

**Vestal Historic Preservation Commission**  
Meeting Minutes - Monday, May 23, 2022

**Present:**

Nina Versaggi  
Margaret Hadsell  
Mary L Supa  
Paul Deeley  
Alex Jablonski

**Call to order:** 5:37pm

**Business**

1. The Town's plans regarding the Museum move;
  - a. The Town emailed to indicate that they will no longer be pursuing national register designation in the design phase of the Museum move, which would allow greater discretion regarding internal changes to the structure (specifically the basement)
    - i. There is concern that internal changes would make any later application for NR listing difficult, because SHPO has raised consistent objections to a basement and other changes
  - b. VHPC chair emailed to say that the building is designated as local landmark and the Commission has jurisdiction over the structure; no response from town
    - i. VHPC at least has say over any external changes, but a section of the Ordinance states that jurisdiction extends to internal changes when it is a public building
  - c. Areas of concern for committee regarding structural changes:
    - i. Fixing of sliding doors in open position, adding french doors
      1. Town engineers expressed concern about air infiltration and effect on collections; current practice, though, is not to keep fragile items in there long
      2. Other problem is security in the building, especially for items on loan
    - ii. Reorientation of staircase (possibly to go through existing wall) and removal of chimney
    - iii. Exterior railing
    - iv. Replacement of slate shingles with synthetic, rather than repair
  - d. Town had originally indicated this fall for move, but now seems to be waiting for next spring. The reason for the delay is unclear.
  - e. Next step – town needs to submit a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) regarding proposed changes
    - i. Need to clarify town's goals in moving the museum – Willing to forgo national designation for what reason?

2. Dr. Muench's missed deadline (May 15) for starting repairs on the Rounds House;
  - a. MH visited May 16 and 18, no visible activity; paint on east elevation beginning to peel
  - b. VHPC had sent Dr. Muench letter in February 2022 indicating deadline to start repairs; received response that he was at the mercy of his contractor's schedule
  - c. Next step – VHPC will pursue terms of letter and contact town attorney, copying code department, town board
3. The African community historic marker;
  - a. Markers have not yet been installed; no word from town highway department about timeline
4. The Bicentennial;
  - a. Planning commission just met; planning yearlong series of events
5. Other items?
  - a. NV – Lustron houses are in disrepair; after experience with Rivercrest houses, should VHPC remove local designations since they are in poor condition and likely now ineligible for the National Register? Or should VHPC pursue non-compliance through code?
    - i. PD – VHPC should send letter to owners of all local designations, reminding of responsibilities
    - ii. MH – could use this as an opportunity to compliment stewards keeping up property and to notify those who are not of their obligations
    - iii. MS – could also spotlight historic properties in good repair in newspaper and as part of bicentennial
    - iv. MH – VHPC could publish pamphlet; Broome County print shop has very low rates
    - v. MH and PD will organize mailings to registry members (~12 properties)
    - vi. NV – could award remaining historical property medallions during bicentennial
    - vii. Next steps for Lustrons – take up issue of non-compliance with code department and notify owners; consider as well whether the buildings should be removed from local registry
      1. MH – have suggested to local historical society that they request land from the town and move yellow Lustron to serve as meeting place; could encourage current owner to donate and apply for grant to fund move
  - b. Rivercrest – houses have been demolished and land is currently being cleared