

2023
Building & Grounds Annual Report
Mark Haber

The purpose of the Building and Grounds Committee is to take care of ongoing maintenance, long term projects, and the graveyard. As for ongoing maintenance, Russell Roofing installed a new roof over the porch on the southwest side of the building, and replaced the fascia boards and downspouts. During the coming year, the committee will revisit the issue of when to replace the main roof. To better meet the demands of holding hybrid meetings, we had a licensed electrician, from Newtown Electronics, install outlets around the facing bench for the equipment we use. He also brought the existing outlets up to code and proper functioning.

The Committee also oversaw scheduled services, including lawn care and other landscaping; housekeeping; piano tuning; exterminator service; and Fire Department, boiler, fire extinguisher, sprinkler, backflow prevention, and alarm inspections. A highlight of the year was resuming holding our annual leaf raking in person. Over 20 people volunteered to help. We also owe thanks to George School for the use of their equipment, and the services of Vince Campellone.

As for longer term projects, Joe Evans obtained cuttings from the Mighty Salem Oak. The Mighty Salem Oak fell over in June of 2019. The Mighty Salem Oak was a 600-year- old white oak tree located in the burial ground of the Salem, New Jersey Meeting. It met its end on June of 2019. The sapling is temporarily heeled in at Carol Ashton- Hergenhan's house, until we can make decide where it should be planted.

Peter Vari led the Parking Committee's successful effort to obtain agreement with the Borough on an amended final plan. The plan includes constructing 19 parking spaces, to the north of the meeting house, and a stormwater management area in the southeast corner of the property. Peter, Carol Ashton-Hergenhan, and Richmond Shreve are working on a request for proposal for the actual construction.

We also continued the process of developing a landscape plan for the Meeting property. Bill Fellows sent an RFP to six landscape architecture firms, two of which responded. A subgroup of B&G interviewed those two firms in January 2023, and felt that either one would be an excellent choice. The deliverables list for the project is being revised and we'll ask both firms to provide pricing for their services. We will come to Meeting for Business, in March or April, for approval of the architecture firm and budget for the project. The Financial Oversight Committee has been informed of an estimate for the cost of professional services and have earmarked funds.

Finally, an acknowledgement of the outstanding efforts of Richmond Shreve and Scott Hoskins for continuously making improvements in our hybrid meeting experience.

The complete B&G roster includes Tony Wolf, Joe Evans, Dwight Good, Jean Bohr, Carol Ashton-Hergenhem, Peter Vari, Bill Fellows, Shauna Betoff, Richmond Shreve, John Donato, Hugh Harr, and Will Fabian.

Graveyard Committee

The Graveyard Committee reports four burials in 2022: Elizabeth Hurst, Almira Sharp, and Joanne and Lew Woodman. The “photograph every headstone” project is about 95% complete. We continued updating our records on the findagrave.com website, Newtown Friends Meeting Burial Ground page. We cleaned a few headstones with D/2 Biological Solution, and continued to unearth sunken cornerstones and update records. Further details on the Graveyard Committee’s hard work are provided as an attachment to the B&G annual report on the meeting website. Sharon Hulihan and Wendy Kane comprise the Graveyard Committee. Further details on the Graveyard Committee’s hard work are provided as an attachment to this report.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Haber, Clerk