

Vestal Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes - Monday, February 21, 2022

Present:

Nina Versaggi
Margaret Hadsell
Mary L Supa
Paul Deeley
Alex Jablonski

Call to order: 5:40pm

Old Business

1. Vestal Museum/Depot Move – Depot building is National Register Eligible, but nomination is a separate process. Proposed relocation to side of Rail Trail has prompted discussions with SHPO; SHPO has objected to plans to set building on new basement foundation (as well as proposed changes to inside of building)
 - a. MH referenced Painted Post’s successful nomination of a depot building very similar to Vestal’s and this showed significant changes to the building and foundation; declared eligible at time in 1990s
 - b. SHPO has not outright denied nomination for listing on the Register on the basis of a basement, but has said it is “not recommended”
 - c. From perspective of VHPC, town has compelling arguments for basement:
 - i. Concerns about flooding in proposed area alongside Rail Trail
 - ii. Without basement, utilities will need to be placed inside building, alongside required ADA compliant bathrooms, or in a separate building. VHPC discussed:
 1. Is this necessary? Waiver process for historic buildings?
 2. Instead of building bathrooms inside structure, could build them separately and nearby?
 3. Existing bathroom likely doesn’t conform to current ADA requirements, but do those apply to existing structures? Compliant if within 250ft of coal co. building?
 - iii. Regardless of whether basement built, placing the building on proposed site will require construction of concrete footing – which can either be filled with stone or made into basement
 - d. Beyond basement issues, building will also require railing along backside for safety; could be glass to clearly distinguish from building?
 - e. Alternatively could build up large earthen foundation to support building, hiding foundation and more clearly replicating the original situation
 - f. Regarding proposed internal changes to building:
 - i. VHPC does not see the need to make double-run staircase (requiring new wall opening near stationmaster’s desk), as single-run already exists in structure (created 1970s) and could more easily be widened to be compliant if needed
 - ii. Plans call for current bathroom to be expanded, removing small next door office; NYS code may allow current bathroom to stay in place due to historic building (see below); or perhaps bathroom could even be removed if close enough to Coal Co building

- g. Next steps: Town of Vestal needs to contact grant administrator and make best argument for basement; VHPC provided suggestions for revising internal plans (recommending against most of them), as of yet has not received revised plans
 - i. VHPC needs to research code waivers (ADA compliant stairs, bathroom) and send to Vestal code dept.
 - ii. Scan of NYS building code for historic buildings suggests that, if stair is narrower than modern code, building official in Vestal code dept can approve if stairway is passable; suggests wide latitude with historic building to keep original layout; will conduct further research regarding toilets and will forward to Vestal code department, along with recommendation that they speak with VHPC architect Paul Deeley
- 2. 301 N. Main Street – Letter from Dr. Muench suggests plans to begin construction in Spring; if does not commence, will refer to town attorney per letter
- 3. 2452 Vestal Parkway East – Yellow Lustron (designated local landmark 2012 and prevented from being dismantled); MH has suggested to Vestal Historical Society that building could be easily acquired and would be excellent headquarters if could secure grant to move it; MH will present idea at next society meeting and offer VHPC assistance

New Business

- 1. Received request to completed CLG FY 2021 annual report but no deadline indicated
- 2. CLG FY 2022 grant application window now open; application requires 40% match, and question is whether VHPC volunteer time counts toward requirement
 - a. Could VHPC apply for grant to fund Clay Street Lustron nomination?
- 3. Depot project name – per grant, signage required on project to show that NYS funded project; town needs to find name for project site – proposed names either “Vestal Depot” or “Vestal Depot Museum”
 - a. VHPC suggests “Vestal Depot Museum”
- 4. Vestal Bicentennial Celebration planning underway for 2023; town is planning events all year long (dances, sporting events, Rail Trail activities); MH proposes that VHPC should get involved with some event to showcase commission’s work
 - a. VHPC will also begin planning for WG Pomeroy application for sign commemorating bicentennial; to be submitted February 2023

Meeting adjourned: 7:22pm