

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Held in the Caucus Room of the Municipal Building  
On Wednesday, February 10, 2016**

The Chairman, Joe Richvalsky, called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

**Roll Call:**

Members: Present – Chairman, Joe Richvalsky; Vice Chairman, Ralph White; Lois Shinko  
Clint Gault arrived shortly after roll call

Guests: Terri Czup, Media Relations, City of Avon; Gene Schwartz, Resident; Rick Schneider, Zoning Enforcement Officer, City of Avon

**Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, December 9, 2015**

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Ms. Shinko to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, December 9, 2015, and approve said minutes as published, and the vote was all ayes.

**Schwartz Road Barn**

Ms. Czup stated that she had been designated by Mayor Jensen to be at this meeting speaking on behalf of the City's application to dismantle the Schwartz Road Barn. The plan is to take the barn down one board at a time, label and number everything, package it properly, and store it on City property. One of the reasons for the dismantling is because the barn is in danger of falling down and the other reason is so that it can be saved and rebuilt on another piece of City property yet to be determined.

Mr. Gault arrived at the meeting at this time.

Ms. Czup continued by saying that we have talked a lot about the revitalization of the Detroit Road area, and of creating a new downtown space, and one of the things we would do is take old buildings and use them in an updated, remodeled way so that might be something we might do with the barn. Another thought is using the barn in some way in the area where we are going to have the History Walk if there is enough land there. Nothing has been decided but the two things she knows is that the barn will be put back up on City property and it will be in a historically accurate manner as a demonstration of our history.

Mr. Richvalsky said that he wanted to let everyone know what had happened in the last week or so regarding the barn. When the Schwartz farmhouse received its landmark status in 2004, it did include all its outbuildings on that property and naturally we all assumed the barn was part of that property. Now, all these years later, we have come to learn that the barn sits on a different parcel so really it was never landmarked, and that is the property that the City bought for a new entrance to Schwartz Road Park. Our Ordinance for landmarks does not address an issue such as this. He talked with Mayor Jensen on February 3<sup>rd</sup> regarding all this and the Mayor said that the Law Director would be looking at writing in some kind of clause to handle a situation like this. Ms. Czup added that the Building Department would have typically flagged it had it been on the landmarks list, but since it was not, when the City got the permit to do the dismantling, the process began. Then this came up and everything was stopped until tonight's meeting.

Mr. Richvalsky said, yes, that is how things have happened and Mayor Jensen has personally taken it on to approve it being dismantled and numbered and saved. Mr. Gault added that from his perspective, they could not have a more supportive backing from the City. Legally the City does not have to do anything; it does not fit within the confinements of what they have to do, so they could choose to say that the barn would be demolished. But there was an exerted effort made with this whole process to save the barn and is a demonstration of a commitment to show that they do care. Mr. Gault said that Mayor Jensen told him that he was pleased with all the progress that the City has made in terms of trying to be committed to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and that he did not want the barn to be an issue in any way.

Mr. White stated that they all knew this was coming because when the City bought the property there was talk of what to do with the barn. As far as the designation for a landmark, when Ladegaards bought the Schwartz house in the early 1970's, the barn was not part of it. The Ray Schwartz family to the east still owned the barn. Mr. White said that he did not have a problem with anything the City is doing; it sounds good to him. Ms. Czup asked how old the barn was and Mr. White said his guess would be the late 1800's. Mr. Schwartz added that is what he would say; he asked his aunt that question just yesterday and she said the 1870's.

Mr. Schneider stated that the Mayor asked him to work with the contractor while they are dismantling the barn and packaging it up so we can store it. He said that we cannot save every piece but we are going to save as much as possible for the reconstruction of it at a later date. He passed around pictures of the barn so everyone could see the inside of the barn as well as the exterior. There was discussion about some of the contents and the construction of the barn and what they would be saving.

Mr. Richvalsky noted that this sets a precedent with the City leading this effort; it sets a good precedent for the citizens of Avon that this is a great way to preserve something as opposed to demolition. He said that Ms. Czup has brought in a permit application for dismantling. Since the barn is not landmarked, we need to nominate the building and vote it in as a landmark before we can approve the dismantling.

A motion was made by Mr. Richvalsky to vote tonight to designate the Schwartz Road Barn as an Avon landmark. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gault. Discussion: Ms. Shinko was concerned that wrapping the barn siding after it was taken down might cause mold. Mr. Schneider responded that it would not be wrapped; it would be banded. Ms. Shinko said that sometimes the Amish put slabs in between and layer it. Mr. Schneider said, yes, so there is a flow of air in there.

Mr. Richvalsky stated that now a vote would be taken. A "yes" means approving the barn to become a landmark; a "no" means you do not want it to be a landmark, or you can abstain. The vote was: Mr. White, "yes"; Ms. Shinko, "yes"; Mr. Gault, "yes"; Mr. Richvalsky, "yes". The Chairman declared the motion passed and stated that the barn is now an Avon Landmark. He will fill out the official application and sign it after this meeting because he does not have a form with him.

Mr. Richvalsky asked if any other discussion was necessary regarding the request for dismantling the barn. He said that he just wanted to suggest that perhaps the Avon Isle property would be a good place to rebuild the barn. There was some discussion about the amount of land that the City owns there. Mr. Richvalsky said that he would like to add a condition to the process: that the barn first be thoroughly photographed and then photographed as it is being taken apart so there is a record of it. He said that he was assuming that Mr. Schneider would be doing that anyway, but he wanted to write that in as a condition and that perhaps the LPC would get a disc of those photographs at some point.

A motion was made by Mr. Richvalsky to vote on the approval of the dismantling of the barn and it was seconded by Mr. Gault. Mr. Richvalsky stated that a “yes” means you are approving of the dismantling, a “no” means you do not approve of it, or you may abstain. The vote was: Mr. White, “yes”; Ms. Shinko, “yes”; Mr. Gault, “yes”; Mr. Richvalsky, “yes”. The Chairman declared the motion passed and the dismantling approved. He said he would sign the form and make a copy of it.

Mr. Richvalsky said that before Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Schneider leave, he would love to hear anything else they might know about the barn and the Schwartz family.

Mr. Schwartz said that there used to be a well in the front of the barn and there were two outbuildings there in the front that housed bulls. Mr. Schneider suggested asking Mr. Schwartz’s aunt to write what she remembers about the barn so he could archive that. Ms. Czup said that she would be happy to interview her and write that up. Mr. Richvalsky said to Mr. Schwartz that any photographs from the past are interesting to the LPC and the Historical Society and they could scan any pictures they might receive.

### **LPC Project Committees**

**Landmark Awards Committee** – Mr. White said that there was no Committee; there was just him and he would like some help with copying letters. He made a list of houses and properties that are eligible for a letter and we could do maybe five letters at a time. There are a couple beautiful houses that have been fixed up and he does not know the new owners. He imagines that the owners are into century homes, so getting a letter would be nice and a little bit of incentive. Most of the others have owned their homes and improved them and maintained them with a lot of dignity so that is why he chose them. Mr. Richvalsky said that when the letters are ready, we can say in this meeting that we approve. Mr. White said to remember that the letter is to be signed by all the members of the LPC and Mr. Richvalsky said, yes, we can sign it at that time. Ms. Czup said that she would help in obtaining the names of owners. Mr. White said that the letters can all be the same as long as we acknowledge the property owner and the property address. Mr. Richvalsky noted for the record that Ms. Shinko has two properties that she wants to nominate and she is going to do the paperwork and bring it to a meeting in the future.

**History Walk Committee** - Ms. Czup announced that she spoke with Karen Kirsch of First Energy Corp. today and was informed that First Energy is granting us \$10,000. this year for the History Walk Project. Ms. Czup told her that the total cost of the project is about \$19,000. and Ms. Kirsch is going to look to either get us another \$3,000. this year or possibly give us \$10,000. this year and \$10,000. next year that would cover the whole thing. Mr. Richvalsky said that was excellent news. He added that through Scott Seighman, the advisor of the Tech Club at Avon High School, we are going to have a lot of student involvement in the History Walk project itself. Not only the Tech Club, but another group that wants to do interviewing, and another writing class group. What is excellent about this is that it involves the younger generation and all the things we have been talking about: community involvement, getting the younger generation interested in history, just so many good things. It is all very exciting. Mr. Richvalsky said that his goal was to have all the markers done by the first day of summer but we will see because now this ties into the students’ schedule, etc.

Mr. White left the meeting at this time as he was not feeling well.

Mr. Richvalsky stated that he wanted to make a few changes on the topics for the markers and he listed these as follows:

- Adding a marker on “Native Indians”
- Changing the “Women’s Suffrage and Emancipation” marker to a marker on “Social Changes” (this would allow for many categories on this marker)
- Adding “Agriculture and Grape Vineyards” to the marker on “The Avon Farm”

Ms. Czup asked what the “Towns and Districts” marker meant and Mr. Richvalsky responded that historically there was Avon Center, which was the area of Stoney Ridge/Detroit/Avon Isle/French Creek and that was where most of the shops were. Then at the Avon Cemetery, there was another corner of shops, and then the third was at the corner of Nagel and Detroit, where there was another of these mini corners. So this marker is about those districts, what the shops were and some of the people living there.

A motion was made by Mr. Gault and seconded by Ms. Shinko to make the proposed changes and the vote was all ayes in favor. The Chairman declared the motion passed and said the changes would be made.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

Mr. Richvalsky stated that the next meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission would be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, at 7:00 P.M. in the Caucus Room of Avon City Hall.

#### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by Mr. Gault and seconded by Ms. Shinko to adjourn the meeting and the vote was all ayes.

Transcribed by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council

