

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building
On Wednesday, February 8, 2023**

The Chairman, Matt Smith, called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call

Members: Present –Vice Chairman Ralph White; Cynthia Murnyack-Czarnecki; Clint Gault; Chairman Matt Smith

Correspondence

Mr. White stated that he emailed Mike Milano of Milano Monuments on Monday but he has not yet heard back from him. Mr. White said that he told him all about the meeting that we had with the Mayor, the photographs that he took at the Cemetery, to keep the work at the Cemetery on his schedule, and to prepare an invoice to get paid. He said that he also told Mr. Milano about having a stainless-steel marker made for John Bowman to replace the plaque that Mr. Milano found on the ground at the Cemetery. Mr. White said that he is going to put the marker in himself and he asked Mr. Milano where he found the plaque. He expects to hear from Mr. Milano within the next week when he is back from vacation.

Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki stated that she had done some research regarding the John Bowman plaque. She consulted with Jennifer Norton, the research librarian at Westlake Porter Public Library and asked for her insight on where to find more information. She actually found information from there at the Cleveland Public Library's Necrology File. There was a relevant entry there for John Bowman, including his obituary. It read that his funeral was held at the W.L. Pease Funeral Home in Wakeman, Ohio, and his burial was in Avon, Ohio. Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki contacted the Western Reserve Historical Society to inquire about the W. L. Pease Funeral Home but what they could share with her was that there was a funeral home in Dover, A. Pease Funeral Home, at the time and Dover is now Westlake but they were not sure if there was an established relationship between the A. Pease Funeral Home and the W. L. Pease Service that is on the plaque from Wakeman. Upon further research she found that the Huron County Ohio Cemetery inscriptions by the Huron County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogy Society, the 1997 edition, listed entries in there for the Bowman family and also an entry for William L. Pease from the Funeral Home. Trying to research that further, she contacted the branch manager at the Wakeman Library and she responded that she would get back to us with any assistance that she could. She said she would research the W. L. Pease Funeral Home because as far as she knew, they did not have that funeral home in Wakeman. Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki told her that we truly appreciate that and that whenever she could get back to the Commission, we would welcome any information that she had for us.

Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki said that, on another note, she received the Letter of Recognition from Mr. White that our Landmarks Preservation Commission sends to homeowners and she is currently looking into and reviewing what other Landmarks Preservation Commissions send before we begin rewriting anything.

Mr. Smith stated that he appreciates Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki's endeavors regarding the Bowman family and working with the Letter of Recognition and he thanked her very much.

Mr. Gault stated that the history behind the Letters of Recognition was to applaud people's efforts. The Landmarks Preservation Commission does not have much teeth in the whole process in terms of making

people do certain things. There was a period for awhile when we made a large effort to gain more strength, to have a mandate or be able to push certain things, but at the end of the day, we decided to stop that path and go the direction of applauding people who went out of their way to beautify their properties. When people come to the Commission and ask if they are able to tear a house down oftentimes there is already such water damage and other issues going on, that there is no choice but it is sad because some properties could have been preserved if they had been kept up. So he thought it was Mr. White who then had the idea to send letters to the property owners who are doing a great job in maintaining and beautifying their properties to tell them we appreciate it and to keep it up.

Mr. White said, yes, he wrote that letter years ago, with the help of his wife, and they sent out several. He likes the letter and wants to keep pretty much everything that is in it but maybe have a different way of saying it. He did not want to keep sending the same old letter that we have been sending for the last 10 or 15 years; it would be nice to have something a little different.

Mr. Smith said that Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki's idea to look at what some other Commissions send out is a great way to glean ideas. Mr. White stated that he did not really know that other Commissions do these letters but he would not say for sure. He thinks that the Avon Historical Society used to do something like that but he thought it was more with plaques. And he mentioned the Historical Society in his letter as being part of it which he felt was important. There was a time when each member of the Landmarks Preservation Commission signed the letter and he thought that maybe we should get the Mayor to sign it too. There is a lot involved in doing all of it - from writing the letter, to getting all the signatures, to going to the post office to mail it. It is not something that he wanted to do for every landmark, but he does have a couple that are past due. One house on Rt. 83 by the golf course – the new people who have moved in there have done a really nice job in fixing it up. The house just looks outstanding and is landscaped nicely. It is probably a 1910 – 1925 built, a three story type house. He said that he likes to put the architecture in the letter; he thinks that is important because so many people may not be aware of what architecture their house is or the original owner's name, so if he knows those things, he likes to include them in the letter.

Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission Held Wednesday, January 11, 2023

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Gault to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission held Wednesday, January 11, 2023, and approve said minutes as published. The vote was all ayes and the Chairman declared the motion passed.

Update on Center Cemetery – Matt Smith and Ralph White

Mr. Smith stated that he and Mr. White met with Mayor Jensen last week just to inquire about how much money would be allocated for this year for updates on the Cemetery and the Mayor told them it would be up to \$25,000. We were talking about how Mike Milano of Milano Monuments is going to have a Phase 2 to do this year and Mr. Smith asked Mr. White to comment on what Mr. Milano was saying about how he was going to handle the next phase of the Cemetery work.

Mr. White said that his intentions, when he first met with Mr. Milano, were to do all the markers that were in desperate need of repair but Mr. Milano did not want to do that first. He wanted to make an inventory and then do the work in phases and Mr. White understood that he was right. He wants to go

from south to north or north to south, a section at a time. That way nothing gets missed and things are addressed in a timely fashion with an organization to it and Mr. White agreed that was good. So the next phase will be from the Rt. 83 side towards the center of the mound, whatever he will do as far as a section, and then all the way to the north, or vice/versa and eventually work the way down. Mr. White went though and took photographs of all the damaged markers and there are a lot. There are a few that are repaired that in his eyes, are good enough for now; some of them are very old. He does not know if some of the markers have been knocked over by the landscaping company that was hired by the City to do the mowing. It is easy to do in a zero turn if you are in a hurry. Mr. Smith added that Mr. White mentioned that to Mayor Jensen and the Mayor said he would talk to whoever deals with the landscaping company to tell them to try to be careful up there. Mr. White said that there is always a chance for an accident but carelessness is just not acceptable in his mind. He thought that there were some more stones that were damaged from the last time he was there last spring; he does not remember that many stones broken and laying in the grass. But we have to address each section at a time so that is what we will do.

Mr. Smith said that he was pleased that Mayor Jensen is fully supportive of taking care of the Center Cemetery, also known as the Mound Cemetery. Mr. White spearheaded the idea with the Mayor and the Mayor has followed through and that is really great. Mr. White stated that the Cemetery is a landmark and it is kind of in the center of the City where everybody looks at it and it would be nice to have it looking good. Originally what started the whole thing was that he got a complaint from a citizen and he went up to the Cemetery and looked and he said, yes, he was going to do something; so that is how it started.

Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki asked if the citizen who complained about the Cemetery had a relative there or were they just looking at the Cemetery and thinking it was deplorable. Mr. White answered, the citizen's exact words were, "Do you have any pull? Can't you do something about that?" Mr. White said to him that he would have to look into it so that is how it started. He added that the signage says, "Avon Center Cemetery"; if you have your name on it you have to take care of it.

Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki asked about the area of the next phase and Mr. White said that he has two lists of the order of stones and one is really old and the other one is since 2010 and they are hard to follow. He said that he would forward that to Mr. Smith to see if he could make sense of it. There are approximately 1,100 people buried there. Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki asked if he could forward that to all of them and Mr. White said yes, or Mr. Smith can forward it on as he has all of their emails. Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki noted that when you are on the corner in your car and looking at the Cemetery, you would never imagine that there were that many buried there. Mr. White agreed. He said that when you look at the map that the City has where it has numbered the plots, you are amazed at all the numbers but it does not seem like there is an order because the markers are not even.

Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki asked if the topography of the land being a hill there, has an effect on the numbering and Mr. White said, yes, it may have but it also had an effect on how they buried people. Sometimes they are not even rows. The newer side, on the east end, is a little flatter and it is more in rows.

Landmark Nominations

There were no Landmark Nominations.

Landmark Letters of Recognition

Mr. Smith stated that they did discuss earlier in the meeting that they are working on a new version of the Letter.

Member Comments

Mr. Smith stated that this past December, we had a citizen donate some Indian artifacts to the Cahoon House Museum. There were arrowheads, spearheads, hatchet head scrapers and pipes. Nicole Rambo-Ackerman, Planning Commission Secretary, asked him to get those identified as she would like to mount those and display them somewhere in the Cahoon House. So on Saturday, February 18th, Mr. Smith is meeting with the Firelands Archaeology Group and anyone is invited to this. The meeting will be at the Firelands Archaeologists Meeting House at 4944 Detroit Road in Sheffield Village, 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. Every once in awhile they will bring in professionals and they will give you the time periods when the Indians made the artifacts and the name of the tribe. Again, anyone is welcome to come to this and it should be interesting.

Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki asked if the artifacts were found locally and Mr. Smith said, yes, on both sides of the road by the Cahoon House. The gentleman who found them, Chuck Smith, lived across the street at one time. He came to the celebration of Wilbur Cahoon's 250th birthday party in December; he came in with the artifacts and said that he would like to donate them so we gladly took them.

Mr. Smith said that he also wanted to mention that the Lorain County Historical Society is celebrating Lorain County's Bicentennial which was December 26, 2022, and they are doing a series of programs through the year 2024. Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki kindly sent him an email that there was a program on the Connecticut Western Reserve which Avon is part of. It is well done and is on the Lorain County Historical Society website. These programs are going to be ongoing and he thought it was excellent. He said they can all spread the word to people to check out the Lorain County Historical Society website and click on Lorain County Bicentennial and they will find a lot of interesting information.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Ms. Murnyack-Czarnecki to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the vote was all ayes. The Chairman declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

Date of Next Meeting

Mr. Smith stated that the next meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission would be held on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, in the Council Chambers of Avon City Hall at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council