

**MINUTES
OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLESEX COUNTY**

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

A regular scheduled meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission was held in Town Hall, Cranbury, New Jersey, on February 5, 2019 beginning at 7:00 pm.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Mr. Banks called the meeting to order and Ms. Scott performed as recording secretary.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-5) was provided on December 20, 2018, of this meeting's date, time, place and an agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Banks, Ms. Marlowe (arrived 7:26pm), Ms. Ryan, Mr. Szabo, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Coffey (arrived 7:09pm) and Mr. Golisano (arrived 7:04pm).

APPLICATIONS

HPC002-19 –# 21 Park Place West (B23, L48) within Historic District; Mr. Boyer was present to discuss his submitted application to re-roof the structure. He would like to replace the existing cedar shingles with GAF Timberline asphalt shingles. He stated that he believes the original roof was cedar shingles. Mr. Golisano referenced the 1916 Sanborn Map which indicated that this structure has cedar shingles. Mr. Boyer stated that the roof is covered with organic growth, the shingles are absorbing moisture and there is evidence of mold on the interior. There is no attic space. HPC asked what the cost would be to replace the roof with wood, Mr. Boyer guessed approximately \$10-\$12K, perhaps more. He did ask his vendor for a wood shingles estimate, but his vendor was unable to find the shingles to quote a price. HPC suggested that the color of GAF asphalt shingles match closely to the existing roof color. The HPC selected the Mission Brown Blend color. HPC asked about the gutters, fascia, and existing skylight. Mr. Boyer commented that the skylight will remain and whatever (gutters, fascia) has to be done at the time will be done and match the existing.

Hearing no other questions or comments for this application, roll call to approve this application with the stated shingle color recommendation; AYES: Mr. Banks, Ms. Ryan, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Walsh. Ineligible: Mr. Coffey and Mr. Golisano.

HPC003-19 –# 53 South Main Street (B18, L3) Historic District; homeowner informed secretary that he will be unable to be present for application discussion of replacing the front windows. Since this application was conceptually discussed at the January 15th HPC meeting, Mr. Banks noted it as such. There are no changes in the materials or work.

Hearing no other questions or comments, roll call to approve this application; AYES: Mr. Banks, Ms. Ryan, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Walsh. Ineligible: Mr. Coffey and Mr. Golisano.

HPC004-19 –# 55 North Main Street (B23, L50.01) Historic District; Record will reflect that Mr. Steven Golisano recused himself from HPC to present with the owners Ms. Juliana Lako & Mr. William Lako for the submitted application for the new addition and changes onto the rear of the structure. Mr. Golisano explained the phase of this project will be interior work for two apartments. The existing rear entry and the two shed like structures will be replaced with a tower that may include space for a future elevator but will be built have interior stairs to allow access to the apartments and upper third floor area. He explained that the existing

windows will be replaced and the storm windows removed. The replacement windows on the front façade will be matched in size and muntins with Marvin Cottage style, wooden interior, and clad exterior. The lower portion of the double hung windows, for safety reasons, will not be operable due to the location of the sill in relation to the floor. Safety egress has been considered. The side windows will be matched with existing. The exterior back of the building will follow the approved guidelines set forth by the resolution from the Planning Board approval through the previous owners. There are easements for driving, and pedestrian alley. There will be no change to the driving easement. There is an electrical meter in the pedestrian alley, a new meter and trim will be installed that match the building and will meet code. The gas meter with piping and the dumpster (garbage/recycling) will be enclosed. The air conditioning units will be installed on the roof and screened. New entrances to the apartments are planned, one is a single, and the other entrance will be double wide with two doors to allow for oversized items. The siding will not be removed off the majority of the building, although a section of the siding (north alley) has been removed exposing the wood siding and asphalt siding. The siding will be addressed but not at this time.

Ms. Lako has set-up an Instagram account. She has been posting photos of the work and other finds as they turn up. Secretary will email the pictures of the building when the siding was removed exposing the original clapboard and painting to Ms. Lako.

Hearing no other questions or comments, roll call to approve this application; AYES: Mr. Banks, Ms. Ryan, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Walsh. Ineligible: Mr. Coffey; Recused: Mr. Golisano.

DISCUSSION:

Discussion with Mr. Richard Preiss: Mr. Preiss was present for discussion of the properties within the Historic District. Mr. Preiss stated he had an unofficial meeting with a newly-formed subcommittee last week. One item of discussion was the necessity of re-examination of the Master Plan (MP), which includes the Historic Preservation element. He stated the MP is up to date on most of what was addressed in it but some updates will be needed. Mr. Preiss has worked with other NJ Historic District communities to draft local laws and is interested in discussing HPC's concerns and issues so recommendations can be include in the updated MP.

Mr. Preiss stated that the Planning Board (PB) will work on the MP involvement with other boards on occasion outside the public meetings where the subcommittee will do the work. Meetings happen once a month. Two HPC volunteers can participate at some point and directly talk with the subcommittee. Basically, the only issue that rose in the 2010 MP regarding the preservation element was the Buffer Area. This will be re-visited. HPC stated that enforcement is also concern. Mr. Szabo stated that recently, an Intensive Level Survey was performed, and approximately 12 properties (north end) were found to be over 100 years old along with a home (south end) that are not currently included within the HD. HPC feels that the HD should be expanded to include these properties. There are newer homes on Prospect Street circa 1965 that are in in the HD and other older homes a few properties away that are not. However, the large HD with the BA has backyards within the radius. Properties within the BA with frontage, not backyards, could be included or worded to include the streetscape. There are several individual HDs with a BA, but a large home would visually alter the area. Another topic that the HPC is aware of are larger "McMansions" being built in other areas of the village and how they would impact the HD. Mr. Szabo brought attention to the scenic vista map from the 2010 MP. There is a vacant farmhouse located at 147 Plainsboro Road providing a historic vista as defined in the current Master Plan. This farmhouse is a highly visible and unfortunately nothing is being done to help save it from falling into disrepair despite Cranbury township having a Maintenance Code (CH 116).

Mr. Preiss stated that in other communities there are three types of historic designations.

- Historic Districts are where buildings predominately that have a coherent, architectural, historic ambiance and any house, historic or not, will have an impact.
- Another type is where individual buildings are designated and outside the district, certain buildings are designated individually as properties. There are different sets of regulations for this type and the properties are subject to the regulations.
- Historic Streetscape is not used in every community. For this, a certain number of houses on a particular street where that view from the street is historic and want to be preserved even though the individual houses may not be historic or an historic district.

Mr. Preiss was uncertain if a historic vista could be identified, but there may be some regulations relating to districts or individual properties, designated as historic, with consideration of its view. He gave an example of South River which has many old structures in a settled community dating back to 1700s and listed on the State and National Register. The local Historic Society looked at additional properties. It was decided to designate an historic district and individual properties. The properties, on either Register, had been altered so much they lost their character, that in the end, the decision was made to include or exclude some of these structures. This resulted in designating a coherent district and individual properties. In this situation there was support for historic designation. The homeowners within the HD did not get to choose. It was felt that it was too onerous to designate individual properties without getting the owner's permission. If the owner indicated that this was amenable, the decision was irreversible unless the Boro agreed not to designate. Future owners would purchase an historic property. If the owners did not agree, then it was not designated.

Cranbury Township has recently completed an intensive level survey of the historic district. Mr. Preiss suggested HPC determine if a recommendation is needed to change the HD boundaries and if any changes to the regulations within the HD should be made. Also, consider whether any buildings should be added to the list of individual properties. An issue of consideration would be if somebody builds within the HD or BA, whether it is a contributing property so that it is reviewed. Dealing with an individual property, look to adopt a BA around it. If an area is other than a HD or individual property, perhaps something like a streetscape can be considered. Another area to consider is the scenic view. The word 'historic' could be applied and additional areas of the Township where this is applicable can be included. Currently it is not historic, it is more rural agricultural.

Mr. Szabo stated that the key issue is the BA definition around the HD for non-historic properties, including the properties that have the BA demarcation in their back yards. Mr. Preiss was aware of certain examples of properties with no impact to the HD and could not properly define this.

Mr. Golisano asked about the HD and streetscape. He noticed that there's not only the farmhouse on Plainsboro Road but other scenic vistas listed in the 2010 Master Plan that have been since converted from an agricultural, crop base to a tree farm production. The trees are maturing and are now cutting back on the amount of vistas. These vistas are not protected and he wondered if there is an appropriate solution. Mr. Preiss felt that the right to farm trumps the vistas. When the vistas were looked at back then, it was not looked at from an historic point of view. The land is zoned for large lot and single family only. But everything should be put on the table so it can be considered for review.

Mr. Preiss suggested that HPC start with considering how the HD should be expanded with these (certain) properties, and the major concerns would be a good place to start the conversation. Mr. Preiss closed with saying that a couple months is a good time frame, but if the HPC had any questions, please reach out to his office. He thanked the HPC for the work they did and will continue to do.

Mr. Banks asked HPC for volunteers to represent the HPC at the Township level. His thought four volunteers would be best, taking into account any conflicts. HPC agreed with this. Mr. Szabo, Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Ryan and Mr. Golisano agreed to volunteer. Mr. Szabo said that after the survey it became very clear that there were issues that needed to be addressed with the current HD boundaries. Ms. Marlowe stated that enforcement is a concern and was briefly discussed.

Mr. Szabo asked about the timeframe to get the Intensive Level Survey Phase 2 up on the website. Secretary responded that this is being looked into now. There was a statement on the file that the webmaster found concerning not sharing the information. Emails are being sent and responded. It is hopeful that this issue will soon be resolved. Also, HPC thought it would be a good idea to have additional hard copies of the survey printed and made available in the Cranbury Public Library Reference section. Ms. Scott will look into having the additional copies printed.

15 Prospect St (B23, L32) within HD: Secretary stated that an email was received from Mr. Kevin Golisano updating the HPC on the use of the dwelling from one family unit to two family unit. There are no changes to the exterior façade as approved at the March 2, 2018 HPC meeting.

MINUTES

The minutes from the January 15, 2019, meeting was reviewed, amended, and approved. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Szabo, all in favor. Record will reflect Mr. Coffey and Mr. Golisano were ineligible.

NEW BUSINESS

The 2018 Action Report was reviewed. There is no tally on the number of applications since they were not counted as of yet. A request to lighten the gray area was made. The typing errors, tally and grey area will be addressed and resubmitted for the HPC review. This report will be presented to the Township Committee during the February 25th TC meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

New Homeowner Letters: none sent.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, a motion duly made by Mr. Banks, seconded by Ms. Ryan and carried, the meeting was thereupon adjourned.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, undersigned, do hereby certify;

That I am the duly appointed secretary of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission and,

That the foregoing minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission, held on February 5, 2019 consisting of 4 pages, constitute a true and correct copy of the minutes of the said meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name on this 19th day of February 2019.

Linda M. Scott, Recording Secretary