

History Advisory Committee
June 26, 2021

Attendance: Richard Coons, Alvin Sheffer, Rory Callahan, Tony Albino, Donald Dubac, Eric (?), Tom Shannon. First in-person meeting since March 2020.

- Parsonage has reopened on a limited basis. We can only have 5 visitors at one time in addition to History Department members. Masks are optional. There will be masks and hand sanitizer available for all visitors.
- Letter of intent for a Alexander and Marjorie Hover Foundation grant is July 1. I will submit a letter of intent seeking a grant for a marker at the First Reformed Cemetery at Sharp's Landing Road and Sharp's Landing Extension. Most prominent burial here is Diell Rockefeller but it also includes the earliest Sharpes. The marker I have in mind is similar to the one in front of the Parsonage, a stone with a bronze plaque. Germantown Library is willing to be our 501(c)3 partner on this project. The land belongs to the Town but has been mowed for decades by the adjacent property owner. Will eventually require Town Board approval. For now, I'll submit the letter of intent and work on the full grant.
- Going to try my hand at getting a Pomeroy Foundation grant to replace the Sharp's Landing NYS historic sign. As we've discussed before, it is the most inaccurate historic marker we have in Germantown. The original author confused it with Sharptown, in the town of Stuyvesant, NY. There are plenty of interesting and historically accurate facts that can be put on the replacement sign. Grants are reviewed on a rolling basis.
- Next history walk will be at the Second Reformed Cemetery on the hill on Main Street. The date changed since our meeting. It will be July 14th at 6:30 PM. There will be a history walk on Lower Main St/Young America Rd in August, and Viewmont Cemetery in September. October will either be a walk or a Zoom talk depending on weather.
- We spoke about the status of the Iron Mountain grant. Christopher Wiss from Germantown Library has been assisting us with this for months now. The representative from Iron Mountain seemed most interested in helping us preserve and digitize our tintype and glass plate negative photographs as well as scanning the extensive map collection we have upstairs. At this point, we need to get them an accurate inventory of what we have. Rich and I will follow up on this.
- During discussion of the Iron Mountain grant, Tony suggested putting together a pamphlet or small book and selling it at local stores. We have a number of publications we could do this with already. Currently they are only available at the Parsonage. I will follow up.

- Cheviot cemetery headstones. Bill Droege stopped by to pick up the Christoffel Fritz 1762 headstone, the large 1784 headstone, and the small marker with the initials "C.S" on it. They had all been stored at the Parsonage for safekeeping since autumn 2020. He will work on restoring them to their approximate locations in the oldest section, under the cedars close to Cheviot Road. Mentioned that Bill found the Fritz headstone underneath about an inch of dirt last year. It was not on Arthur Kelly's 1970's inventory or Dr. Rockefeller's 1910's era inventory of the cemetery.
- During discussion of the Cheviot cemetery, Donald asked about potentially using ground penetrating radar or similar technology there. Alvin mentioned Susan Winchell Sweeney from Bard and also a department at Vassar College having done projects locally. Everyone seems supportive of the idea. The priority areas I highlighted are the First Reformed and First Lutheran cemeteries on either end of Sharp's Landing since there are no physical remnants of them. Can someone on the committee please follow up with Bard and Vassar?
- Demolition permits. I received notice of our first demolition permit application since the demolitions at 44 Main Street a year or so ago. It was an application to demolish the former farm office on what is now called Gulden Farm on Dales Bridge Road. It was previously the Kellner Farm and Gene Sarazen's farm. I took some field notes and about 40 pictures. They will be kept on file at the History Department.
- Taconic/Bard/Cheney possible trail connecting Camp Creek Road and Maple Avenue. Nothing new to report since last meeting. Haven't heard back yet from Taconic since meeting with them in late May.
- Preservation League of NYS grant for a BCR at the Parsonage. Nothing new to report.
- 321 Main Street. Kate Wood approached me seeking a letter of support for a Excellence Award in Historic Preservation from the Preservation League of NYS. She gave me a tour of the house and I subsequently wrote a letter of support. The letter is attached here.