

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Held in the Caucus Room of the Municipal Building  
On Wednesday, July 10, 2019**

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

**Roll Call**

Members: Present –Vice Chairman Ralph White; Lois Shinko; Clint Gault; Chairman Matt Smith

**Guests:**

Bob Shinko, Resident

**Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, June 12, 2019**

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Gault to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, June 12, 2019, and approve said minutes as published. The vote was all ayes and the Chairman declared the motion passed.

**Landmarks Letter of Recognition – Ralph White**

Mr. White said that he had nothing for this month.

**Landmark Nominations – Lois Shinko**

Ms. Shinko stated that she did not have anything for this month.

**Comments**

Mr. Smith said that he met yesterday with Matthias Hauck, one of the owners of the Avon Brewing Company. Mr. Hauck had asked him several weeks ago for some application forms for Avon landmarks as he wants to get plaques for the old French Creek Tavern, now the Avon Brewing Company, and for two buildings that he and his partners have purchased: the building at the end of their parking lot (the Radio and TV Repair Shop) and ZZ's Big Top at the corner of Jaycox and Detroit. They are going to put a tap room in there. Mr. Smith said so he gave Mr. Hauck three application forms and he is going to fill them out and return them.

Mr. White stated that we need to go over the historical landmark list to make sure that the landmarks are not only accounted for but to make sure that the structure is the correct structure, and he wants this to be placed on the agenda for next month. He said, for instance, the Stickney House is not designated as a landmark on the list, but the barn is. The barn is not the landmark; it is the house. That was an oversight and we need to correct it. Mr. Smith noted that in the binder that has all the photos of the homes and the addresses, it has that house and in parentheses it says the word "barn". Mr. White stated that the house does not have a plaque; the people who owned it rented it for 25 years. Mr. Smith said that, for the next meeting, he would bring in the binders that have the photos and he and Mr. Smith should both bring in the lists that they have. Mr. White stated that we need to do whatever legal thing is necessary to make sure that the Stickney House has the designation and not the barn. He said he has a feeling that the demolition permit is getting close. The house has been neglected for years and he has complained about it to the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Some of the issues were addressed but

now the paint is peeling, there are broken windows, and all this past week the door to the house has been wide open. Mr. Smith said that he had gotten a call from someone who said he was in the process of purchasing that house and that he was getting a loan to refurbish it but if it was not refurbishable he was just going to tear it down. Mr. Smith told him he would have to go through the process of getting a demolition permit and he said ok. Ms. Shinko asked about the location of the house and Mr. White said that it was the Stickney House (the Palmer House) and it was next to ZZ's. It is one of the oldest houses in Avon and we need to try and save it. Mr. Smith added that in the list, it says circa 1850. Mr. White asked if they needed to find out from the Building Dept. or the Legal Dept. what needs to be done to change the designation from the barn to the house and Mr. Smith stated that they can just tell the Building Dept. that we have changed it. We will go over that at the next meeting and make the change and he will notify the Building Dept.

Mr. Gault reported on good things that have been happening when it comes to preserving the charm and character of the French Creek District. He said that he met with Service Director Mike Farmer last week at Mr. Gault's office and they took a walk down Detroit Road, all the way down to Middleton and back. The Bike to School/Walking Path Committee that Mr. Gault is on is trying to make Avon a friendlier, walking/biking community and part of that is not having these massive changes when you are walking down the road where the sidewalks are all messed up. So Mr. Farmer is going to have somebody come out and fix those sidewalks when you are walking to school or down the French Creek District. Mr. Farmer is also going to install a new pad for a planter where it must have been removed by the developer there across the road from Avenbury on the south side. Also, Mr. Gault showed templates to the Commission and said that something like the templates will be placed around the planters. They still have to decide on the final design. A lot of people do not like the "cement" kind of look of the planters and they wanted to keep them consistent with the whole French Creek District. The French Creek District needs to feel "different" or "special" to make it so and the Foundation is trying to make positive moves toward the quaintness and charm of that area. So these covers for the planters would be all down Detroit Road. That is a major upgrade and would look a lot better and they appreciate the help from the City on that.

Mr. Gault went on to say that he was talking to Law Director John Gasior a couple of days ago and they lined up a meeting for July 16<sup>th</sup> at Starbucks at 9:00 A.M. to discuss the agenda items from the LPC meeting that Mr. Gasior and the Mayor attended. Mr. Gault invited everyone to come to that July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. He added that, afterwards at 10:30 A.M., there will be a short meeting at his office with the Bikes/Walking Path Committee. They will discuss the things that the French Creek Foundation and people in the area are looking for in regard to the biking/walking path. He invited everyone to that meeting as well but said he would give an update at the next LPC meeting. He added that he also talked to Mr. Farmer about the progress being made on the light poles. They are going to start installing them deeper into the City and then expand out. The poles are up high enough so that they can cover both sides of the street and then there would be something lower where we can put banners, etc. to highlight events.

Mr. Gault said that he had one more comment. We are having good progress with the Library Committee. The big question is whether we keep the library as it is, or renovate it, or move the existing library elsewhere. He is trying to push forward the idea of making it more interconnective with other things. Our library is a little outdated and also separate from everything else so it would be nice if it were somehow connected to either the Miller Nature Preserve or to the area of Every Child's Playground, History Walk, Aquatic Center, and all of that. There are different ways that we could

potentially do that with more land but it would amplify the benefits and use of the library if that were to happen, and so there is a lot of brainstorming going on about the library and progress is being made.

Mr. White asked Mr. Gault if, when he talked to Mr. Gasior, if Mr. Gasior had any input on the topics that we discussed at the last meeting he was here. Mr. Gault said it was really that he just wanted to let us know he was following up and looking into things and wanted to talk more about them. Mr. Smith said that he ran into Mr. Gasior at City Hall a couple weeks ago and he cited some Ordinance categories dealing with Planning and Building and so Mr. Smith came and looked at the Codified Ordinance books. One of the requirements is if you have a plat and you want to build something on it, you have to list if there is a historic landmark on the property. If you do not fulfill that requirement, you do not get a Building Permit. Later on in the Planning process, you have to have your demolition permit; you have to have evidence that you have had contact with the Landmarks Preservation Commission. If you do not have that in your paperwork, you do not get a Building Permit. He then asked everyone, in the history of this Commission, how many times has a demolition permit been denied? Mr. White said that before he was on the LPC, there were a lot. Mr. Smith asked what happened when some got denied; did they still tear their building down because they owned it? Mr. White answered, yes, eventually, or they did not and moved on with a different idea. They waited out the six months and paid the fine or whatever. Mr. Smith said that obviously the idea of the demolition permit is to slow people down to look at other options but again, if you owned the property, you were going to do what you wanted with it. That is what he gathered by looking at the Ordinances. It slows them down by denying them a building permit but eventually someone would appeal and they are going to get their permit. Mr. White noted that in all the years that he has been on the Commission, he has never denied a demolition permit because it has always been justifiable. The house was not worth saving and he saw the benefits of demolition. Mr. Smith said he was just wondering what happened in the past when someone was denied a demolition permit. Mr. White said they waited six months and they got the demolition permit; a couple people paid fines. Mr. Smith said he could not find anywhere the mention of a fine. Mr. White stated there needs to be one; that was the idea in the beginning. Mr. White said that years ago, he wanted to increase the fine and increase the moratorium because he did not think it was enough.

Mr. Shinko stated people just want to build from the ground up; they do not want to restore anything old because it is so much easier to just put new buildings up. Mr. Gault said that when they bought their office it was actually set to be torn down but then they came in and wanted to restore it. Even the contractor told them it would be cheaper just to tear it down because there was so much involved but now so many people who come in the office say they love the charm and character of it. Mr. White added, and not only that, but what you have will last another 100 years and people do not think of that.

### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Gault to adjourn the meeting 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, August 14, 2019, in the Caucus Room of Avon City Hall at 7:00 PM.

Transcribed by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council