

**TOWN OF WESTPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Kennedy Administration Building
Community Meeting Room
5387 Mary Lake Road
Town of Westport, Wisconsin

Minutes Aug 3rd, 2023

Members Present: Pichette, Moore, Werner, Will. Absent, Crowell Public Present: none, Bob Birmingham present

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

Public comment on matters not on the agenda: none

Motion to approve minutes from July 6th, 2023, made by Moore, seconded by Will, motion approved unanimously.

Military Trail – Application Discussion

- Pichette gave a recap of current project status, including State review of marker draft, which was noted as needing further review by State given their overall consideration of markers with native story elements.
- Bob Birmingham appeared at the request of HPC, given his background in related history. Pichette asked Birmingham about his previous research and maps. Birmingham noted part of trail is preserved around Blue Mounds and said it is maybe 3-4 feet deep. He noted archaeological surveying technology now using LIDAR, which he noted could provide data and imaging not previously possible. He noted the original road was sizeable and deep, and likely something could be found. When asked what Birmingham might recommend to HPC for this project, he noted HPC could keep an eye on developments if they are in area of trail, and could do archaeological survey, and that the trail could be included as a cultural resource in the area, which might bring up opportunities for documenting it.
- When asked what one might see from imaging, Birmingham noted one would see compaction and erosion, and some discarded objects (e.g., oxen shoes, items, etc). Pichette noted Town could do some additional signage to State signage.
- Birmingham noted remnants of cabin on lake which can be seen on LIDAR, on private property. Cabin was decedent of French fur trader, with Ho Chunk wife. St Cyr cabin. Pichette noted HPC might be applying for a state grant for survey of historical sites and could do a cultural trail to connect these sites.
- Pichette noted Town has land on lake (Sunny Side Park) that was gifted, walking trail and area of Diane Drive. Land has never been developed and has been a park since ~1900.
- Effigy mound locations: Noted that West Point has effigy burial mounds (Birmingham) (Baskerville area)
- Birmingham noted LIDAR might help reveal other hidden things and gave example of mounds in woodlot (conical)
- Native populations looked for water, mouth of streams (like at Pheasant Branch), effigy mounds tended to be built around significant parts of environment.
- When asked about spirit stones by members, Birmingham noted spirit stones are not easily identifiable, would have to know location, or have an idea that it was one to identify.
- Pichette asked about Statz (keyhole) site – Not many know about it. Birmingham said it was a great example. Noted WHS had previously excavated Statz site.
- Pichette asked what an appropriate strategy for sharing information might be - Birmingham said interpretive signage and brochures, but websites and social media.
- Birmingham noted that nowhere else in the world do these mounds exist in this quantity – He noted that delegation from Stonehenge who visited were amazed by ancient history here, stating the Town has remarkable collection on not only native, but ancient sites.

Mill Road Sign -No further updates

EWV - No further updates.

CLG Grant Application Status

- Grant application will be sent for review from Town staff to HPC members.

Misc. Matters / Forthcoming Events

- Nothing on Plan Commission (no meeting)
- Waiting for Town historical ordinance update draft.

5360 Westport Rd, (former Nau-Ti-Gal, Hansen's Tavern) - No further updates

Motion to adjourn Moore, seconded Will. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm

The next HPC meeting is on September 7th, 2023

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Chris Moore, Commission Secretary