

# Yorktown Landmarks Preservation Commission

January 08, 2020

Location: AACCCC

Attendance: Lynn Briggs, Chair, Christine Sisler, Nancy Milanese,, Bridget Krowe, Brendan Murphy, Ed Pell and Tom McLoughlin were present. Adam Fetzer and Terry Naumann were excused.

T82.001	Balance to Date	\$562.42
T82.002	Balance to Date	\$3030.30

The CLG Grant monies in the amount of \$2572 have not been received by the town. Lynn will send a reminder to the state.

Lynn questioned the term limits of the reappointed and appointed board members. Nancy explained that according to Code 198-3 (B) term limits are to be staggered.

The Town Board has given the YLPC a budget of \$5000 for 2020. A new budget line has been created under Code A8020.479.5.

Lynn is in the process of preparing the CLG annual report. All members are to forward any training/events they attended that are eligible.

She also asked if everyone has been sworn in. If not, do so. Stop by the Town Clerk's Office and she or her Deputy can do so. Alice Roker is the YLPC's liaison from the Town Board.

It was brought to the Board's attention that Monica Doherty, deceased member of the Historic Society had boxes and boxes full with papers some possible containing historic information on Yorktown. Paul Martin, president of the Historical Society has stored them in his garage. Finding a safe location was discussed. Can YLPC have access to the boxes? Monica's files need to be catalogued for future reference. Inquire of Tom Travis if there is room in Record Retention. Inquire of Paul Martin how many boxes are there.

Brendan is in the process of creating a digital storage for all of HHD and designated Landmarks. Obtain the design for digital archives from Patrick Raftery, Westchester County Historical Society. Lynn to ask Paul Martin to work with YLPC to put Monica's files into an archives. Lynn and Brendan to meet with Westchester County Historical Society to produce digital archives. She'll invite Paul Martin to be part of the larger project.

Suggest the new town's administration put plan in place to march forward to 2026, the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Revolutionary War. Use celebration as a point of arrival for the town. This is a huge opportunity for YLPC to present to the Town Board, create a working committee aligned with the state and the county. Create a resolution to get the Town Board to get involved.

Present to Town Board a name change for the YLPC to Heritage Preservation Commission. This name better represents what we are about.

Suggestion to appoint a Town Historian and appoint them to the YLPC. NYS requires a Town Historian in every municipality. Lynn asked for recommendations. Linda Kiederer's name was mentioned. Also, it was thought that Tom Travis, may be in this position.

Next up: Updating our resources. We will only focus on the Heights Hamlet. Neil Larson submitted a proposal. He will leverage the 2006 survey and focus on the Heights District. Note: He identified 52 properties that are historical in nature. Lynn asked if YLPC should proceed. All present voted in favor.

Using the GIS, Larson/Fisher Survey, Comp Plan, HHD, Landmarks came up with 623 different points on map generated by Brendan. This is a general idea of where the town was between 1620 and 1866. CLIO templates will layout the best driving route for tourists. Westchester County Historical Society is inputting all their data into CLIO. They invited us to so also.

A meeting with former Town Supervisor Michael Grace, present attorney Adam Rodriguez and Lynn is set for January 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the town obtaining ownership of the Hyatt Cemetery located on Route 132.

Pictures of the Strang Tavern structure were passed around, including an article on its historical value. Neil Larson to date and authenticate the structure. A proposal to move it to Downing Park, across from the Presbyterian Church was proposed and to turn it into a visitor center.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm

Submitted by  
Nancy L. Milanese

**Revitalizing the Hamlet of Yorktown Heights:  
Economically and Culturally**

**Recommendations from  
Yorktown Landmarks Preservation  
Commission  
January 8, 2020**

## **Revitalizing the Hamlet of Yorktown Heights**

### **Recommendations: Yorktown Landmarks Preservation Commission**

**Goal:** Use the celebration of the nation's 250 birthday in 2026 as the point of arrival for this phase of our revitalization journey

### **H.R.4875 - United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016**

(Sec. 4) This bill establishes the United States Semiquincentennial Commission to plan, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of U.S. history leading up to the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

(Sec. 5) The Commission shall: (1) prepare an overall program for the commemoration; (2) plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate observances and activities commemorating the historic events associated with the Semiquincentennial; (3) emphasize the planning of events in locations of historical significance to the United States; and (4) give special emphasis to the role of persons and locations with significant impact on U.S. history beginning on the date of execution of the Declaration of Independence and to the ideas associated with that history.

(Sec. 6) The Department of the Interior shall study and report to the Commission on appropriate actions that might be taken to further preserve and develop historic sites and battlefields to ensure that fitting observances and exhibits may be held at such sites during the celebration.

The Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Archives shall cooperate with the Commission. The Secretary of State shall coordinate the participation of foreign nations in the celebration.

Interior shall, through a competitive process, seek to enter into an arrangement with a nonprofit organization, the mission of which is consistent with the purpose of this bill, under which such nonprofit shall:

- serve as the secretariat of the Commission;
- house the administrative offices of the Commission;
- assume responsibility for funds of the Commission; and
- provide to the Commission financial and administrative services related to budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, personnel, and procurement.

(Sec. 10) The Commission shall terminate on December 31, 2027.

## **I. Town Support Required**

**1. Recommendation:** Get the Town of Yorktown commitment to align with New York State and Westchester County legislation (tbd) to commemorate nation's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday

**1a. Recommendation:** Enact Yorktown legislation that states the town will formulate and implement a program in observance and commemoration of the historical aspects of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of the United States

### **Next Step:**

- 1) create resolution to bring to the Town Board
- 2) lay out potential programs or events, Town or partnership, with other municipalities

**2. Recommendation:** Establish a digital archive for Yorktown's historical records

### **Next Step:**

- 1) work with the Westchester Historical Society, create proposal for Town Board approval

**3. Recommendation:** Support the renaming of the Yorktown Landmarks Preservation Commission to the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)

-Sometimes, Landmarks has a toxic connotation; stimulates negative experiences or perceptions about what we do; is limiting, restrictive, inflexible

*-Heritage is all the things that make up our story, tangible and intangible, and as we value them, we must protect them*

We have been preserving our heritage, tangible (landmarks, HHD's) and intangible (public outreach: lectures, festivals, events, projects)

### **Next Step:**

- 1) create resolution and review with NY State Historic Preservation Commission, Town Attorney
- 2) gain Town Board approval
- 3) modify website and other materials

**4. Recommendation:** Appoint a Town Historian; become member of the HPC

-New York is the only state requiring a public historian in every municipality

-New York State has 61 city historians and 567 village historians and 938 town historians

**Next Step:**

- 1) re-recommend the appointment and provide the Town Board with potential candidates

## **II. Proposed Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) Plans and Programs**

### **1. Update the Historic Resources Inventory for Yorktown Heights Hamlet**

- complete an update of the 2006 historic resources inventory conducted by Larson Fisher
- an exclusive focus on the Yorktown Heights Hamlet, estimated 52 properties
- deliverables include:
  - a map indicating locations and potential historic district boundaries,
  - photographs of buildings and views,
  - analyses of each significance and eligibility determinations, and
  - identification of character-defining features & preservation standards for redevelopment
- confirm eligibility determinations with State Historic Preservation Office

### **2. Create a Geographic Information System map of all historically significant sites within Yorktown**

- target landmarks, homes of historic distinction, Major Andre stops to British line
- first priority, use as input to CLIO, free website and mobile application and open architecture
- completed eleven drafts of CLIO template
- require additional data to meet peer review ready status
- convert into tours with in "historic" districts

### **3. Apply for designation of the hamlet as a Preserve America Community (clustered points of interest)**

- a federal initiative
- designates and recognizes communities that protect and celebrate their heritage
- uses historic assets for economic development and community revitalization
- encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs
- apply under our Certified Local Government status

### **4. Make the hamlet walkable (in conjunction with Planning, ABACA, other Town Departments)**

- start with Route 118, Underhill Avenue, Kear Street, Downing Drive, Commerce Street, Veterans Road
- make people, not automobiles, the focal point; encourage people want to walk it
- develop design criteria: clear, understandable sidewalk, street and land-use system
- sidewalks and streets system should link points of interest, cleans lines of site and travel, unify pedestrian system, balanced transportation supporting automobiles, bicycles, walking, transit, secure,

- well connected street patterns, alternative automobile and pedestrian routes to every destination, stable paving materials for sidewalks
- simple instructive signage, benches, restrooms, fountains, artwork, trees to human level, landscaping and flowers in planting strips or containers, gathering places, e.g. pocket parks and small plazas, street parking, lighting, digital walking tours

#### **5. Embrace Revolutionary War 250 (RW250) Initiative in conjunction with the Semiquincentennial Commemoration**

- participate in the observance and commemoration of the Semiquincentennial of the United States Commission Act of 2016 (250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United States)
- partner with RW250, a charitable non-profit corporation, organized to further the purpose of the Semiquincentennial Commission
- participate in local planning and execution and with other municipalities of events and activities, such as:
  - battle reenactments, road signage that ties with information historic markers
  - programming on the Town TV channel
  - speaker series paired with special event days featuring culinary or brewing experiences, etc
  - projects with students, role of women, soldiers and civilians of African Descent
- providing rotating programs: lectures, workshops, programs in photography, museum, dance, art, painting, book discussions, poetry readings, services in the community, job training; can be adjunct museum, mini theatre, office for YLPC, others
- tied and linked to parades and festivals on Commerce Street

#### **6. Rehabilitate abandoned cemeteries in Yorktown**

- complete inventory of abandoned cemeteries
- pursue Town ownership of the Hyatt Cemetery, restore and designate
- complete the Community Church (landmark) inventory with Shrub Oak International School students and Monumedic, 1H 2020
- complete Troop 164 Eagle Scout project of Amawalk Friends House (landmark) grounds and cemetery, 1H 2020

#### **Next Step:**

- 1) resolve the ownership of the Hyatt Cemetery; action plan in place for January 21 start



## 7. Identify and gain approval for additional landmarks and HHD's

-fabricate first four bronze markers in first installment: Yorktown Train Station, First Presbyterian Church, Albert A. Capellini Community & Cultural Center

-identify the next group and

-fund raise

### Identify Potential Landmarks, HHDs and Listings for National and State Register of Historic Places and Owners

Rochambeau Mill race - Landmark

Zahn Home - HHD

Fran Goldwyn house, Chapman Road - HHD

Spallone House, Baptist Church Road (might be the original Clement homestead) -HHD

Cider Mill (P. Arden Hall), Baptist Church Road -HHD

Hubbard Farm house, Baptist Church Road, HHD

Beautiful intact farmhouse on top of Baldwin Road (don't know the name of the owner)

Baptist Church Parsonage (original 1840s church moved to corner — where Joe Vigilante lives) - HHD

McGill/Dial Home, Baptist Church Road, (formerly Tompkins Scribner) Landmark

Victorian house next to Presbyterian Church — one time parsonage, HHD

Mill Pond, Dr. Brennan's Home, Landmark or HHD

Mohegan Dairy Farm -Landmark

Florenceville School - HHD

Mildred Strang House (across from Copper Beach) - HHD

Soundview Preparatory School (Edward B. Underhill home) LM / HHD *Not really*

Hilltop Hanover Farm - Landmark

850 Underhill Brigit and Alex-Landmark

Catskill Aqueduct - Landmark

-Indian Hill Site, Landmark

-Other buildings, structures, sites, earthworks???

### Potential for next bus tour:

-Crompond Corners plus

-Yorktown Heights Hamlet

### Criteria for Landmark Per Code:

1) Possesses historic civic and community importance or value:

-education

-social

-historic

-political

-economic

- 2) Identified with historic personages
- 3) Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style
- 4) Is the work of a designer whose work has significantly influenced an age
- 5) Because of its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood.

Criteria for HHD from the application:

Simple Statement in 25 Words or Less Why Structure is of Historic Importance (Consider 1 - age of home/structure: typically 100 years old but more recent may qualify, 2 - architectural significance: designed by renowned architect, 3 - previous ownership: of local, regional and national prominence and 4 - relationship to events: like Revolutionary War):

**Next Steps:**

- 1) who will take ownership for which structures?

**Certificate of Appropriateness – AAC CCC Entry ways rehabilitation**

**Next Steps:**

- 1) obtain clear understanding of the plan (Demarsh, Tegeder, Gspuining)

**Certificate of Appropriateness – Yorktown Railroad Station**

**Next Steps:**

- 1) complete photo journaling
- 2) close out three conditions in CoA

Preliminary Draft on Strang Tavern – dated 1/6/20

*Background:* The Yorktown Landmark Commission was informed that a shed at 800 Granite Springs Rd, Yorktown was the former Strang Tavern dating back to the 1700's.

*Research Objectives:* The Commission wishes to confirm the original location of the tavern and establish its historical significance.

1. *Original location* - The Strang Tavern was a part of Crompond Corners (present day intersection of Routes 202 and 132.) Crompond Corners served as the town's focal point until the railroad was built in 1881 (present day Depot Station on Commerce St., Yorktown Heights). Originally built in 1738, the First Presbyterian Church still occupies the northwest corner of 202 and 132. The Strang Tavern was located opposite on the south side of Route 202. Also, housed there were the post office, tannery, slaughterhouse, and cobbler shop (**Presenting Historic Yorktown**).
2. *Historical Significance* - The Strang Tavern served as the meeting place for Major John Andre and Captain Ebenezer Foote in 1780. While stationed in Fishkill, Captain Ebenezer Foote was appointed superintendent of livestock for the American army. He was the officer in command at Crompond Corners when Andres and two other riders were stopped by a picket guard. Benedict Arnold's pass for a "Mr. John Anderson" (actually Andres) was read by Captain Foote by lamp light in Strang's Tavern. "The Connecticut Captain" accepted the pass and as William Abbatt stated, ... misses his chance (Foote) of historic distinction." (**The Crisis of the Revolution**)

When the purchasing commissaries department was abolished in 1782, Foote returned to Crompond village (now Yorktown) and lived with his wife in her brother's home in Yorktown (**The Memoirs of Ebenezer Foote**). Captain Ebenezer Foote, while serving in the Revolutionary War, was killed at Mud Fort, Horse Neck, Ct, (now called Old Greenwich).

While attempting to reach the British lines after meeting with Benedict Arnold, Andre's journey took him through Verplanck (Kings Ferry Road), Peekskill, and Yorktown before his eventual capture in Tarrytown. Andre also stopped overnight at the Andreas Miller house – south of Catherine Street (**Westchester County Historical Bulletin**) and had breakfast at the Underhill house at Hanover and California streets (**Spy Along the Hudson**) on Sept. 23, 1780.

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# Larson Fisher Associates, Inc.

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6 September 2019

Lynn Briggs, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Town of Yorktown  
1974 Commerce St.  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Dear Lynn,

Based on your response to our broader proposal, which we have amended and sent to you in an accompanying document, we are here providing a proposal singling out Yorktown Heights in a project that will update historic property data collected in our 2006 survey, provide assessments of significance for these properties and identify those that appear to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register either individually or in potential districts. We can also point out character-defining features of the buildings and their setting so that they will be protected in planning for the redevelopment of the town center and provide a foundation for compatible, contextual design.

The 2006 historic resource data base contains 52 properties located in Yorktown Heights. We propose to review that documentation and determine their current status and relationship to the planned redevelopment area in the field. From there, we will provide assessments of significance and identify character-defining features.

### Scope of Work

1. Select properties in 2006 data table and organize in separate spreadsheet
2. Field check properties and create map indicating locations and potential historic district boundaries
3. Photograph buildings and views
4. Prepare analysis of significance, eligibility determinations
5. Identify character-defining features & preservation standards for redevelopment
6. Review findings with Landmarks Preservation Commission & others
7. Confirm eligibility determinations with SHPO

The cost for our services will be \$4250.

Let me know how this plan sounds to you and other interested parties.  
We appreciate you inviting us to make this proposal.

Sincerely,



President