

**Oakbourne Mansion Commission
January 14, 2009 Meeting
Westtown Township Building, 1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown**

Draft

In attendance were Chair Eva Foster, Vice Chair Michelle Gifford, and Virginia Gray; Township Manager Robert Layman; Parks Advisory Group Chairman Leonard Tehrani.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Minutes (October 13, 2008).**
- III. Proposed Activities for 2009.**
 - A. Business to Business Card Exchange.**

Mrs. Foster stated that it has been suggested to do a business to business card exchange. The event will be held on February 24th, with a snow date of February 25th. The hours will be 4 – 7Pm. Mrs. Foster said she still has the list of businesses and vendors who were invited to the Muddy Shoe and suggested that list be used for this event. Mrs. Gifford will mail invitations to those on the list using the Mansion “Corporate Event Card”.

B. Sleigh Rides.

Mrs. Gifford said she has been in contact with a gentleman who gives sleigh rides. She would like to do this at the park, when we have a good snow fall, but because of the type of event it is it would have to be “spur of the moment”. The sleigh has both runners and wheels. In order to get this information to residents who might be interested the Commission is establishing a confidential email list to inform residents of special events. Information about the email list was in the latest Township Gazette. Mrs. Gifford said in working out the cost for this event she felt we would not break even but in discussing this with the sleigh owner he would be willing to reduce the cost because of the exposure he would receive.

Mr. Tehrani said the Parks Group is considering having “Christmas in July” at the Park. He stated that there are ways to make artificial snow and maybe they could work together on this event. This would give the Commission an opportunity to advertise their winter events.

C. Bridal Expo.

Mrs. Gifford stated that local country clubs are holding Bridal Expos and it appears that the bridal consultants are not just from this area but all over the country. She feels that the Commission needs to do something different than the Country Clubs are doing. Her suggestion is not just having booths for the vendors but actually setting the Mansion up for a wedding. The expo would be advertised as come see how we can put together your wedding. Mrs. Gifford said she visualizes the rooms set up with tables and decorated. Bridal wear could be shown by models walking through the Mansion as well as caterers having waiters walking around with food. She would also like to have a tent on the lawn so this could be done inside and out. People attending the expo would be taken through the Mansion in groups. Mrs. Gray asked if this would be a fund raiser. Mrs. Gifford said there would be a charge to the vendors and a ticket charge to the public. Mrs. Gifford said exiting from the dining room is difficult as you either exit into the hall way or the pantry area. She suggested that the closet next to the fire place be opened up and made an exit. Mrs. Foster said the Board of Supervisors might not approve the change. Mrs. Gifford said it would give a better traffic flow to the room. Mrs. Foster asked if she had a date in mind. Mrs. Gifford said right now it is tentative for the fall. She will be discussing this with Judy Shaw our volunteer florist consultant who has been involved with Bridal Expos.

D. Valentine's Event.

Mrs. Foster said she has been contacted by Carlino's in West Chester about doing something for Valentine's Day but is not sure what they are looking for. Mr. Layman said he has spoken with them and they had indicated to him that they would like to be the sole caterer for the Mansion. He stated that he referred them to the Mansion Commission and also asked for their insurance and health department certification, which was did receive. Mrs. Gray said she does not feel an exclusive caterer is a good idea. Mrs. Foster and Mrs. Gifford agreed with her. Mrs. Gifford said if they would like to be a preferred caterer that would be fine but not exclusive. The Commission asked Mr. Layman to explain to Carlino's that we are not having an exclusive caterer. Mrs. Gray suggested that the Commission consider West Chester University as an approved caterer. They have a hotel and restaurant management program and she has been to events that they have catered and which have been well done. They are also reasonable and the food is very good.

E. Art Show.

Mrs. Gray mentioned that she knows several Wild Life Artists, one of which is nationally known and whose wife makes jewelry. Mrs. Foster said ARC could always be asked to do another show. Mrs. Gray said "A Meet the Artist Night" could be held before the opening of the show as a fund raiser. Mr. Tehrani said he runs an art gallery at his office and has contact with ten to fifteen artists. Mrs. Gifford asked about dates. She also mentioned that jewelry is what draws the women to these events.

F. "Cars of Great Brittan".

Mrs. Foster said that this event is scheduled for June 6th and would like to be able to do a fund raiser for the Mansion around this event. The people showing their cars will be coming from all over. She suggested doing something for the wives that would be attending. She suggested a cocktail party or brunch. Mrs. Gifford asked if they will be bringing vendors as part of the event. Mrs. Gifford suggested having jewelry and upscale crafts and maybe a wine tasting. Mrs. Foster said there will be 200 cars so the outside cannot be used. Mr. Tehrani asked who is paying for this. Mrs. Foster said the Township was approached by a member of the Jaguar club on Chester County Day. The Board of Supervisors has agreed to this event and they are in charge. The car club has paid a fee of \$1,600 for the event. The Township will be meeting in the near future with the club so hopefully these questions will be clarified. Mrs. Gifford said she feels more information is needed before the Commission can make any plans for this event.

G. Murder Mystery Dinner.

Mrs. Gifford stated that the Mansion, with all its empty rooms, would be good for this type of event. She suggested that it be held around Halloween. A script could be prepared similar to the game of Clue. Light food and wine would be served. Mr. Tehrani said that Parks was thinking of doing a Halloween Masquerade party and that could be combined with the mystery dinner and with enough volunteers they could work together on this. Mrs. Foster said she did not feel that this event would be appropriate for children. Mr. Tehrani said their agenda is to work with everyone not just children. Mrs. Foster said Parks does events outside of the Mansion and suggested a haunted hayride for Halloween. Mr. Tehrani stated that the Commission's "Cars of Great Brittan" was an outside event. Mrs. Foster responded that the Board approved this event to be held in the Park. Mr. Tehrani said Parks should be involved in this also and said he does not want to make this an inside/outside issue. Mrs. Gifford said the Commission plans events in the Mansion to raise funds and Parks events are done outside for the community. She stated if they have events at the same time they could advertise together.

H. Antique Show/Antique Road Show.

Mrs. Foster said she talked to Bill Bunch and he is willing to do an Antique Road Show.

She stated that she felt an Antique Show would be a huge undertaking and given the economy it might not be a good time to do this. Also, the Chester County Historical Society is holding their annual antique show at Westtown School this year. Mrs. Gifford stated that a date needs to be decided if we want to do the Antique Road Show at the Mansion.

I. Corporate Holiday Events.

Mrs. Foster said they should try to do this again this year. She stated that she has a tentative birthday party scheduled at the Mansion for November 6th. Mrs. Gifford said the Mansion should be decorated by November 1st as that is when businesses start to schedule their holiday parties. She stated the Mansion should be advertised for Holiday events by November 1st. Mrs. Gifford and Mrs. Gray were in agreement that Mrs. Foster contact the person who wants the birthday party and get a firm commitment and signed contract from her.

J. Other Possible Events.

Mrs. Foster suggested holding a Christmas Holiday House Tour. There would be a tour of three or four houses in the Township ending at the Mansion. Mrs. Gifford said there are other tours at this time and we would be in competition. This will be further discussed.

Mr. Tehrani said the Parks is considering a tree lighting at the Park and could coordinate this with the house tour. Mrs. Gifford made a suggestion that the Mansion be opened one day a month for "drop ins". She stated when they were decorating the Mansion for Christmas they had quite a few people who just happened by and asked to see the Mansion. This could be advertised in the newsletter.

Mr. Tehrani reviewed the Parks Advisory proposed events and dates. Mrs. Gifford asked for a copy of the events. Mr. Tehrani stated that they would like to do a yard sale. It was suggested that he contact Pennsbury Township for information as they hold one every year.

Mr. Tehrani said as the Mother's Day Tea was a great event last year and had great reviews they would like to do it again this year. He would like to work with the Mansion Commission on this. He stated that residents expect this to be held again this year. Mrs. Foster said she feels it is not cost effective as they lost money on the tea last year. After some discussion it was decided that the Commission would meet with Parks Advisory and review the numbers to see if it could be a good fund raiser. Mrs. Foster also reminded Mr. Tehrani that the Commission is in charge of events in the Mansion and if they take over the tea it would be their event.

IV. Old Business.

There was no old business at this time.

V. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

VI. Adjournment.

On the motion of Mrs. Gifford, seconded by Mrs. Gray, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40Am.

Respectfully Submitted by Helen R. Greer (Transcriber)