

St. Wenceslaus Preservation Society Minutes for 26 August, 2026

The meeting of the St. Wenceslaus Preservation Society focused on the organization's efforts to preserve the church after its closure by the diocese. The group discussed the status of their canonical appeal, which is currently being reviewed in Rome with the help of parishioner Kevin Shea, who has significant influence. A request of the copy of the appeal was requested. They also discussed potential legal and zoning strategies to protect the property, including seeking historical district designation. The society's nonprofit status was confirmed, and they decided to set up a free donation platform. The group reviewed financial matters, including the handling of stocks and potential fundraising. They expressed distrust of the diocese's motives and decided to wait for the outcome of the appeal before making further moves. The conversation ended with a closing prayer.

Next steps:

1. Send out legal documentation for the non-profit by email. Paper copies were handed out at the meeting. Additionally, Joel inquired to get a copy of the appeal to Rome.
2. Get the Zeffy donation platform set up on the website and prepare to announce it to the mailing list.
3. Contact the diocese to inquire about the domain name renewal and hosting costs for the website.
4. Provide the bank debit card information to Don Les for society expenses.
5. Draft a letter to the parish mailing list explaining the St. Wenceslas Preservation Society and how to donate.
6. Contact Jason from Save Rome of the West for fundraising suggestions.
7. Consider reaching out to Bruce Dunn to meet with the board.
8. Look into transferring the stocks to the Preservation Society.
9. Schedule future meetings later in the evenings, say 7 PM Eastern Time.
10. Consider having Deacon Martin serve as a chaplain (non-voting member) for the Preservation Society.
11. Ken Popp to provide a concise email with the legal documents and PDF for the website.

Collaboration:

Group: Vote on and implement the Zeffy donation platform (vote passed with 5 yeses).

Summary:

Nonprofit Domain and Operations Planning

The discussion covered several topics including domain name acquisition for a nonprofit organization, with Don mentioning a potential free or inexpensive domain service. They discussed a wedding event

and mass rescheduling, with Father Class coming to perform the service. The conversation also touched on family land usage of septic & parking currently in use by the diocese doesn't belong to the property that could help in arguments to preserve, as well as setting up a donation system for the nonprofit using a free payment service provider that offers optional additional contributions.

Meeting Introduction and Agenda Review

The meeting began with introductions and a prayer led by one of the participants. The group discussed attendance, noting that Kim and Julius were missing. They reviewed the updated agenda and handouts, including a contact list. The participants acknowledged the presence of the IRS letter but did not discuss its contents in detail.

501(c)(3) Organization Establishment Discussion

The meeting focused on discussing the establishment of a 501(c)(3) organization following the closure of a church in January. The group emphasized the importance of implementing preventative measures and having funds available to support the community, particularly regarding the maintenance of the building and cemetery endowment fund. They discussed the need to backfill funds that were previously used for these purposes.

Church Closure Protection Discussion

The discussion focused on concerns about a church potentially being closed and sold, with participants discussing the formation of a society to protect the property. They explored legal options including seeking the property deed from the diocese and pursuing historical zoning designation to prevent sale or development of the church. The group expressed skepticism about the bishop's stated reasons for potentially closing the church, noting inconsistencies with his actions regarding other parish responsibilities.

Church Closure Appeal Vatican Meeting

The group discussed their ongoing church closure appeal, with Kevin Shea offering to help by presenting their case to Vatican officials in Rome. Kevin Shea, a parishioner and billionaire philanthropist who has raised millions for the Vatican, will meet with Cardinals and present their appeal in October or November. The appeal is currently being reviewed at the dicastery of the clergy, with officials already examining the documentation, which is considered a positive development as it typically takes up to a year for appeals to be processed.

Church Closure Appeal Discussion

The group discussed the status of their church closure appeal, with Don explaining that if the dicastery approves their case, the bishop will be ordered to open the church with no further legal expenses. They agreed to potentially compensate the group supporting their appeal with \$2,000-3,000 if they win, as the current \$600 payment was deemed insufficient.

Nonprofit Status and Donation Platform

The group discussed the nonprofit status of their organization, including legal documents and financial matters. They voted to implement a new donation platform called Zeffy, which would not charge transaction fees and offers optional additional giving.

The conversation ended with a discussion about adjusting meeting times to better accommodate participants, particularly Joel who is based in a different time zone.

St. Wenceslaus Preservation Society Planning

The group discussed scheduling future meetings for the St. Wenceslaus Preservation Society, agreeing to meet at 7 PM their time or when Joel is in town. They addressed website and domain hosting concerns, with Don taking responsibility for managing the technical aspects. The group decided to wait before approaching Father Walsh about transferring the church deed, choosing to first build support and potentially consult with Jason from Save Rome for fundraising recommendations. They also discussed concerns about potential opposition from Father Siler and agreed to be cautious about how they present their efforts to the parish leadership.

Next meeting to be announced, but tentatively around the late November time frame when Joel is in town for Thanksgiving.