for the THPC to begin working on.
* Would any commissioner consider representing the THPC on the MOST Committee? It meets a few times a year. Commissioner Valerio, who served in this post in 2022, can explain its responsibilities and duties.

**Notifications and Old Business:**

* **Chairman Norris, update**: Chairman Norris has been in conversation with Doug Ruccione, the Township Clerk, **to create three further historic markers at Sewah Studios—the John Ackerman House, the Zabriskie-Kip-Cadmus House, and the Demarest-Brinkerhoff House**. Due to upheavals at Sewah Studios, the township’s order for 14 park markers, submitted to them in 2022, was lost by the company, so the township has had to reorder these park markers in 2023. However, because the order has been pushed into 2023, its expense of close to $40,000 ($44,000 is the state limit for township markers each year) means that these three historic markers may have to be put into open bid this year (as happened in 2022, which—sadly--was not carried through).

The commemorative texts for Lizette Parker and Ulysses Kay will be incorporated into the Google map, mentioned above, and so, at this time, markers from Sewah Studios with this text will not be pursued.

* **Chairman Norris, update**: The order for 14 park markers, sent to Sewah Studios in mid-October 2022, but then lost by that company, means that reordering the 14 had to occur in 2023, with the dogged help of Doug Ruccione, the Township Clerk. The park markers should be be ready in May or early June.
* **Chairman Norris, update:** There has not been much movement on the **proposed standing marker near Bryant School** that the THPC had been working on with the Teaneck Council through its former liaison, Councilman Kaplan; it is to commemorate that school’s desegregation, without a court order, in September 1964. (See the agenda of the THPC’s meeting on Nov. 29, 2022, for a narrative of this project and its Appendix B for the relevant township resolution that endorsed this marker.)

The marker’s text has been written by Commissioners Lacey and Turner; been before the 2022 Township Council where one minor change was suggested by Councilman Kaplan; the changed text was then reapproved by Commissioners Lacey and Turner; and then it was copyedited by Kate Norris, a copy editor at *The New Yorker*.

Following this, Chairman Norris sent an email to the Township Manager, without reply, asking whether money was allocated for the marker in the 2022 budget and whether it should be a standing aluminum marker from Sewah Studios (which currently has a wait time of 18 months per marker), or a stone marker from the American Monument Company of New Jersey in Hackensack. Doug Ruccione, the Township Clerk, has recently offered to work on the situation, asking for bids from Kunath Signs of Teaneck, without reply so far.

* **Chairman Norris, update**: As mentioned in previous meetings, the refurbished BCHS “Revolutionary War Encampment” marker is now up, thanks to the DPW. However, the 12 historic markers from Sewah Studios, now in the township for nearly a year, have been waiting for the DPW to set them up for months. Due to some homeowner pushback, only two can go up without possible controversy. One would be at the bottom of Fyke Lane, indicating the general location of Oratam’s village along Overpeck Creek, and another would mark the Lutheran Van Buskirk Church Cemetery on River Road (see <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=7236>). Again, Doug Ruccione, the Township Clerk, has tried to help in this situation, but the DPW and its superior, the Township Manager, has not responded to entreaties to get the two markers up. Chairman Norris has suggested to Doug that the township could send out a second batch of letters informing the owners of historic properties of the township’s intention to erect a historic marker in the public right-of-way near the property and establishing a deadline for the owners’ response after which the marker would be automatically erected by the DPW. So far Doug has not responded to this proposal.

However, for his part, Doug has suggested that the marooned historic markers be used in the Teaneck Public Library as an exhibition/display for the public, so that at least their texts could be seen by the public.

Commissioners, any thoughts on this last suggestion?

* **Chairman Norris, update:** Chairman Norrishas been working with Javalda Powell of the BLM Mural Committee **to create a label/marker for the BLM street artwork** in the parking lot across Palisade Avenue from the Rodda Center complex. (See the THPC meeting agenda October 26th, 2022, for history of the issue up to now and Appendix B of that agenda for the relevant township resolution).

Some time ago, Chairman Norris learned from Dean Kazinci, the Township Manager, that the DPW has a machine to create signs, currently red letters on a white background, so he has tried to learn whether such a machine could make a sign in this case.

As a reminder, the BLM marker text, written by Theodora Lacey, Levonne Turner, and members of the BLM Mural Committee, has now been copyedited by Kate Norris, approved by the BLM Committee, and sent to the Township’s Manager. The idea was that the Manager would present it to the DPW in order for it to create examples and samples of possible sign possibilities, to be approved by the BLM Committee. At this point, my understanding is that the Manager sent the text to the Council some weeks ago for comments and, in any case, the DPW sign-making machine is currently broken. Once again, the Township Clerk, Doug Ruccione, is in discussion with Kunath Signs concerning it and Chairman Norris awaits the repair of the DPW’s sign-making machine

* **Citizens’ Comments**
* Next meeting - Zoom at 7:00 PM April 18th, 2023
* **Adjournment**
* **Future Business**:
* **Vice-Chairman Force and Commissioner Valerio**: Continue the work of refining the language in the township’s ordinance concerning finding artifacts on public land in Teaneck (see Township Code, Chapter 7A-1-7A-3). Vice-Chairman Force is the THPC’s lead negotiator on this issue with interested parties, such as Larry Bauer, with the goal of drawing up a list of suggestions for the Township Clerk.
* **Consider creating an inventory** of mixed-use buildings at least 50-years-old in Teaneck for special revenue-generating grants; same with the Warner District.
* **Thoughts from Vice-Chairman Force and Commissioner Valerio on the process of designating the Teaneck Armory** below as a historic site, perhaps starting as a possible field trip for the Commission to the site? Also, should it be on the National, State, or Township registers? At the successful conclusion of the designation, Chairman Norris strongly suggests making up a text for a historic marker before the facts grow dim. Lindsay Thivierge, of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, has digitally sent to Doug Ruccione, Township Clerk, material relevant to the armory.
  + Teaneck Armory (ID#4338), considered historic site in opinion from State Historic Preservation Office 9/10/2004; also listed on the map of the 2007 Master Plan of Teaneck
* **Also consider designating as a historic site**:
  + Teaneck High School building (dedicated January 31, 1929; Ralph E. Hacker, architect; see Mildred Taylor, The History of Teaneck, pp. 82-83)
* **Vice-Chairman Force and Commissioner Valerio et alii**: Update the 1996 publication “A Guide to the Historic Landmarks of Teaneck, New Jersey,” that had been put out by this Commission with assistance from the New Jersey Historical Commission.
* **Add information to street names in a township web directory** of Teaneck streets, to explain the significance of these names.
* **Commissioner Valerio**: Report on any movement on creating a history/research room at the Teaneck Library, which could possibly be the recipient of archaeological artifacts uncovered in Teaneck, too. Such a project may qualify for a NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant or some other funding possibility. Perhaps the Commission should also work with the library to bring in a professional archivist to digitize the Volcker papers. Below are a couple of grants to support the idea:

<https://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/ingenta-research-award>: About the Ingenta Research Award The Ingenta Research Award is given annually by the Library Research Round Table of the American Library Association to support research projects about acquisition, use, and preservation of digital information.

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/save-americas-treasures-grants.htm>: This grant program is divided into two parts:

* + One for **preservation projects** for properties *listed*in the National Register of Historic Places for **national significance** *or* are designated a National Historic Landmark. The property may be listed either individually or as contributing to a nationally significant district. These awards are managed by the National Park Service.
  + One for projects involving **collections**(including artifacts, museum collections, documents, sculptures, and other works of art). These awards are managed by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.