

Forest Home Improvement Association
Meeting Minutes
Date: Jan. 25, 2016
Location: Forest Home Chapel

In attendance: President Montana Peterson, VP Cindy Bowman, Secretary Connie Stirling-Engman, Treasurer Jennifer Loucks, Randy Little, Bruce Brittain, David Kuckuk, Sally Grubb (visitor)

Agenda with notes:

The main purpose of the meeting was for visitor Sally Grubb to present plans and computer images for the Forest Home Chapel's proposed handicapped accessible restroom. Sally showed us drawings of the proposed restroom, which will be built at the rear of the building. She stated that she has already received verbal approval from neighbor John Foote, whose property is adjacent to the chapel. David Kuckuk, whose property is also close to the chapel, said the renovation is fine with him. Sally said that she'll go to a Town of Ithaca zoning board meeting during the third week of February to ask for a zoning variance to build the addition. She said she hopes that digging for the bathroom foundation could start in early April. Sally talked about the impact of the renovation. She said construction trucks will park in the chapel parking lot and store building materials on chapel property as they are needed. As I understood Sally's description of the project, it sounded like the entire restroom project might take two to three weeks to complete. Everyone at the meeting was in favor of the renovation, agreeing that it is necessary for the comfort and convenience of churchgoers and community members who use the chapel for various purposes. Sally said that the chapel has needed a handicapped accessible restroom for some time. Sally also updated us on renovation plans for the chapel kitchen. Work on the kitchen, which will include asbestos removal, could start in early May. Sally showed us a timeline for construction activities and general asbestos mitigation, which involves removal of kitchen tiles.

Montana agreed to write a letter for Sally to take to the Town of Ithaca Zoning Board stating that FHIA is supportive of the restroom renovation.

- 1) Summary of chapel renovations - Sally Grubb presented plans & drawings for the ADA accessible restroom renovation, pending approval at upcoming Town Zoning Board meeting on Feb. 22, when Chapel will apply for an area variance. Montana agreed to write a letter for Sally stating that FHIA supports the renovation. Upstairs foundation and bathroom work starts April 1. Downstairs tile abatement and renovation begins May 1 with move out the week prior.
- 2) Meeting dates in the Chapel for spring, keep former schedule except cancel Feb. 1. From our Nov. 2015 meeting:
 - Mon. April 4, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, open meeting
 - Fri. April 29, 5:00 - 7:00 pm potluck, may need to move the week prior?
 - Mon. June 6, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, open meeting

Tues. Sept. 6, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, open meeting

Tues. Oct. 18, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, open meeting

Additional dates:

Historic Walking Tour of Forest Home with Bruce Brittain: Sat. Mar. 19, 1:00 - 4:00 PM, meet at the Nevin Center. Raindate: Sat. Mar. 26, same time & place. We will have refreshments after the tour at the Forest Home chapel in the basement.

May 7 (or 14 if harsh winter), Saturday, 10:00 AM, Spring Cleanup/Park maintenance

Shipe garden planting (same date?)

Sept. 10, Sat., 3:00 - 6:00 PM Block Party in park (rain date Sat. Sept. 17)

Other Business:

Montana agreed to follow up on several items briefly discussed:

- The status of the Forest Home Drive closure near the intersection with East and Thurston Avenues and projected duration of repairs;
- The status of the traffic study organized by Cornell, particularly whether the public will be invited to comment;
- An eventual FHIA meeting with Cornell representatives on diverse issues, reaching out to Gary Stewart and collecting FH key questions and concerns;
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Bruce has copies of various awards and certificates made to Forest Home, e.g. related to historic preservation and sustainability efforts, and volunteered to provide photos for posting on the FHIA website, for example. Bruce also has actual historical objects and artifacts from Forest Home that he is reluctant to donate to Historic Ithaca. (Historic Ithaca has previously sold some of its historical inventory as part of its fundraising efforts.) It was discussed whether the items could be photographed or catalogued. No decisions taken.

Bruce provided background information on expanding the Forest Home Historic District to include additional homes that would now qualify since the initial application. He also shared information on the process involved in putting up National Historic District signage and potential hurdles. If the FHIA succeeded at expanding the District's current boundaries, it may be possible to attach new signs to the existing sign posts at the six entrances to FH--would need to be negotiated with the Town and County. Best to raise the issue of signate with the Department of Public Works/Policy Committee, instead of with staff, according to Bruce. Signs cost \$70 each and can be crafted here Ithaca. No decisions were taken--this issue will be revisited at later meetings.

Bruce is interested in organizing field trips to sites nearby, i.e. the Cornell Apple Orchards, the Fuertes Observatory, and the Water Treatment Facility. He will keep us posted.

The FHIA Website will be updated soon, and Montana will reach out to Annika Pinch to inquire if she would write content for the site, for her volunteer service requirements. ?? I don't recall any decisions about how others might contribute content or photos to the site, although it was agreed the site could use new material.

Montana inquired with the Town Parks Department about installing a little lending library in the park, and they had concerns specifically related to concerns about ongoing upkeep/maintenance. The options are: finding an alternative site for the library or raising the issue with the Town again. No decisions were taken at this time.

Connie Stirling-Engman
Secretary
FHIA

Jan. 27, 2016