

Vernon Township Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 PM.

Chairwoman Lisaann Van Blarcom Permunian read the statement of compliance.

Flag Salute

Roll Call for attendance:

Jodi White Bearstler

Lee Clancy

Lisa VanBlarcom Permunian

Janet Redyke

Jamie Rickey

Harris Soloman

Special Guest Mayor Rossi

Secretary not present

Approval of minutes: January 2, 2025 – all in favor

Public Meeting Opened: motion made by Lee, second by Jodi, all in favor.

Discussion about Jessi Paladini asking for members to please e-mail or contact Board if you are not going to be attending meeting.

Mrs. Paladini came to show the Secretary how to do the report and help start recording meeting.

She commented that the “staff” in Vernon Township are civil service.

Mrs. Paladini also wanted to dispel a rumor that info on the owner of Seasons was not brought to the Historical Society and had no knowledge of it.

Mrs. Paladini spoke to Charles Eberhart concerning what it would take for putting in a casino into Legions. New Jersey does not have the Lenape recognized and will not approve of gambling. A pocket casino was mentioned and a place for the Historical Society Museum in the hotel. After meeting with Charles Eberhart, the man never returned her calls. She resents being lied to and used and wanted to set the record straight. The President of the Historical Society was in the room and didn't know anything about it until Mr. Eberhart said "ok".

Mr. Harris stated that he never mentioned gambling being the center.

Mrs. Paladini said it was much later I told you we met with the mayor and he knew.

Mr. Harris said that he has called him several times (Eberhart) and he will be having drinks next week with him.

Mrs. Paladini asked the nature of the call.

Mr. Harris said Landmark Preservation, the Mayor said to hold off on Preservation for awhile because he has other investors. He asked what the Town meeting outcome was.

Mrs. Paladini said she was not involved.

Mr. Harris stated that he received a text message from Mr. Eberhart.

Jodi made a motion to close the meeting to the Public.

Second by Lee

Old Business:

Hinchman Rickey Farm

Mr. Rickey said he had none of his paperwork.

Mr. Rickey will let Mr. Brown know of the HPC's intent of Historic Designation

The Board of Education hearing with HPC concerning the demolition, our Land Use Law wants full disclosure. White sheet goes in with the letter. HPC deadlock-land use.

Mr Rickey said that Mrs. Paladini said that there is an unspoken rule: it is not in the ordinance that requires approval from the owner. In his personal

opinion, move forward if we think it has landmark status, even if the owner does not want it.

Discussion on procedure continues with Historical Society votes on it then moves to Land Use Board, then Council.

Lisa said that Joseph Perry is a founding father, and this puts no effect on sale by putting the site on the Master Plan. The Lot and Block and Historic information will be on the master Plan which states where the property is located.

Mr. Rickey stated the Rickey Farm was nominated and he will have the paperwork, application with changes, and would like to schedule it for April meeting. He then mentioned the steps taken.

Mr. Rickey made the motion to proceed with the Hinchman-Rickey nomination.

Lisa second

All in favor.

Legends:

Mr. Harris said the paperwork is done but not in the format required. He will go back and adjust. He will also meet with Charles Eberhard, maybe next week and he will report next meeting.

Lisa said that the last few meetings we were not moving forward with Legends.

Jodi -I vote no. In 1972 we had the Playboy Club, and it was a success, in 1973-1975 it was struggling, in 1975 they changed over to a "family" atmosphere, and in 1982 it closed. Problems like drug abuse, rapes of bunnies, degradation of women, possible loss of liquor license review. Gene Mulvihill did more for Vernon with the Ski areas than Hefner. I do not want to move it forward.

Mr. Rickey asked if we voted at a prior meeting?

Mr. Harris asked, "Can you tell me where you got that information from?" There are a lot of allegations made. It is a significant property, and I am not here to defend Hugh Hefner or Playboy. The Township is known for Playboy. I don't know why you are smiling.

Jodi said because it was known for Action Park and Ski areas, not Playboy.

Mr Harris said that in 1972-1973 Playboy was the center of the world accepted by society. Now we look back today and ask how can they have such a thing? Many celebrities and people all over the world came to Playboy.

Jodi said that she believes it needs to remain dead with Hugh Hefner.

Mr. Harris said that he had nothing to say but if you look online there is much interest in the lasting legacy of that time period, good or bad. Playboy moved society forward, it is part of Vernon Township, like Action Park, better or worse. You are smirking and I don't know why. No one died at Playboy, but Action Park had deaths.

Jodi said that no one is asking for Action Park to be nominated. You have been told numerous times to let this lie, you keep bringing it up. I will not vote for Playboy.

Mr. Rickey stated that the guidelines that were given tonight, we did want to look into legends a few months ago. Mr. Harris is working on number 3 and at number 6 you get to another vote. We did vote to move forward on the nomination.

Lisa commented we did not.

Mr. Harris said, "I think you are right Jamie".

Mr. Rickey asked if someone could check the minutes. I believe it was the same night as the Hinchman/Rickey Property.

Mr. Harris agreed, it was.

Lisa said the mayor spoke in November 2024 and she will read the minutes from previous meetings stating the HPC put Legends on hold

The mayor said at the meeting that Eberhard is the new owner, no taxes have been paid, there is uncertainty of the transaction, but there is other prospective buyers.

In the December meeting it was decided to postpone the nomination of the resort.

Mr. Harris made the motion for Legends to be recommended for nomination.

No one seconded the motion. An all in favor vote without a second is not keeping with Roberts Rules and is void. There will be no more discussion on Legends/Playboy Club.

Vernon Train Station

Mr. Harris spoke to the owner of the station and took a tour. He believes it should be included and is a wonderful memory of this town.

Mr. Rickey thinks the Railway was important to Vernon.

Mr. Harris stated to letting sleeping dogs lie, is it important? Everything is still there.

Chairwoman Lisa stopped the meeting and said the mayor is here to give an oath.

Mayor said to continue.

Mr. Rickey said it was probably deserving of Landmark status. He has no ability to work on moving it forward at this time due to his current workload. Can someone else take it on? Is there a motion to recommend the Train Station?

Mr. Harris asked if there was a file in the Historic Commission at the Railroad Station.

Lisa said she did not know.

Mr Harris stated that to the best of your knowledge, no one has any info on this? He called the Sussex County Historical Society and spoke to Wayne McCabe, President. He was told to contact Ron Dupont who knows everything. He left a message and received a call back. Ron Dupont e mailed 20 pages of info on the Train Station. Mr. Harris stated he had the info on his compute

Lisa stopped meeting for the mayor to give a new member the oath of office pledge. The new member is Janet Redyke.

Open Meeting to the Public

Mrs. Paladini told Mr. Harris that's not what you said to me. You called Wayne McCabe, and he directed you to contact Ron Dupont because he badmouthed Jessie?. This is unethical and inappropriate.

Mrs. paladini stated that it was inappropriate for you to call the County President of the Historical Society about bad mouthing Vernon Historical Society. For three decades we have worked together well. Inaccurate information was given to people on the commission and when asked to write the application for the Rickey property it was rejected because the application was done wrong.

Mrs Palladini said it was inappropriate to say that to everyone at the meeting.

A motion to close public meeting by Lee, and second by Jodie.

Mr. Harris asked if there is any other info on Train Station.

Mr. Rickey stated to put sources with information Dupont gave you. Dupont has a great passion for History.

Mrs. Paladini asked why they were still discussing Ron Dupont.

Mr Rickey made the motion to recommend the Train Station.

Mr, Harris asked Source of info

Mr. Rickey said our Historical info has been moved 3-4 times.

Mr Rickey said to move landmark design, someone still has to do the work. Look through the info.

Discussion on process

Mr. Harris asked what we have in the files. Are there files on the railroad or any paperwork?

Mrs. paladin stated that she had digital copies on her computer.

Mr. Harris said he will do the work of going through the papers.

Mr. Rickey said to cross references with what you have.

Stewart House

Discussed at last meeting.

Lisa moved to amend the minutes to reflect the Stewart House process.

Indian Training Post on hold.

Mr. Rickey asked about the Hotel tax funds. The mayor stated he could not go into the funds. Mr. Rickey said that the 2020 Ordinance tax that Vernon receives 1 percent and can be used for a number of things.

Discussion:

25 percent 3 categories, 16-18% maintain Maple Grange turf/field. 6% cultural sites and other, 1% open space/farmland preservation.

What is a cultural site, natural or manmade. Black Creek is a definite site.

Mr. Harris asked, "how much money is this?"

Mayor said 150-170,000. Call the office tomorrow.

Mrs. Paladini said to ask where did the money come from for the Historic signs. The markers cost \$3000.

Mr. Rickey will call.

Land Use Board applications - None

Motion to adjourn was made by Lee, second by Jodi

All in favour

Respectfully submitted.

Debbie Coulson