

Lower Merion Historical Society
Executive Board Meeting
January 17, 2017
The Lower Merion Academy

Present: Jerry Francis, Carole Strickland, Leon Levine, Christina Fink, Perry Hamilton, Martha Moffat, Max Buten, Pete Hoskins, Bobbie McElroy

Excused Absence: Joanne Murray, Ken Brier, Louis Barson, Gary Brock, Pat Doyle and Bruce Gill

Jerry Francis called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM. The minutes of the November 1, 2016 meeting were corrected by adding the signature of the Secretary, Barbara McElroy and approved as corrected.

Reports: Jerry expects this year of 2017 to be an active one for the Historical Society. We are working on protecting “historic objects,” such as the Milestones, which will go before the Historical Commission to be listed. The Township has hired Gregory Prichard, an Historic Preservation Planner, to document the history of an additional 15 properties that should be classified for protection and are not listed on the Township’s Historic Resource Inventory Database. Lower Merion Township has hired DPZ Partners, LLC, giving them a 2½ year contract to implement a new form based zoning. Re-Zoning in the Township will be a controversial effort.

A list of controversial projects was presented. Of continued concern is: 330 Gypsy Lane in Wynnewood, 6 Old Gulph Road (Lot 6) in Penn Valley, Egyptian Theater in Bala, Knox Home in Wynnewood and the William Penn Inn located in Wynnwood. On the positive side, there has been good news concerning: Ashbridge House in Rosemont, 306 Bala Avenue in Cynwyd, Old Guard House in Gladwyne, and the Levering Mill Tribute House in Cynwyd. A discussion of each property followed.

Treasurer’s Report: Leon discussed the preliminary review of the 2016 Profit & Loss Statement and the Balance Sheet. We do show more in the black despite a shortage of income for the Station unit. Listed as “Gross Profit” should be listed as “Gross Revenue.” Under Expenses/Repairs is work done in basement and plumbing. The Final Treasurer’s Report will be at the Annual Meeting. A vote to authorize The Historical Society to spend approximately \$900 for Worker’s Compensation Insurance for Jerry Francis, our employee, was approved unanimously.

Database Administration/Newsletter: Jerry reported that Joanne continues to do a wonderful job with both the Newsletter and our Database.

Education: A list of 11 Education Sessions and Programs for 2016 was provided. The list of programs for 2017 is incomplete. The next program will be on February 26th on “The Underground Railroad”. May 20th will be the “Merion Friends History Festival.”

We have all been asked to work there. A discussion of a meeting and tour at West Laurel Cemetery will be discussed at a later date.

Website/Facebook/You Tube: The Website was launched in 2001, so over the past 15 years we have had 2,449,794 visits. Of the 110 countries that have visited the site, Jerry noted the 886 visits from the Russian Federation! During 2016 there were 221,420 visits. Jerry and Joanne have engaged the services of MetaTechnical Computer & IT Services for an overview of the project.

Membership: Jerry reported that the 2017 Membership letter has been mailed. It is thought that we cannot survive on dues alone. We have an aging Membership, so we should revise what we ask for Membership.

Programs: Jerry discussed the request for funds, for the Historical Society, to various organizations. The “Merion Friends History Festival” on May 20th will have exhibit tables. Carol moved to provide \$500 of Historical Society grant money to “Merion Friends History Festival” on May 20th. Perry 2nd the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Property: A discussion of the up coming construction at the Bala Cynwyd Middle School, next to the Academy building, will be on the Zoning Hearing Board agenda. The Lower Merion Academy Trustees owns our building, but how the construction will effect our building is a question.

Pete Hoskins discussed the changes at the Cynwyd Train Station property. Tracy Katz has separated from her partner, Julia, at the Café, however both names will stay on our agreement for the 3-year lease. They have been storing food items in the basement area. The Montgomery County Board of Health now requires the floor in the storage room be painted and be sealed.

Public Relations: Nothing to report.

Publications: Perry deferred his report to the Spring meeting.

Strategic Planning: No report

Old Business:

The Assimilation of the Lower Merion Horse Co: Christina reported that there will be a meeting of Committee members on Tuesday, March 14th at 7 PM at the Historical Society building. Each Member must bring a Mission Statement for the Horse Company on how to make it relevant in the Historical Society. Two Lower Merion and two Harriton History students will be invited as a Junior Advisory Council. The Horse Society has not turned over any of their records yet.

Request from the Office of Independent Odd Fellows: A request from the Office of the Grand Secretary of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of Pennsylvania: to re-activate Merion Lodge #210 was discussed. A decision to invite the group to come to a meeting in the Spring for discussion was made.

New Business: Committee Appointments

Budget Committee: Leon Levine and Jerry Francis.

Financial Review Committee: Perry Hamilton and Carole Strickland

Nominating Committee: Perry Hamilton, Ken Brier and Jerry Francis

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara McElroy, Recording Secretary