

Spotswood Cultural and Heritage Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2023

Present: Brian Engstrom, Marc Fafara, Jack Eichenlaub, Gary Castellano, Chuck Hager, Chris Borzuku, Art Campbell and Bruce Eckman

1. Meeting called to order before 7:00 pm by Chairman Jack Eichenlaub
2. Minutes were distributed. Motion to accept by Art Campbell. Motion passed.
3. The commission will have a tent at Octoberfest on September 29th at the municipal building. Set up 5PM. Event runs from 5:30 to 9. (Actual end time is 9:30) We will hand out magnets and the trolley brochures and sell books. Joe will display pictures of the events. Art suggested a write up of our activities.
4. Devoe Lake plaque has been delivered from Paul's Awards. Andrew will ask the Mayor for a location at the lake to install same.
- 5.. It was suggested that we invite new residents to Octoberfest.

6. The trolley tour was a great success. Forty Five or fifty residents took the tour. A third were born in town; a third long term residents and a third were recent residents. The interest level was very high.

7. A contractor was identified for the 3D scanner . A purchase order is in the works

- 8 We agreed to do two more historic site markers for a cost of \$2400. One at the old Birchall School site and the second at the VFW honoring the Lenai Lenape Weawhalie's upper mill and Physical Cultural City. Bruce provide language for the plaque at the VFW site which was amended and accepted. Copy attached.

9. Jack purchased 100 Spotswood photo history books for distributio0n at events and also to distribute to new residents. .
10. The tour of the East Brunswick historic Old Bridge village was postponed to a date which Marc will provide in the future.
- 11 Holiday dinner will be held an November 2 at 6PM at Frescos.
12. Bruce will provide a list of Spotswood Mayors from 1908 to present.
- 13 The Temperini family has a 1909 map of Spotswood Orchard Square section. Joe Schwartz offer suggestions to restore and conserve same. Chuck Hager suggested we check the County map room to see if there is a copy in better shape there..
14. Marc found and purchased a comic book "Helm Man" worth \$900. We will scan it before Marc sells same.
15. Helmetta Day is Saturday.
16. Bruce presented a map of Physical Cultural City. We discussed how we could use same.
17. Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Hager, Acting Recording Secretary for Marc Fafara ,
Secretary

SUGGESTED WORDING FOR SIGN TO BE LOCATED BEHIND THE VFW.

SECTION 1 ORIGIN OF THE NAME OUTCALT

The South Spotswood/ Monroe Township/Helmetta area surrounding the VFW is often referred to as "Outcalt". This name, also the name of a street in Spotswood, is derived from a German munitions family-owned company which wanted to build a production facility at the VFW site at the turn of the twentieth century.

SECTION 2 PHYSICAL CULTURE CITY

Between 1900-1910 Bernarr MacFadden owned and operated the Physical Culture City which was located roughly between modern day Daniel Road and North Shore Boulevard and Forge Rd in Helmetta. When the facility was up and operating there was a concrete dam in place in the Manalapan Brook leading to a body of water known as Lake Marguerite. MacFadden was finally shunned by leaders in Spotswood and Helmetta because the bare arms and legs of his campers were considered nudity in the Victorian era ~~we are discussing.~~

SECTION 3 LAKE MARGUERITE

Lake Marguerite was named after Bernarr MacFadden's daughter Marguerite. It was located from the rear of the VFW building up to North Shore Boulevard. (There is a small concrete remnant of this dam behind the VFW near the Spotswood Boro drinking water well.) there was a concerted effort to raise funds to restore this dam in the 1950's which failed to accomplish this goal

SECTION 4 WEEQUAHALA GRIST MILL

Chief Weequahala was in 1727 ^{an} was known as the Indian King of East New Jersey. He was a major land owner in the region and raised cattle and horses and operated a water powered grist mill along the Manalapan Brook in the general area of the current VFW/Outcalt area. Many white settlers were interested in his business operations and many times tried to get him to sell to them, but he always refused. One of these speculators, Captain Samuel Leonard, would repeated get the chief drunk and have him sign away deeds to individual ~~small~~ tracts of land, located as described above. The Chief finally realized that he had been victimized, became angry, and killed the Captain. He was subsequently tried for murder in Perth Amboy and hung.