

Town OF CLIFTON PARK

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes from November 20, 2025 Meeting

Present: Linda Seymour, Brian McGlinchey, Maureen O'Connor, Chrysoula Highland, Jennifer Jeram, Nancy Kiyonga, Deanna Rubinger, Paul Szczesny, Sue Thompson, Toby Watkins, Gail Winters, John Scherer, Emad Andarawis

Absent: Art Bourdeau, Andrew Gorman, Anthony Morrelli

Guests: Jean Cottrell, Sophie Cottrell, Mark Lasek, Scott Styles

Linda called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and welcomed our new member, Toby Watkins to HPC. She introduced a special guest, Sophie Cottrell, who has been working on Girl Scout project at the DeGroff Cemetery. Mark Lasek, another guest, indicated his interest in cemeteries.

1. SECRETARY'S REPORT: Minutes from the October 16, 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved as submitted.

2. BUDGET: The balance for 2025 remains \$7072 with the intent of making some purchases before the end of the year. 10 easels at a cost of approximately \$400 will be purchased for use at Grooms Tavern. Sophie Cottrell has cleaned and uprighted gravestones at the DeGroff Cemetery. She reported that she received a \$300 grant from the Town and indicated that she could use additional funding to purchase epoxy, fencing and a sign to complete her Girl Scout cemetery project. Deanna made a motion to allocate up to \$300 toward purchase these items. Paul seconded. Motion passed. Once purchased, Brian will provide Mike Woerner with receipts. John will work with Sophie on sign design. Sophie will do a presentation about the project at the Clifton Park Halfmoon Public Library in 2026. Linda pointed out the sample room darkening shade that Andrew installed at the Tavern. A suggestion was made to try an accordion shade prior to purchase and installation of shades throughout the building.

3. NEW BUSINESS:

a. New member request: Those present certified the email vote taken between meetings to recommend to the Town Board the appointment of Toby Watkins to HPC.

b. 2026 HPC Calendar: Meetings will be held the 3rd Thursday of the month with the exceptions of August and December. An August meeting may be scheduled if needed. January – March meetings will be held at the public library. Jennifer made a motion to accept the proposed calendar, Nancy seconded. Motion approved

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPDATES and DISCUSSION:

a. Democratic Party Request: Linda will send a letter to the Transition Team to clarify what they need in terms of resumes from HPC members and inform them that all are willing to serve in 2026.

b. Committee Steering Group meeting on November 13th: Chairs of Town organizations and committees met to discuss possible collaborations. A recommendation was made that Chairs share their minutes with each other. The group will meet quarterly with the next meeting scheduled for January 22.

c. Appointment of Sue Thompson as Deputy Historian: The appointment is scheduled for the December 15th Town Board Meeting. This will not be a paid position so Sue will be able to continue as a voting member of HPC.

d. Heritage Square/Blacksmith/Palmer House grant update: The Town Board allocated \$20,000 for a study of the blacksmith shop to be included in the 2026 budget. The Friends of Grooms Tavern will send a letter to the Town recommending that the three buildings be known collectively as Heritage Square at Grooms Tavern.

e. Revolutionary War Markers: Maureen has been in touch with the Pastor of Clifton Park Center Baptist Church who will check with church leadership about working with HPC to apply for a marker in early 2026. He seems enthusiastic. Maureen will follow up.

f. Damaged Jonesville Cemetery Marker: Maureen was informed by Mike Woerner to work with Dahn Bull on this. She has the form from the Pomeroy Foundation to reorder the marker but a check is required. Dahn is following up on the insurance claim.

g. Marker request protocols for Pomeroy, Town, personal: Linda spoke with Andrew who will continue working on his draft for future HPC consideration.

h. Grooms Cemetery Rededication: Linda and Gail attended and reported that the event was nicely done. The Shenendehowa Methodist Church paid for the sign and the cemetery looks great.

i. Garnsey Cemetery Cleanup: Linda and Sue along with family members worked at the cemetery. Ruts will still be a problem for Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) The plan for spring is to have Dan Bradt use GPR inside the fenced area.

j. Town Resolution on metal detectors: The resolution prohibiting use of metal detectors on town property was approved. Information is available on the website and will be included in the Town's next Parks and Recreation booklet.

k. NYAOT (New York Association of Towns) essay contest entry: Linda and John collaborated on an essay about the Town's essential role in history.

Old Business:

- a. Development projects: Birch Tavern, CP Hotel, Main St. Project: Emad said there was no report and there are no pertinent plans before the Planning Board at this time.
- b. Elnora School house: There has been no response from the owner to John Scavo's letter.

6. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Public Relations: Several suggestions were made for ways to publicize events such as CliftonParkConnet and engageCliftonParkNY.gov John stressed the importance of getting the word out about Heritage Square.
- b. Town Register: No report.
- c. Cemeteries: See above Budget. Mark Lasek a guest at the meeting indicated his interest in cemeteries.
- d. Commission Website: 209,925 hits to the website thus far. Paul suggested adding a link leading to the Town Historian's site which is difficult to find on the Town's website. .
- e. Tax Easement: Linda received an inquiry about replacing a mailbox with a "Private Property" sign. John Scavo indicated that no COA was needed.

7. ANNUAL GOALS:

- a. identify and preserve historic buildings, sites and heritage: Historic Register, "Heritage Square," add houses to the Historic Register
- b. advise and consult with Town departments and property owners: COA's, tax easements
- c. educate and involve individuals in the history of Clifton Park: Upcoming Celebrations and events
- d. recognize individuals, businesses for outstanding efforts in preservation: annual Historic Preservation award(s)

8. OTHER: 2026 Officers for HPC for 2026 will remain the same as 2025 with Linda and Brian as Cochairs and Maureen as Secretary. Brian will get an ID card for Toby and complete Deanna's ID.

Adjournment: Maureen made a motion to adjourn. Nancy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:48.

The next meeting will be at Clifton Park Halfmoon Public Library on January 15th at 7:00 PM.