

Minutes
R. Stiles Renovation Committee

www.stileshouse.org

January 13, 2011

Committee Members Present: Mark Haley - President; Debbie Jourdanais - Vice President; Faith Bloomfield - Treasurer; Chris Castrio - Secretary; **Members:** Wes Clark - Mayor of the Village of Argyle; Cher McCotter - Trustee of the Village of Argyle; Joanne McDowell - Trustee of the Village of Argyle; Dan Komarony; Jeff Gargano; Allison Wilshere; Denis Wilshere; James Hempel

OLD BUSINESS:

Chris Castrio shared that the last committee meetings minutes of October 2010 were not formalized and asked the committee to move on. All present approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Treasurer's Report:

Faith Bloomfield reported a balance of \$10,619.45

Includes:

Donations from The Sheridan Foundation of \$2,000. Cathi Radner (not present) had sent out the requested village tax id and thank you response.

UPDATE ON HOUSE:

Chris Castrio gave a lengthy review of the projects beginnings through progress to date and his involvement with the project. The following are some key points:

- Property was purchased by the Village of Argyle on April 21, 2000 and finalized on June 12, 2000 from the Evergreen Bank of Glens Falls, NY. The reason for the purchase was for the sole purpose of constructing a waste water facility to benefit the Village of Argyle. The R. Stiles house was on the land.
- The Argyle Village Board decided to keep and renovate the R.Stiles House. As a municipality, the Village of Argyle could not solicit donations so they asked Laurie Ellithorpe and Cathi Radner if they would be interested in organizing a subcommittee with the sole purpose of raising money for the project.
- Laurie Ellithorpe and Cathi Radner agreed and on September 19, 2000 they helped form "The R.Stiles Renovation Project Committee" See Appendix I for the original By-Laws.
- Shortly after the formation of this committee a "Statement of Need" was released to the community. See Appendix II.
- The Village of Argyle wanted a single point of access for this project. Chris Castrio was a Village Trustee and at this point in time had 18 years

of restoration experience as a contractor. He volunteered to be the Project Manager. The Village Board and the R. Stiles Renovation Committee accepted his offer.

- In 2002, the Village Board and the R. Stiles Committee applied for a \$15,000 Member Item Grant and won. This grant was used for the installation of a new roof system, reconstruction of the front exterior fascia with crown design common to period, reconstruction of the chimneys and parapet walls, pointing of three exterior brick walls, poured a concrete interior center foundation wall and skim coated other interior foundation walls with concrete.

- Over the years, the R. Stiles Committee has raised money so I could advance the completion of this worthy project. This has been done with very little money from the tax payer. The money has been raised through numerous fundraisers such as but not limited to bake sale, a stage show, 9 Haunted Houses, 5 Car Shows and 5 Air plane ride events at the Argyle Airport.

- Using the above fundraisers we have been able to replace the heating system, install a new electrical system, begin insulating and begin the access project (ramps, stairs and porches).

- Presently, we have Steve Bonhote (Precision Construction) reviewing our Entry Access Project. We hope to start this project in earnest come spring. Also, we have Randy Cuthbert completing electrical.

- Last but not least, Chris Castrio will be stepping down from the Secretary position and would like to continue as a general member but stay concentrated as the Project Manager. The R. Stiles Committee accepted this plea. Chris will ask the same of the Village at the next Village Board meeting.

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS:

LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN. Thank you to Faith Bloomfield, Peter Bailey and Cher McCotter for their help in a very successful letter writing campaign.

CAR SHOW. Thank you Dan Komarony for organizing this event. Dan gave an update on the results of the Columbus Day Car Show. The following are some of the key items:

- Dan expressed the need for a better balance between not enough help and too much help. This event experienced not enough help.

- It was decided to keep with the Columbus Day Car Show. Lots of positive feedback about getting more things back into the Village for the town wide garage sale weekend.
- We may want to reconsider using Alternative Sentencing persons for this event.
- Dan wants to concentrate on the car show exclusively. More help will be needed for the non-car happenings such as food and non-car games.
- The horses were neat but did not mix well with the cars so next year we will only go with cars.
- We should make the food more assessable to the general public passing by as they yard sale.
- Next year we will have more trophies for the entries. Also, only one award per entry.
- DJ is already booked for next year.
- Dan has volunteered and at no cost to the R. Stiles or the Village of Argyle offered to re-grade the front yard and remove the remainder of the trees from the nursery. The general public is still welcome to take what they want. Dan will see if there is any interest in the trees from the local nurseries. The final removal date has been set for May 15, 2011. This has been approved by the R. Stiles committee and will be brought up at the next Village Board meeting.
- Mark Haley has offered his artistic talent to sell and donate profits to the R. Stiles by making "on the spot" drawings of the cars entered in the next show.
- Anne Smith has offered her talents as a professional singer and Mary Smith has offered her talents as a professional massage therapist at next years event. It was decided that since we are already contracted with a DJ for this event that it would be better to ask Anne if she could help us with a possible coffee house event instead. The committee felt that if Mary could do "on the spot" massages that it might be a good match for the car event.

HAUNTED HOUSE. This year's Haunted House made \$1,900. Thank you Cathi Radner for organizing this event. Next year will be our 10th anniversary so we hope to make it our best yet. Dan Komarony shared that he visited both the Stiles House and the Salem Court House and that they were equal in quality. The Court House charged \$10.00 and had a 45 minute wait.

MEMBERSHIP EMAIL LIST. Chris Castrio will sent our new President, Debbie Jourdanais, an updated email list separate from these minutes.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS. Thank you to the following people for stepping up to the challenge:

PRESIDENT - Debbie Jourdanais

VICE PRESIDENT - Mark Haley

TREASURER - Faith Bloomfield

SECRETARY - Peter Bailey (elected but not verified)

CLEAN UP DAY. This years clean up day will be held on May 21, 2011.

COMMUNITY BOARD. Cher McCotter brought up the possibility of constructing a new and improved community board that could be located at the Stiles House. Chris Castrio mentioned that Greenwich has a nice little house with local information in it. Will be discussed at a later date.

GRANTS:

- Chris Castrio continues to work with NYSERDA to seek available energy/appliance grants. Our application number is NCP8622 and our contact person is Michelle Fiano (mmf@nyserda.org) 518-862-1090 x. 3254 or Hillary Grimes-Casey HILARY.G.GRIMES-CASEY@saic.com 518-454-6400 x. 232

Appendix I
By-Laws
Of
R. Stiles Renovation Project

ARTICLE I PURPOSE

Section 1: Functions - The R. Stiles Renovation Project shall engage exclusively in charitable and educational endeavors related to the historic Ransom Stiles house located in the village of Argyle, Washington Country, New York. This may include fund raising activities.

Section 1: Employees - There shall be no paid employees. This shall not prevent the organization from paying for necessary professional services.

Section 3: Membership - Membership is open to any interested person. Any member in attendance at a meeting shall be permitted to vote on any issue presented to the membership at that meeting.

ARTICLE II - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1: Board of Directors - Board of Directors shall be made up of not less than seven members. The initial Board of Directors shall serve for one year and shall consist of:

Susan Buck, Rene Cronk, Diana Eggleston, Laurie Ellithorpe, Shan Hitchcock, Cathi Radner, Tom Smith.

Section 2: Meetings - Regular meetings may be held without notice at such places and times as may be fixed from time to time by resolution of the directors.

Section 3: Conduct of Meetings - The President shall preside at meetings of the Board. If the President is not present, The Vice President shall preside. The Secretary shall act as Secretary of the Meeting, but, in his or her absence, the presiding officer may appoint any person to act as Secretary of the Meeting.

Section 4: Quorum and Voting - A majority of the entire Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The vote of a majority of the directors present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is present at such time, shall be the act of the Board of Directors.

Section 5: Action Without a Meeting - The Board of Directors may take such actions by unanimous written consent in lieu of a meeting as is permitted by the laws of the state of New York.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS

Section 1: President - The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Organization and shall have general charge of its affairs. He or she shall keep the Board of Directors fully informed, shall freely consult with them concerning the business of the Organization and shall faithfully carry out the directions of the Board of Directors. He or she may sign, in the name of the Organization, all authorized contracts, documents, checks and bonds or other obligations.

Section 2: Vice President - The Vice President, in the absence or disability of the president, shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors shall prescribe.

Section 3: Secretary - The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of shareholders and directors in the books proper for that purpose. He or she shall attend to the giving and serving of all notices of meetings required by these By-Laws or by law.

Section 4: Treasurer - The Treasurer may sign in the name of the Organization, all authorized contracts, documents, checks, bonds and other obligations. He or she shall have custody of the financial records of the Organization and shall render a statement of the financial accounts and records to the Board of Directors whenever so required.

Section 5: Additional Powers of Officers - In addition to the powers specifically provided in these By-Laws, each officer (including officers other than those referred to in these By-Laws) shall have such authority and perform such duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time determine.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICES OF THE ORGANIZATION

The Board may establish from time to time the location of the principal office of the Organization and such additional offices and places of business of the Organization as may seem to them expedient.

ARTICLE V - AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended, repealed or adopted by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at a meeting of Directors at which a quorum is present. If any By-Law regulating an impending election of directors is adopted, amended or repealed by the Board of Directors, there shall be set forth in the notice of the next meeting of shareholders for the election of directors the By-law so adopted, amended or repealed, together with a concise statement of the changes made.

ARTICLE VI - INDEMNIFICATION

The Organization shall, to the fullest extent permitted by law, indemnify any person, made or threatened to be made a party to an action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, by reason of the fact that her, his testator or intestate is or was a director or officer of the Organization, or of any other Organization which any director or officer of the Organization served in any capacity at the request of the Organization, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses incurred as a result of such action or proceeding or any appeal therein. The forgoing right of indemnification shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which any such person, his testator or intestate, may be entitled apart from this By-Law.

Dated: 9-19-00

Appendix II

"Statement of Need"

Recently, the Village of Argyle purchased the Ransom Stiles House with ten acres and is hoping to renovate it into a community arts, history, and educational cultural center.

The Ransom Stiles House was built in approximately 1820 by Ransom Stiles. It is a fine example of a late Federal period dwelling. It is a three story brick house with six fireplaces and a brick floor in the original cooking area. Internal shutters fold into the interior window jambs, double hung sashes with small panes six over six windows.

The house design was taken with minor changes from the 1797 book "The Country Buildings Assistant" by renowned American born architect Asher Benjamin. In this area Asher Benjamin is best remembered for his designs in white churches throughout New England. Beacon Hill, Boston, is graced with many Asher Benjamin town houses resembling the Stiles House.

Ransom Stiles was a successful merchant and business man who settled in Argyle and went on to become the first President of Trustees (Mayor) of the Village of Argyle when it was incorporated in March 1838.

The village plans to restore the home and grounds into a combination of historical, arts, educational and cultural center. We plan to have the village and town historian office in the home, with different pictures and exhibits of the history of Argyle, and local area. We hope to refurbish the house with furniture of the area, have lectures and displays of the area folklore and history: a place where artists could hold exhibits. This would

also be a place where children from school could go to learn and research local history including Argyle's history in the underground railroad, American Revolution, French & Indian Wars, and Allen Massacre. The barn would make a nice agricultural museum. The grounds can host a bandstand for summer concerts, and provide gardens for different organizations. The field will be used for a park and possibly youth field with the anticipated sewer project tucked in the back of the ten acre parcel of land.

We are seeking donations and grants to make this lovely homestead a valuable asset to the community of Argyle, village and town. We anticipate phase 1 which will include a new roof (slate), updated heating, plumbing and electrical system to cost \$50,000.

We have a committee of volunteers who are trying to raise funds for this project. "The Ransom Stiles Renovation Project" held a garage sale and Chinese auction which raised nearly \$800. More fundraisers are planned. The youth from the Argyle Presbyterian Church, contractors, and citizens continue to volunteer time.

This is a very worthy project that will be the centerpiece of the Argyle community, bringing life back to the village and town. This is needed since Malincroft Inc. left several years back. Also, our only grocery store closed last winter, one of our major insurance carriers has relocated, and several other small business have gone under. We hope that by uniting the community behind this project, Argyle can begin rebounding.

Any donations will be greatly appreciated and may be sent to:

The Village of Argyle
Project
C/O Village clerk Jennifer Bailey
Main Street Municipal Building
Argyle, NY 12809

The Ransom Stiles Renovation
C/O Cathi Radner
19 Main Street
Argyle, NY 12809

The Ransom Stiles Renovation Project
C/O Laurie Ellithorpe
PO BOX 298
Argyle, NY 12809