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July 2011

Hi Friend of the Historical Society,

Trail Progress Update



According to the Township Planner, “Construction of the Cynwyd Heritage Trail is proceeding well and everything is on schedule for an October 1st opening. The trail is paved from Rock Hill Road to the Manayunk Bridge and from the Cynwyd Station platform to the Cynwyd Club. The Plaza and access ramps at Cynwyd Train Station are just about to go out to bid for construction. With any luck, we can expect to see construction at the station this fall. Because the station connects to an active train line, extra scrutiny was required to make sure that trail users and rail activities are safely separated. Thanks to our friends at SEPTA for ironing out the safety details.”

Last week at the Cira Center, the William Penn Foundation, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission hosted an [Active Transportation Summit](#) to develop a regional trail network. The Manayunk Bridge was prominently discussed and the conference concluded with a walk over the bridge.

[The Manayunk bridge consultant team](#) is currently preparing for the next public meeting for the bridge design. Keep checking www.cynwydheritagetrail.com for the next date and location.

Station Progress Report

Thanks to a generous donation from West Laurel Hill Cemetery, we are able to paint the exterior of the Cynwyd Train Station in preparation of the considerable construction to better connect the trailhead to the trail. The new colors will be *Stone Bond House*, *Bambridge Green* and *Red Bay*. After construction, we will be able to install our recently-approved rainwater harvesting and stormwater features. **Please consider contributing to our Capital Campaign** to help pay for the completion of the train station. **Or, buy our book!**



Until the first floor office space is tenant occupied, this space is being used as a meeting room by the Historical Society. Pictured is Ross Mitchell standing in front of our Pennsylvania Railroad display of station artifacts that were uncovered during its restoration.

Preservation of Historic Resources



City Avenue rezoning remains a hotly debated topic and will likely remain in the headlines in the coming months. Fortunately, the Bala Avenue corridor has been separated from this larger zoning ordinance debate, but this area should not be overlooked.

The Bala Avenue corridor, with its close proximity to the Cynwyd Train Station and the Cynwyd Heritage Trail, is comprised of fifteen early 20th century commercial buildings, one theater complex and an apartment building. Although not the most prevalent, the Art Deco style dominates the Avenue. This is due primarily to the size and grandeur of the focal point of the district: the Egyptian

(now the Clearview Bala) Theater. The buildings within the corridor have retained their architectural integrity, their historic details, and have been altered very little.

The Historical Society supports the revitalization of Bala Avenue in terms of rezoning and the preservation of existing character defining buildings. We look forward to the upcoming debate and will keep you posted.

Education of the Community

So far this year, we have hosted 26 lectures or events and have contributed to a number of publications that highlight our local history. Highlights include teaching black history at Overbrook Presbyterian Pre-School, helping to raise funds for the Schuylkill Project at their *Grass Roots Gathering*, receiving an award from Broadcast Pioneers of Philadelphia, Elementary School Bus Tours, sharing oral histories at Intergenerational Interviews, cleaning and greening Cynwyd Station Park, and a presentation on the Lenape to Brownie Troop #5398.



Building Photographs - To preserve Today for tomorrow's history

Our July pictures are from www.lowermerionhistory.org/buildings/, where it is part of our future history:



Lower Merion's Historic Inventory says that this is a "handsome well preserved early stone house" built in 1890. The new owner has applied to demolish the main house, the addition to the stable, and the pool house. He would keep the original stone hay barn, machinery barn and garage. The house is listed as a Class 2 with the Index No. GL211 – demolition can be delayed but not prevented.

The Main Line Times has published a story on this house [here](#): and see 21 photos of the house and stable on our [Buildings web](#).

The August issue will have a story about our Joseph Price (1752-1828) and further updates on the Cynwyd Train Station.

Favorite Links

- [Lower Merion Historical Society's Website](#)
 - Our [Preserve America Website](#)
 - [Membership Information](#)
 - [Buy Our Books](#)

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LOWER MERION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Lower Merion Historical Society is an organization dedicated to *Preserving Our Past For The Future*. This is accomplished by stewardship of local history, education of the community, preservation of historic resources and outreach to promote awareness of the cultural heritage of the Township of Lower Merion and the Borough of Narberth.