

Tredyffrin Township Historical Commission

Minutes for March 12, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Rob Williams.

Present: Rob Williams, chair; Ernie Falcone; Eric Williams; Janice Olsen; Mark Dixon; Jean Faber, Associate; Robert Emmanuel, staff liaison; Eamon Brazunas, Supervisor liaison; Steve Finkleman (resident); Wanda Odom (resident)

Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve as submitted the minutes for the January and February meetings. Approved unanimously.

Steve Finkleman and Wanda Odom joined the meeting. Steve is a retired engineer living in the Tredyffrin panhandle who has been involved with HC in the past. Wanda is a retired journalist living in Strafford.

Current Business - Project updates

1. YESTERDAY IN TREDYFFRIN

The effort to make the HC more visible and pave the way for the updated ordinance via the weekly postings of a picture and narrative on Tredyffrin history is bearing fruit with as evidenced in the increased viewing and sharing on the township Facebook page and a growing email list. Additional topics/content are always welcome. The origin of township park names is a possible area to investigate.

2. PROPERTIES AT RISK

Properties/historic buildings could be at risk of demolition due to an owner's death, recent sale, etc. Protecting historic properties from demolition can only come at the local level, not federal or state. Williams, Williams and Falcone will draft a letter asking the owners of historic houses that were protected in the past if they would like information regarding what it means for a property to be eligible for historic protection and the various resources and incentives available to owners. This information could also be included in the next township newsletter, perhaps with the title "Is Your House Protected?"

A **motion** was made and seconded to write letters to owners of selected properties that had been previously but are no longer protected for the purpose of informing them of their current protection status and options. Passed unanimously.

3. TREDYFFRIN HISTORIC ERAS

Content Working Group – history of Tredyffrin – Meg Wiederseim of the Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society (TEHS) organized a chart listing seven major eras in Tredyffrin history along with the types of properties of these eras. The chart has two uses. First, the chart will help HC organize documentation for presentation to the commissioners for the new historical preservation ordinance as well as act as a guiding

tool for future use. Second, the comprehensive history will provide the basis for the history presented in the Tredyffrin Heritage Center displays. The table must be reviewed compared to prior such listings (e.g., 2009 Preservation Plan) and for completeness, including cemeteries/churches, schoolhouses, ethnic communities, inn/taverns, and notable people

4. DEPREDATIONS PROJECT

E. Williams proposed the project plan for researching and creating experiences for Tredyffrin Revolutionary War depredations. The Township received a \$5,000 grant from the Chester County Community Foundation for this project. The plan includes a traveling exhibit that is portable and easily accessible. It can be displayed in the township building, schools, libraries or any other locations showing interest. There will be two sets of three 6'X3' panels. One set will show depredations resulting from the British occupation and the other from the Continental army's looting and plundering. The exhibit will show items taken, when they were taken, and the dollar values of each. Additionally, in connection with the reenactment in 2027, a historic marker will be erected near Teegarden Park, and there will be two tours; one is a historical walking tour and the other a depredations driving tour that covers the entire circuit. There could also be theatre pieces highlighting the local historical buildings and characters. War isn't just battles and famous people it's people on the homefront, too! Highschool students are being involved.

5. HISTORIC RESOURCES OVERLAY PROJECT

R. Williams presented the HC annual report to the township Supervisors to include an overview of the reasons for needing to update the historical ordinance. Emanuel is conducting public meetings to guide these changes. The first public meeting focused on what we want to protect. The second looked at how to protect these properties. He shared that at that meeting most things that are going to be required of owners of historical houses are already required of all owners. Three actions were viewed as requiring board review and approval: demolition of a historic outbuilding, demolition and relocation of historical assets, and partial demolition of a historic structure. Meeting attendees expressed a desire to have resources available at the township level. The third public meeting is scheduled for March 17th.

6. TESD ENGAGEMENT

The school district will be taking interested teachers on a bus tour of the township's historical buildings. Rob will guide the bus tour with the district's social studies curriculum members and school librarians. This initiative is intended to provide teachers with the necessary background to engage their students and generate enthusiasm for local history.

7. WINDSHIELD SURVEY

Rob has prepared lists of sites for HC members to use to take pictures. This will be done soon.

8. AMERICA 250 TREDYFFRIN

- a. DARE to DECLARE – Eric presented the idea of having people record readings of the Declaration at various sites. He will coordinate this later for use in 2027.
- b. 2026 FUNDED PROJECTS – Janice suggested the possibility of organizing trolley tours of local historical structures. These tours could take place in September, following the reenactment. One option includes charging a fee for adults while allowing children to attend for free. Janice will gather more information on this and will share further details in April.
- c. We need to get better at photographing and recording our events/activities.

9. BRITISH REENACTMENT

- a. Rob has not been able to connect with the 40th Light British reenactors so there is nothing new to report. Rob is meeting with local reenactors and will look into what is needed for permits for the 2026 reenactment. Eric attended the Parks and Recreation meeting and answered questions.

10. WILSON PARK FARM MURAL

The Township Arts Commission is investigating creation of a free standing 4' x 8' mural in Wilson Farm Park. The Park has no information on the history of the land, originally Wilson Farm in the Great Valley. The HC will seek information from the Arts Council.

11. COMMUNICATION & PUBLICITY

We have a good start on social media. The option to tag other groups including PA250 was made.

Information Sharing:

- A250 Exhibit at Tredyffrin Library in April
- NAPC membership - given to all committee members
- The Spoke – has written two articles recently; Rob will send links
- America 250 Main Line zoom meetings – 2nd Mondays, @ noon
- Lower Merion – fall meeting for Main Line Historical commissions being organized
- Fence posts w/ QR codes around the township – following Easttown project

Future events:

March 17 @ 7:00 – public meeting

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next Historical Commission Meeting – April 9, 2026, 7:00 p.m.