

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building
On Wednesday, September 8, 2021**

The Chairman, Matt Smith, called the meeting to order at 7:06 P.M.

Roll Call

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

Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings of Wednesday, July 14, 2021 and Wednesday, August 11, 2021

A motion was made by Mr. Gault and seconded by Mr. White to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the meetings of Wednesday, July 14, 2021, and Wednesday, August 11, 2021, 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 stated that he will have a Letter of Recognition next month for the house at 4063 Center Road. This house is already a landmark and the new owners have done a nice job with it; it is really well kept.

Landmark Nominations – Lois Shinko

Ms. Shinko stated that she did not have any landmark nominations at this time.

Ms. Shinko noted the wonderful flowers all about town, and she said the other day cornstalks and fall decorations were brought in. Mr. Gault stated that the French Creek Foundation and the Garden Club combined to place all the cornstalks. Volunteers got together last Saturday at Olde Avon Village and then as a group went down Detroit Road and tied all the cornstalks up. He said that Fran Burik always does a fantastic job with that; she leads the organization of it and the Garden Club does a great job. Also, a volunteer from Lowe's always helps out and she brought the Lowe's truck out so everything could be loaded into it. He added that the summer flowers on Detroit Road are placed in the planters by the French Creek Foundation and then the City does a great job of watering and fertilizing those all throughout the season.

Approval of ZZ's Big Top as an Avon Historic Landmark

Mr. Smith stated that Mathias Hauck, one of the owners of ZZ's Big Top, was at the LPC meeting last month and gave a very good speech on why ZZ's should be an Avon Historic Landmark. There were not enough members present at that meeting to vote on the application, so he now called for a motion for approval.

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Gault to approve that ZZ's Big Top be made an Avon Historic Landmark. The vote was all ayes and the Chairman declared the motion passed.

Mr. Smith said that he believed that Mr. White indicated that Mr. Hauck already has a plaque that he can put up and Mr. White said, yes, and maybe Mr. Smith can help him decide where to place it. Mr. Smith said he thought by the front entrance would be good because people would see it when they stop for the traffic light there. Mr. Smith added that, for the record, the address of ZZ's Big Top is 35015 Detroit Road.

Mr. Smith then handed out an updated list of the historic landmarks and stated that ZZ's is not on it yet. He said that Gail Hayden was kind enough to sit down with him about a month ago and they went through the list and got things organized. He said so they could add ZZ's to the list and he will stop at City Hall next week and have them put ZZ's on the official record. He added that the last time the landmarks list was revised was 2016 so it has been awhile.

Comments

Ms. Shinko noted that the Mayor gave her a plaque honoring the 50 years of her antique stores in Avon and all of her involvement in the community over those years. Mr. Smith stated that he was there at the ceremony and it was really nice. Ms. Shinko said, yes, the Mayor gave her the big plaque declaring the "Aunt Teak and Uncle Junque" weekend in Avon. Mr. Smith added that the official name now for the 4th weekend in June is the "Lois Shinko Aunt Teak and Uncle Junque – Avon Citywide Garage Sale Weekend".

Ms. Shinko mentioned the big event this next weekend at Crushers Stadium and Mr. Smith stated that it is the Avon High School's 70's decade reunion. Mr. Smith said that it is this Friday from 11 AM until 11 PM with live bands, vendors, raffles, food, etc. On Saturday they have activities going to the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame but the main event is Friday.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. White if he wanted to talk about the Mound Cemetery and Mr. White said, yes, that at the last meeting he and Mr. Smith talked about the Cemetery because he had a call from a citizen who was concerned about the condition of some of the headstones. He went to the cemetery to assess everything with a friend of his who is somewhat knowledgeable and they agreed that some of the stones need some attention and some repair and it is better to do it now that wait because it is just going to get worse. The City does a nice job in taking care of the grass and trimming, etc. and this has nothing to do with maintenance. It is just an age thing and throughout the years, a lot of attempts have been made to make repairs to the stones but they have failed. He talked to the Mayor about it and he said to draw up some suggestions and see if we can make something happen. Mr. White suggested to the Mayor that maybe we can find some volunteers, maybe somebody who is familiar with sandstone, etc. Things need to be drilled and then stainless steel dowel rods put in place. The stainless steel rods will hold the headstone up on the base because the bases are all pretty good; it is just that a lot of the top sections have fallen over. Some others need some other work also where possibly a company might be able to go in and level it before it falls over. There are some really big stones there.

Mr. Gault asked when Mr. White talked to the Mayor about that and Mr. White said, last weekend. Mr. Gault asked what the Mayor said about it and Mr. White responded that he said it was a good idea. Mr. White told the Mayor that the LPC would take it up as a project and the Mayor said to draw up some ideas and they will work on it. Mr. Gault noted that the French Creek Foundation had looked into that as well and one idea was putting a gated fence area around the Cemetery and releveling the gravestones and then perhaps having a water feature on the corner there. Mr. White stated that he remembered that and those are all good ideas but at this point, the most important thing are the stones because it is a cemetery. A lot of the stones have fallen over and he has a list of those. Also, some of the stones have broken. On the west side of the Cemetery the stone of Amy Sweet, the wife of Waterman Sweet, one of the original Avon founders, is a really big stone, probably 6 or 7 ft. high, and it is tilted and is falling in at the center. We would have to get some professional advice about restoring that. And of course there is some tree trimming and other maintenance and he suggested that Rick Varga, the City Arborist, could go and look at it and give us an assessment of what we need to do. There are other stones that have moss that need to be cleaned and that could be done with volunteers and the Mayor was ok with that.

Mr. White said, so maybe in this upcoming month, we can think about companies, contacts, etc. and then at our next meeting we can discuss the ideas and submit them to the Mayor and let him go from there and just kind of help with the project.

Mr. Gault stated that obviously paying tribute to those who have passed is important, especially people who were involved in the founding era of Avon itself, but he wondered if there was a precedent as to who carries on the ongoing maintenance of the Cemetery. What do most cities do? Do they just take it upon themselves to always take care of the headstones? Is it the job of the City to always maintain or redo them? Mr. White said that he thought that it is. The City owns the Cemetery; it is not privately owned. Sometimes it is left to the family members to maintain the gravesite but we are talking of people of 200 years ago and most of the family members are gone. There are Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI, and WWII soldiers buried in there and all of the Avon founders that are not buried at Holy Trinity or St. Mary's Cemeteries are on that Mound. So he thought this project is worth looking into and seeing what we can do. It is not going to be quick but if we plan and start and get some things rolling, maybe by next year something can be done to at least begin the project. He said that he thought it would not be really expensive but at the same time it is not going to be cheap and the more volunteers we can get or people to do things, the better. When he was at the Cemetery with his friend, they straightened some of the tilted stones by hand. So it is not a big job with some of them but others are quite a project and we would have to get equipment up there, such as a power drill or a generator to power a drill, concrete drills, and maybe a pressure washer.

Ms. Shinko mentioned that her family is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery and she said that there are some really big stones in there. Mr. White stated that work has been work done to those through the years by volunteers and also at Holy Trinity. And that type of effort is what we are probably going to have to do. He said so we can think about it over the next month and come up with some ideas. He said that he would try and find some contacts for sandstone repair and things like that because a lot of the graves have sandstone-type of stones that need repair.

Mr. Gault said to Mr. White that he thought this is a great idea; just in general to do whatever we can do to show respect to those who have passed. Mr. White stated, yes, any effort to make things better is good. To do nothing is really a problem so we need to do something.

Date of Next Meeting

Mr. Smith stated that the next meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission would be held on Wednesday, October 13, 2021, in the Council Chambers of Avon City Hall at 7:00 P.M.

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.

Transcribed by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council