

Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission

HPC Meeting Minutes from Tuesday, November 12, 2019

Attendees: Bill Bruce, Cathy Kouchich, Bill Flies

Guests: Jamie Lorenzen

The regular meeting of the HPC was called to order at 6 PM. A quorum was present. The October HPC minutes were read and approved. No building permits were presented.

Jamie Lorenzen, chairperson of the Frontenac Cemetery Association, updated HPC members on a project that the association is planning and raising funds for. That project will contract with Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps, an affiliate of the national AmeriCorps program, to send a group of young adults to the cemetery for 8-days to refurbish stone monuments. Northern Bedrock provides opportunities for young adults to learn the preservation trades while working with professionals in that field.

Northern Bedrock requires the Cemetery Association to commit approximately \$12,000 to the project. Some of that amount has already been raised and cemetery association members are actively seeking additional money. Jamie requested that the HPC recommend that some portion of the money that may be remaining from the 160th Anniversary Celebration be earmarked for the cemetery project. To that end, the HPC passed the following motion:

“Whereas the Frontenac Cemetery was one of the focal points of the 160th Anniversary Celebration and the continued maintenance of this cemetery is important to maintaining the history of the village of Frontenac, the HPC recommends that the Florence Town Board prioritize spending a portion of any money remaining from the 160th Anniversary Celebration budget for the planned Frontenac Cemetery stone monument refurbishment project. Further, the HPC recommends that Florence Township support this project by making an additional contribution from the general fund.”

At the last Town Board meeting a document with the signatures of multiple Frontenac residents was presented that requested that Barton Street from Lake Avenue to Lake Pepin be reopened. Both the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission were given a copy of this document.

After discussing the complaint and reviewing the history of Barton Street, the consensus of HPC members was that reopening this street would be of no benefit to the township and would, in the long run, be detrimental to the relationship between the residents for the village. The HPC passed a motion opposing the reopening of Barton Street. That motion is attached to these minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 PM.

Submitted to HPC members by Bill Bruce, 15 November 2019.

Approved 10 December 2019.

The Florence Township Board of Supervisors forwarded a letter to the HPC that was submitted by a group of Florence Township residents requesting that Barton Street between Lake Avenue and Lake Pepin be opened as a road with gravel. We, the HPC, recommend that this road NOT be opened but rather returned to the adjoining landowners for the following reasons.

1. The road has never been developed or used since the 1857 plat.
2. The road would end at Lake Pepin and would not access any land since Bay Street has been vacated and the lots east of Bay Street have been purchased by private landowners.
3. The letter forwarded to the HPC states that the road would be used by the public to transport kayaks to the water. There is no need for this access since there is over 1,000 feet of unused public lakeshore between the boat ramp and the Miller property; beach that is about 200 feet north of the Barton Street / Lake Pepin intersection and would be a much better place for kayak activity since there is vehicle parking at the boat ramp and over 1,000 feet of adjoining lakeshore.
4. If Barton Street were to be developed into a road, it would have to comply with the Goodhue County regulation that it must be at an elevation within 2 feet of the 100-year flood elevation. That would require a large quantity of fill and would also require that Lake Avenue be elevated to meet the Goodhue County road elevation regulation. This would be an expensive development that is not offset with public use benefits.
5. Historically, Barton Street has never been an active road east of Lake Avenue. Rather, it has been developed into an attractive garden by adjoining property owners which is a preferred use in the residential area.
6. There are no parking areas at the Barton Street and Lake Street intersection to support vehicle parking for those that would use Barton Street for lake access.
7. There is no need for additional Lake Pepin access since the township already has over 2,650 lineal feet of public lakeshore of which only 800 feet is maintained by the township. If additional maintained public lakeshore is desired, the 1,850 feet of unused lakeshore should be maintained since it is already township property with adequate access.
8. It would be more beneficial to the Township to make this Barton Street section taxable property.

It is our recommendation that the Township reject the residents' request to open Barton Street and, instead, initiate communication with the adjoining landowners to vacate the 1857 easement of Barton Street between Lake Avenue and Lake Pepin to the adjoining landowners.