HISTORICAL COMMITTEE
Strategic Plan -2018

VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

In our vision, the Historical Committee will preserve and protect the history of the Borough of Watchung. The Committee shall maintain the Texier House as a local museum containing all artifacts and material pertaining to the history of the Borough of Watchung. The Committee shall be dedicated to the maintenance of an accurate history of the Borough and seek to document all information collected. The Historical Committee shall gather current items of future interest and catalog and store such items for the future. The Committee will conduct programs as necessary to educate citizens on the colorful history of this area and to encourage resident participation. The Committee will seek to maintain high interest in historic homes and sites in the Borough to preserve our heritage.

Goals and Objectives – 2018

Highest Priority

Determine what renovation/restoration is needed for the Mural and decide where it should be placed.

Obtain a more realistic cost for restoration/cleaning of the Mural by utilizing local art experts.

Raise the necessary funds to restore/clean the Mural.

Review all possible sites where the Mural could appropriately be place, utilizing superimposed photograph if possible.

Make recommendations to Mayor and Council by August 1, 2018.

Plan for the placement of the Mural with appropriate publicity.

Recruit a total of four new members for the Historical Committee; two members and two alternates.

Advertise throughout the Borough to attract candidates with the skills we need and who can meet the time demands.

Make recommendations to the Mayor and Council as soon as possible. Plan for a complete orientation and training for new members.

Complete all requirements for the $4000 grant received from the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission and meet deadlines for reports and financial information as received. (To date, no paperwork received.)

<u>High Priority</u>

Maintain the Texier House as a local museum containing all artifacts and material pertaining to the history of the Borough of Watchung displayed for the community to enjoy including the following initiatives:

Advocate for the installation of the ceiling tiles which have already been purchased. Review plans for landscaping.

Preserve and copy the Civil War diary so that it is workable as a display.

Develop guidelines for the tours of the Museum and train volunteer docents to assist the Committee.

Complete the exhibit highlighting Watchung Schools. Continue to set up displays at the Texier House Museum and refine those displays that have been completed.

Maintain the schedule of open hours with adequate staff.

Develop a display showcasing the Wilson Memorial Church bell.

Complete the video project, "Reflections of Watchung," and the conversion of other films and videos to add to the collection.

Receive approval and comments back from the Historical Committee on the DVD cover/jacket for the film which includes all necessary acknowledgments.

Get estimates/send out all edited footage to a professional company to burn/compress the video segments that have been edited. These DVD's will serve as the final product for the Reflections of Watchung film.

Design custom DVD covers for all of the converted film reels collected over the years and now converted to a media form. Produce additional copies of these DVD's for archives and viewing.

Plan and implement a ceremony honoring the completion of the Eagle Scout Project at *God's Little Acre Cemetery commemorating the graves of Revolutionary War soldiers to gain publicity for the Scouts, Matt King, and the Historical Committee.*

Establish an organized system for backing up all of our digital photos and scanned items into a centralized, secure location on different computers.

Create a digital form of current exhibits to assure preservation.

Inventory and catalog digital items stored.

Develop Bylaws for the Historical Committee and continue to develop policies and procedures as needed.

Draft of Bylaws reviewed by Committee by September 1, 2018 and submitted to Mayor and Council for legal review.

Adoption of Bylaws by December 1, 2018.

ON-GOING

Complete a design proposal for an Ice Harvesting Sculpture to be placed at Watchung or Best Lake to commemorate historical commerce and plan for implementation.

Continue to explore a place, preferably the carriage house, to showcase our collection of farm implements and large artifacts.

Continue to implement the recommendations made by the CAPES evaluation within our budget: (This goal will take several years to complete.)

Develop a disaster plan in cooperation with OEM.

Continue the inventory of all holdings, identifying and documenting any items that are on loan or whose ownership is unknown. Continue with the spreadsheets already developed and as materials are catalogued plan for organization, preservation, disposition and digitization.

Continue to relocate all collections items from non-archival storage to acid-free boxes and folders and papers to house the collection safely.

Begin the process of digitizing all holdings. Where possible, utilize copies for display while preserving the originals.

Review and evaluate the Historical Committee's link from the Borough's web-site and add appropriate material.

Continue to organize the conference room for use as a work room and storage room for the Committee's materials.

Organize the Committee's Minutes, Correspondence, Documents, Budgets, etc. into the files in the conference room.

Conduct small scale public events such as teas, special tours, holiday themed events, etc. and invite targeted groups. Invite other local historical groups for tours and special events.

Continue to meet with other Historical Committees from other towns to get ideas about showcasing and organizing the collection.

Monitor completion of Girl Scout Project for the Driving and Walking Historic Tour of Watchung.
Continue to review the fiscal needs of the Historic Committee in view of the occupancy of the Texier House and the establishment of a Borough Museum.

Develop procedures for the Financial Manager to track purchases and expenditures and monitor with the approved budget.

Examine external support for government and corporate grants.

Monitor the budget and report at all meeting of the Committee.

Keep an accurate record of the sale of all fund raising items.

Determine future budget needs.

Collect and organize newspaper and magazine clippings, record events that occur in Watchung in 2014 and create a scrapbook of such material.

Continue fund raising efforts to include the note cards, Watchung Throws, publications and other items as determined by the Committee.
Attend Historical Workshops sponsored by the state and county historical organizations to gain information to improve the functions of the Committee.

Continue to photograph appropriate events in the Borough and document major changes in landscape.

Continue to collect any and all information pertaining to the History of Watchung. Monitor on-line sources for historical material.

LONGER-TERM GOALS

Recreate the narrative to the program on the history of Watchung

Review and evaluate the old slides and determine if they could be used in a Power Point presentation about the history of Watchung.

Develop a script and program that can be used by all volunteers for programs and tours.

Document the origins of the names of the streets in the Borough.

Utilize information gathered to regularly publish and disseminate articles about Watchung, including anecdotes and "Did you Know" type articles.

Explore programs to increase visibility and the image of the Historic Committee, i.e. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, other community groups.

Explore additional fund-raising projects and grants.

Contact colleges to determine if there are students in library science or other majors that could assist us in setting up more displays in the museum and organizing the material.

Research the role of Watchung in all aspects of the Revolutionary War to determine if there is any documented evidence of participation in the Revolution. Search for artifacts that might prove the presence of troops, etc.

Gather more information about the Lenni Lenapi tribes in the Watchung area to assure accuracy of information we do have.

Research Watchung history that may be in the archives of Warren, North Plainfield and Plainfield.

Explore the preservation of historic sites in Watchung.

Approved at the Historical Committee Meeting February 20, 2018