

Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society Meeting
Wednesday, August 15, 2018, 7:00 P.M.
City of Sugar Hill City Hall – History Room
Meeting Minutes

I. Introductions and Approval of the Agenda

A. Darrell Pruitt, Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society (SHHPS) vice-chairman, convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and announced that Chris Walker, SHHPS chairman, was unable to attend. He then called for approval of the meeting agenda. Ed Lanfear, SHHPS board member, made a motion to approve the agenda and it was seconded.

B. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and a sign-in sheet was passed around.

C. The following individuals were in attendance:

NAME

Kathryn Baskin	Secretary/Board Member
Lisa Cheek	Guest Member
Ryckie E. Fernandez	Board Member
Susan Y. Gilbert	Guest Member
Brandon Hembree	Board Member/City Liaison
Stephanie Isaacs	Guest Member
Kim Landers	City Staff
Ed Lanfear	Board Member
Aly Lopez	Board Member
Margaret Neal	Board Member
Darrell Pruitt	Vice-chairman/Board Member
Holli Stouffer	Board Member

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Darrell Pruitt asked for approval of the July 18, 2018, meeting minutes. Ed Lanfear moved for the meeting minutes to be approved and the motion was seconded. The minutes were adopted without objection.

III. Treasurer's Report

Joann Burel, SHHPS Treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting and there was no formal Treasurer's report. Darrell Pruitt told the group that no significant expenditures were made since the July meeting. He also confirmed with Brandon Hembree that the SHHPS funding must be expended by the end of the year. Darrell mentioned that several markers and events will require funding in the future months. Members also discussed how to assist Joann Burel during her family illness. Holli Stouffer volunteered to follow up on the ideas discussed. Ed Lanfear made a motion to proceed and Ryckie Fernandez seconded the motion.

IV. Cemetery Updates

A. Sugar Hill Cemetery - Darrell Pruitt called on Brandon Hembree, Sugar Hill City Councilman, to give an update on the projects for the Sugar Hill Cemetery and other historic cemeteries in Sugar Hill. Councilman Hembree announced that the cemetery app project would be ready on Saturday, September 22nd. The app will provide similar information to Find A Grave but specific only to the Sugar Hill cemetery. He added that Tim Schick, City of Sugar Hill, will also include an aerial view of the Sugar Hill cemetery as part of the app. Councilman Hembree told members that SHHPS was asked to provide a tent and refreshments for the volunteers gathering data. In addition, he said assistance in the erection of the tent and distribution of water, etc. would be needed. It was agreed that the details regarding the request would be worked out at the September 2018 meeting.

Councilman Hembree continued with an operations update on the Sugar Hill cemetery. He explained that a memo had been submitted in February/March 2018 requesting specific improvements to the cemetery and that the city \$150,000 had been approved in the budget for these purposes. Councilman Hembree announced that the installation of the fence extension was underway. Aly Lopez, board member, asked if the on-going construction would disrupt any Sugar Rush activities. Councilman Hembree responded that it would not. He added that there were some grading issues and the need for filling in some areas, but the identification of grave sites needed to occur first.

As follow up to this discussion, Councilman Hembree told the group that Chris Walker had contacted Dan Bigman to discuss using ground penetrating radar (GPR) to identify unmarked graves in the cemetery. He said that Mr. Bigman had told Mr. Walker an option to reduce costs could be to use search dogs initially and then use GPR on those sites.

B. Kile Benson Cemetery - Susan Gilbert, SHHPS Guest Member, inquired about including the Kyle Benson cemetery in the efforts to identify unmarked graves. Councilman Hembree responded affirmatively. Ms. Gilbert informed the group that she was a descendent of the Kyle Benson family. As such, she gave permission to include the family cemetery as part of the project to identify unmarked graves.

C. Veterans Memorial Marker - Ed Lanfear asked when the veterans memorial marker would be moved. Councilman Hembree said that a new location outside the cemetery gate has been identified and the marker will be moved there sometime in the future.

V. Sugar Rush Preparations

A. Sluice Box – Darrell Pruitt began the conversation regarding Sugar Rush Preparations. He told the members that SHHPS would definitely have the Sluice Box again this year. He added that Sugar Rush will be on October 20, 2018, from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Shift times for volunteers will be determined later.

B. Face in the Hole – Mr. Pruitt told the group that there were still plans to have some type of photo opportunity for people to dress in period clothing and to pose in front of a blown-up, sepia tone photo of a cave opening. He said that Chris Walker had checked on the professional photo booth company and found out that it was expensive. Mr. Pruitt said that Karen Harrison was going to contact a company to see what they would charge for this type of service.

C. Sugar Hill Cemetery Tours – Darrell Pruitt inquired about the Sugar Hill Cemetery tours and when they would be conducted. Aly Lopez responded that she thought they would be in the daytime during the hours of Sugar Rush. The group then discussed the role of SHHPS regarding the tours. Brandon Hembree and Darrell Pruitt added that SHHPS would identify the characters and provide the scripts for the Sugar Hill Players Guild actors. Councilman Hembree said that he would circulate the existing scripts for the group to review.

D. Other Topics – Margaret Neal suggested that we might need to order more SHHPS t-shirts to identify the members at Sugar Rush. Brandon Hembree did a quick inventory on t-shirts in stock and Aly Lopez said she had three in her possession. In addition, Ms. Neal suggested that members alternate as “roving” goodwill ambassadors to inform people attending Sugar Rush about SHHPS and its activities.

VI. Veterans Day Ceremony, Monday, November 12th

Darrell Pruitt informed the group that specifics regarding the time for the ceremony need to be confirmed. He said that we will need to coordinate with Rachel Schmalz, Regent of the Suwanee Creek Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), to work out the details. Susan Gilbert, Chaplain of the Suwanee Creek Chapter of DAR, volunteered to work with Rachel Schmalz on the arrangements. Councilman Hembree added that the Sugar Hill Broad Street Band also planned to perform at the ceremony.

VII. History Award Scholarship(s)

Holli Stouffer advised the group that the description of potential projects for scholarships was a work in progress. Brandon Hembree stated that he would discuss the proposed scholarship project with the city’s legal counsel once the SHHPS members had decided on the appropriate project. Ed Lanfear suggested that the target date for the scholarships should be for the Fall semester of 2019.

VIII. Interviews for Sugar Hill Historic Spotlight

Darrell Pruitt reminded the group that the historic spotlight project would involve SHHPS members interviewing Sugar Hill citizens to highlight the history of the community and their life experiences as residents. Members identified possible long-time Sugar Hill residents that would be good choices for storytelling. Councilman Hembree reminded the group that Joann Burel, SHHPS treasurer and lifelong resident of Sugar Hill, should be selected for the first interview. Susan Gilbert provided names of several individuals including Maron Buice, Wayne Hill, Louie Grizzle, Tommy Johnson, Claude Godfrey, Benjamin Youngblood and others.

Brandon Hembree stated he would share the interview questions that already had been developed to guide the interview with other members. He also said that he would conduct one interview prior to the next SHHPS meeting and show the video to the group at the September meeting. Darrell Pruitt also volunteered to conduct an interview of Wayne Hill and Bea Samples. Susan Gilbert said

she would interview Maron Buice, Claude Godfrey and Benjamin Youngblood. *(NOTE: These people have not agreed to an interview as of the date of this meeting.)*

IX. Autumn History Hikes

Darrell Pruitt told the members that Chris Walker had asked him to bring up the topic of group hikes of historical significance for SHHPS members. He then called on Councilman Hembree to talk about a recent hike he and other citizens took to an area near the Island Ford Church. Brandon Hembree said the hike turned into a three hour adventure with sightings of interesting artifacts. He told the group that there was an old moonshine still as well as artifacts of old homesteads. Councilman Hembree suggested that a shorter hike may be arranged for SHHPS members in late Fall.

A new guest to SHHPS, Lisa Cheek, suggested a tour of the Level Creek United Methodist Church cemeteries and properties. She told the group that Rick Beggs had a wealth of knowledge regarding these locations and the information needed to be archived. Ms. Cheek described three locations of the Level Creek United Methodist Church and that the original site was the location of the first cemetery in Sugar Hill. She also informed the group about the burial of a Level Creek United Methodist Church pastor and his family at Sims Lake Park.

Councilman Hembree suggested that SHHPS members consider an outing to Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta. The group expressed interest in pursuing a field trip to the cemetery in the future.

X. Historical Marker Delivery

Vice-chairman Pruitt advised the group that historical markers had to be delivered to a business and that someone had to be present to accept the delivery. As part of the discussion, Margaret Neal said that her replacement marker for the Shelley-Howerton home was scheduled for delivery soon. After discussing several options, Kim Landers suggested that the markers should be delivered to the city at “the barn” where the maintenance staff could accept delivery. Members agreed this was the most practical option since the maintenance staff is responsible for installing the markers. Ms. Landers agreed to inform the maintenance staff of this decision.

XI. Centennial Tree Program/Very Old Oak Tree

Darrell Pruitt told the group that an oak tree that is possibly over 100 years old existed on City of Sugar Hill property. He told the members that Chris Walker wanted to pursue an official centennial tree program historic designation to preserve the tree. Mr. Pruitt informed the group that the process required the engagement of a certified arborist. Ed Lanfear volunteered to arrange for a professional arborist to estimate the age of the tree. Darrell Pruitt designated Mr. Lanfear as the lead member on to arrange for an arborist to examine the tree. Margaret Neal offered to review the centennial tree program form to understand any other requirements. She told the group that a 100 year old pecan tree was located at the Shelley-Howerton house.

XII. Further Questions

Vice-chairman Pruitt asked if anyone had any questions.

Kathryn Baskin, SHHPS secretary, inquired if any of the members wished to ride share to attend the Duluth Historical Society meeting on September 28th. Holli Stouffer expressed interest and several members decided to communicate closer to the event date via the SHHPS Facebook page.

Next, Kathryn Baskin discussed the need for clear procedures for the SHHPS secretary to manage the meeting minutes. She proposed a potential process. Kim Landers explained that the process the City Council uses was similar to Ms. Baskin's proposal. Councilman Hembree agreed. At this time, Margaret Neal made a motion to accept the procedures and Ed Lanfear seconded the motion. The proposal was adopted unanimously.

The agreed upon procedures are below:

1. The secretary of the SHHPS board shall draft the meeting minutes within 10 days following the meeting or at another agreed upon time that the chairman approves.
2. The SHHPS secretary will submit the meeting minutes to all official board members for comment and changes with a time certain for a response.
3. The SHHPS secretary will finalize the meeting minutes, incorporating any changes, and submit them to the city liaison and board members for approval at the next scheduled meeting. Guest members will also receive copies of the meeting minutes prior to the next scheduled meeting.
4. The SHHPS assigned city staff will post the approved meeting minutes on the SHHPS web site and advise all board members, guest members and other interested parties of their availability. *(Note: This action will occur after the meeting minutes are approved at the next scheduled monthly SHHPS meeting.)*

Before Darrell Pruitt adjourned the meeting, Susan Gilbert recommended that SHHPS use GPS to map out the location of the Spring Hill baptismal pool to create a historical record of its location for the city.

There being no further questions or business, the meeting was adjourned.