

**MINUTES
OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY
DECEMBER 20, 2022**

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The Meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was held on December 20, 2022, 7:00 pm at Town Hall, 23A North Main Street, Meeting Room.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) was provided on January 14, 2022 and updated on August 31, 2022 of this meeting's date, time, and place, and the 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.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Ms. Ryan, Chair; Mr. Golisano, Vice-Chair; Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Suttmeier, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Szabo, Alt I and Mr. Geier, Alt II

Professionals and Staff Present: Robin Tillou, HPC Administrative Officer
Eman El-Badawi, Township Committee Member

Professionals and Staff Absent: Matthew Scott, Township Committee Liaison

APPLICATION

HPC165-22 - #18 S. Main Street, Block 23, Lot 78 – Historic District - Roofing

The Applicants/Owners for this property's location was not present, so the application has been tabled to the January 10, 2023 HPC meeting date.

OLD BUSINESS

2-4 Hightstown Cranbury Station Road, LLC. – Block 9, Lot 1.01, Block 9.01, Lot(s) 1 & 2

2-4 Cranbury Hightstown Station Road, LLC. is the developer of the property 2-4 Cranbury Hightstown Station Road. This property has the train depot of the Camden Amboy Railroad located on it.

Franco Rauseo, Owner, and Andrew Grover, Insite Engineering, Civil Engineer for the development was present to discuss the train depot on the property.

Mr. Grover introduced the development by stating the property is on the corner of Station Road and Hightstown Cranbury Station Road just east of the turnpike. They had a meeting at the Development Review Committee on September 8, 2022 and it was recommended to attend the Environmental Commission, which was done last night, and to attend the HPC meeting tonight. The proposal is a 200,000 sq. ft. warehouse.

Chair Ryan advised that the property being developed is not in the Historic District but is adjacent to Cranbury Station Hamlet Historic District. The stance the Chair takes is to have the train depot stay in place.

Ms. Suttmeier stated the Commission has been trying to get the train depot on the property preserved for years. The presentation Ms. Suttmeier had put together was displayed on the screen.

Ms. Suttmeier went over the slides by stating members of the Cranbury Historic Preservation Society has a book to provide to Mr. Rauseo that explains in a section of the book the Hamlet. The Hamlet started in 1832 when the depot was established and continued into 1938 for passenger service. It then shifted to Chamberlin and Barclay for agricultural use. The train that ran in the area was called the John Bull. The John Bull train is now in the Smithsonian Museum. The train derailed south of where the warehouse is proposed, where President John Quincy Adams and Cornelius Vanderbilt and the robber baron of the railroad industry was on the train. Mr. Vanderbilt was on the train and broke his leg and stayed at one of the homes in the Cranbury Station Hamlet Historic District. This was the first fatal train accident in the U.S. that happened.

Ms. Suttmeier went over adaptive reuse with the developers by stating adaptive reuse is the concept of taking the existing structure of a building and using it for new or modern functions. This allows for the continued use of a viable community asset and space. It is a building strategy that is effective in optimizing performance, while saving time and energy. Ms. Suttmeier continued to go over the slides in her presentation regarding adaptive reuse.

Mr. Rauseo wanted to know if there is a picture of what the train depot originally looked like.

Mr. Rauseo stated Haddad Organization (his company to be put in the warehouse proposed) is a 65-year-old company with their main headquarters in Dayton. His company owns brands, and the warehouse will be an auxiliary building to house their brand and be distributed out of Dayton. He does not mind making it a park and make vegetation and/or trees to block the warehouse from the neighboring residents. He can make the depot some sort of a park and incorporate the history of his company into the building itself.

Ms. Suttmeier stated there is a Cranbury Arts Council that would like a space for a headquarters and could possibly rent out for pottery classes and/or birthday classes.

Mr. Rauseo stated the building is too run down and if there is a picture of what the building looked like originally he can renovate it to look like that.

Vice-Chair Golisano showed an artist's rendition from the 1970's of a calendar of what the train depot looked like originally.

Mr. Rauseo stated he will not touch it as is. Someone from the operations can meet members so they know what not to touch during the construction and once a plan is made, they will go from there.

Ms. Marlowe stated it would be her preference for the train depot to not be moved. The outside should look as it does.

The Commission collaboratively advised Mr. Rauseo that they appreciate him working with them to preserve the train depot.

Mr. Szabo stated a freshening up of the structure would be beneficial.

Mr. Geier stated the Commission can help formulate what the building can be and professionals (architects and engineers can also be helpful).

Chair Ryan opened the meeting to the public.

Mary Ann Bossard, 91 Halsey Reed Road, loves the way the train depot looks in the front and the back. She is appreciative to the Owners for respecting the town.

Audrey Smith, Vice President of Cranbury Historical Preservation Society and Cranbury Township Historian, stated John Chambers book is a great resource and there are copies if anyone would like to take one. It has a wealth of information regarding Cranbury. They are happy the developer is keeping the train depot the way it is.

Janice Mondoker, 93 Halsey Reed Road, stated the building is solid and well done and should not collapse. She would be happy to host any meetings needed regarding the train depot.

Kathy Miralda, 693 Yardley Way, Monroe, NJ, stated she had lived on Halsey Reed Road for 47 years and loves the train depot and is grateful for all that HPC has done and is grateful of the Owner of the property.

Lisa Knierim, 58 Washington Drive, stated there is an opportunity to make a connection between old and new. In seven (7) years it will be the 300-year anniversary of that depot.

With no other public comment, Chair Ryan closed the public forum.

Cranbury Station Hamlet Historic District

Chair Ryan stated she had spoken to Liz Leheny, Township Planner, regarding the National Registry, State and National Nomination and it was an idea to consider using a CLG grant to use a professional to help with the application. When speaking with Andrea Tingey, Historic Preservation State Office, it had been indicated that it will take several years with the Certificate of Eligibility being the first step to the National Registry.

Vice-Chair Golisano stated he would be willing to participate if the state could do walk through of that area to determine what is important to include in the application.

Ms. Marlowe stated she had advised Monroe of the nomination, but they do not have the financial support to include Monroe in the State and National Nomination.

Ms. Lindsey Thivierge, State Historic Preservation Office, was present and advised the Commission timing is a concern for the current round of the CLG grant, but Andrea Tingey and herself are happy to help. Getting proposals for a nomination to include with the application is not paid for those for a consulting firm, the firm can turn you down and not give a proposal, but it is encouraged to include proposals with your nomination application. The award would be granted in May and the project would start next fall.

Vice-Chair Golisano asked for another walk through of the Cranbury Station Hamlet Historic District site with the state.

Ms. Thivierge stated her, and Andrea Tingey (national register coordinator) can do a walk through and Pierre Lacombe, New Jersey Geologic Historian, is a great resource for the Camden Amboy Rail history.

CLG Grant

Ms. Thivierge advised the Commission of the New Jersey Historic Commission Grant programs which funds planning activities and it is encouraged to use due to having more money to grant than the CLG grant does.

Chair Ryan stated the issue had come up that getting access to the properties for the identified historic sites in the mast plan, regarding producing a survey for the identified historic sites.

Vice-Chair Golisano stated it is up to the owner to allow access to the property. If they do not consent to access then, we cannot go on the property. What is visible from the public right-a-way can be seen and documented from that vantage point.

Mr. Szabo stated the homeowner would have to be agreeable to make the property a stand-alone historic site.

Chair Ryan stated the first step is the survey.

Mr. Szabo stated the historic farmhouse on Dey Road was demolished with no record of it.

Mr. Szabo stated a drafted letter should be done to the property owners to start the dialogue early of their property to potentially be a historic site. The letter should be made clear of the intent, and it should be known if it is agreed to, they will not be setting themselves up for a lot of restrictions, only exterior from street view.

Chair Ryan stated they may not respond.

Mr. Szabo stated they will go by who is interested and go from there.

Chair Ryan stated we will not be going for the upcoming CLG grant. They will first get out a drafted letter to the property owners of the identified historic sites on the master plan.

Signage

Ms. Suttmeier stated the Commission has submitted the numbers needed for the budget meeting that will take place in January 2023. There has been dialogue again about that sign that has been hit by the truck on S. Main Street. Hopefully that signage can start soon.

Chair Ryan stated that sign is put in the budget for next year.

Ms. Suttmeier stated there will be a welcoming sign on Station Road and Route 130 that was presented at the Township Committee meeting. She could not see the sign at the meeting.

Vice-Chair Golisano stated there was not a final design presented.

Ms. Suttmeier is going to speak with EDAC again in January 2023. The meeting that she had presented to lacked a quorum, so she will be presenting to them then. They seemed supportive and they are now putting in a budget for Cranbury welcoming signage.

Brainerd Lake Railing

Ms. Tillou will contact the administrator as to the status of being a county project or municipal level for the maintenance.

New Homeowner Letters

The new homeowners' letters, which includes directions needing to be taken in a property in the Historic District (HD) and/or buffer area (BA), were sent to the following:

3 Brainerd Drive (BA), 15 Station Road (BA), and 17 Bunker Hill Drive (HD).

MINUTES

November 15, 2022 Meeting

Mr. Golisano made the motion to approve the minutes with amendments. Ms. Marlowe offered a second.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Ms. Ryan, Mr. Golisano, Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Suttmeier and Mr. Szabo

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: None

DISCUSSION

Chair Ryan announced Mr. Walsh's resignation from the HPC and praised his efforts and volunteer work for the past six (6) years on the HPC.

Mr. Geier will be stepping in as a member for 2023 and there will be a vacancy for the Alt. II position.

Vice-Chair Golisano announced the work done from the Historic Preservation Society for the 1713 Cottage was presented to the Scottish group, "Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group", as discussed at a previous HPC meeting. The Scottish group had requested an article in collaboration with himself, John Chambers and Karen Kelley (Historic Preservation Society Members). The article was published, and the 1713 Cottage is on the cover of the journal.

Vice-Chair Golisano suggested a copy of a Camden Amboy origin history book that he had found to donate to the library. Ms. Suttmeier suggested the children's book "The Little House" for the library.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Ryan opened the meeting to the public.

With no public comment, Chair Ryan closed the public portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, a motion was made by Vice-Chair Golisano to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Walsh offered a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 8:30 pm.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed secretary of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission, and that this document, consisting of six (6) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 20, 2022.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name on this day of January 11, 2023.

Robin Tillou

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Recording Secretary

Historic Preservation Commission