

Rockland County Historic Preservation Board

October 23, 2023 Minutes
Orangetown Historical Museum
196 Chief Bill Harris Way
Orangeburg, NY 10962

Members Present: Stacy Alessio, Gillian Ballard, Mary Cardenas, Marianne Leese, Lisa Levin, Craig Long, Robert Masiello, Peter Scheibner, Charles "Skip" Vezzetti
Staff: Michael Kezner, Rockland County Planning Department
General Public: Beth Brown, Rockland County Department of Economic Development & Tourism

Call to Order: The meeting began at 3:31 PM.

- 1. Introductions:** Board Chair Craig Long welcomed everyone and thanked Mary for hosting the Board at the Orangetown Historical Museum.
- 2. Review of September 27, 2023 Minutes:** Marianne and Gillian submitted edits by email that included minor corrections. On a motion made by Skip and seconded by Mary, the minutes with the edits were unanimously approved.
- 3. Properties of Concern:** Marianne mentioned that the Wesley Chapel was sitting neglected with Virginia Creeper covering the whole building.

Lisa provided an update on 103 Montebello Road (the Blind Players Club). She first mentioned this property at the January 23, 2023 meeting. The Historic Preservation & Parks Commission unanimously approved a Certificate of Appropriateness after the owner agreed to make minor alterations following several months' worth of discussion.

- 4. Old Business:** Michael Informed the Board that the RFP for the new County Comprehensive Plan would likely be advertised starting next week. Work would likely start on the actual document in early 2024, at which point the Board would play a role.

Pete asked about the potential name change for Sanitarium Road. Craig said the County Executive's Office received the Board's resolution to keep the name for a portion of the roadway, but he has not received any new information at this time.

- 5. New Business:** Craig reminded everyone that they must complete their required trainings. The County will be hosting in-person trainings for those that would rather complete it that way instead of online. They will be conducted at the Fire Training Center on Wednesday November 1, from 2-4 or 6-8, and on Monday November 20, from 2-4 or 6-8.

Marianne was contacted at the Historical Society by Julien Icher of the [Lafayette Trail](#). The Lafayette Trail is placing markers across the country at places Lafayette visited during his journey to the US in 1824. Several have already been erected in New York State. Mr. Icher is interested in installing one along the shore in Haverstraw. He found in the Evening Post of September 18, 1824, that Lafayette was traveling up the Hudson River from NYC to Albany by steamboat. The steamboat, the *James Kent*, went aground at Oyster Bank in Haverstraw in a fog and delayed Lafayette's arrival in Albany. One possibility for placement of the marker is at Haverstraw Bay County Park. Robert mentioned Emeline Park as another possibility. No one on the board knows where Oyster Bank is or was. Any placement would need to be approved by the landowner. The Lafayette Trail has paid for the marker, so the Historical Society just has to ensure it is installed.

6. **Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting will be held on November 20, 2023 at 3:30 in the Building T conference room.

7. Before the meeting ended, Gillian asked about the wave of demolition and new construction and how that could affect historic structures, as she was new to the Board. Craig said that since the Board is advisory to the County, there is not much that can be done at this level. Marianne noted that New York is a home rule state, so it is up to each municipality to put historic preservation into their laws. Some Towns and Villages, like Clarkstown and Montebello, do have historic preservation laws. Craig noted that the previous administration in the Town of Ramapo acquired certain historic sites, such as Harmony Hall and Crowe House, but were derelict in setting up proper mechanisms to fund their upkeep. If it were not for outside organizations, these sites would likely not receive proper maintenance. Robert indicated that that he would like to speak with the Haverstraw officials to try and put something in their books for historic preservation.

Adjournment: On a motion made by Skip, and seconded by Pete, the meeting was adjourned at 4:14 PM.