

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

**TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING**

A meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission was held in Town Hall, Cranbury, New Jersey, on March 3, 2020 beginning at 7:00 pm.

**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 16, 2019, 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.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr. Golisano, Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Ryan, Ms. Suttmeier (2<sup>nd</sup> Alt.), and Mr. Walsh. Motion to excuse Mr. Banks (1<sup>st</sup> Alt.) and Mr. Szabo was made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Ryan, all in favor. Ineligible: Ms. Suttmeier. Ms. Spann, HPC Liaison, was present.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Work session: Mr. Walsh stated that the last time the HPC met, he recommended that this meeting have a more in-depth conversation around addressing Cranbury Station and to prioritize as to what HPC really wants to achieve. He asked what HPC hopes to get done and if only one item is to be accomplished, and what should it be. He then suggested three observations: 1) The four Cranbury hamlet properties on the Cranbury side of Halsey Reed Road and the limited conversations that were had, possibly embracing these properties into an historic district comparable to the downtown district; 2) The possibility to develop the Conrail line that into an active recreation area as a walking trail/path, bike path; and 3) Since the rail line is a SHPO Opinion, tie the depot with the rail line to preserve for possible community use. He stated that these three issues should be prioritized to move towards fruition over the next few months. He asked HPC if they felt the same, and all agreed. Mr. Walsh suggested having conversations with the Cranbury residents living on Halsey Reed Road so these properties could be absorbed into the current historic district. This area would then benefit from the same advantage that the downtown enjoys. He explained that he visited the area over the weekend but could not find signage indicating that the area is designated as an historic district. He feels that there should be appropriate signage for this site. It would be great to converse with Conrail better understand their requirements to access the line to create a path and to find out if funding is available, should there be enough interest in this idea. He asked if the HPC wants to try to preserve the freight station and tie it in as a historic landmark with the rail line. If so, this might require funding.

Ms. Ryan stated that she looked for the Camden & Amboy Railroad (C&ARR) historic listing for a better understanding. She said that the C&ARR travels through thirty-one (31) municipalities and various other NJ counties. She found it is listed as ID#2970 within the NJDEP Historic Preservation Office and that this site is only eligible, not listed on a state or national register. This means that a letter of eligibility is issued by the NJ State, and listed as an opinion. The freight station could be added, however, extra steps would be required.

Mr. Golisano noted Mr. Kilbride and with his prepared material for submission regarding this area should be corrected to reflect that it is a SHPO Opinion and not a registered historic district listing.

Several Cranbury Station residents were present, and Mr. Walsh invited them to speak. Ms. Janice Mondoker, Halsey Reed Road, Cranbury resident, said that initially when she spoke (December 17, 2019 HPC meeting) it was to save the freight station. She favor the options and agrees that the process should continue. She also volunteered her time to assist with designation before all the structures and depot are gone. It was explained

that the Camden and Amboy Railroad is listed on the NJDEP Historic Preservation Office designation list as an opinion, not as an Historic District.

Ms. Cathy Moraldo, Halsey Reed Road, Monroe Township resident, is in favor of all the ideas but is partial to the bike trail. She recalled that years ago, before Halsey Reed Road was a cul-de-sac, many cycling clubs would use that road as a part of their route. She said that since the rail line extends north into Jamesburg and south into Hightstown, this would be ideal for cycling. She informed the HPC that a freestanding cement kiosk is still existing.

Mr. Brian Scarpulla, Halsey Reed Road, Cranbury resident, was present and expressed that he is willing to volunteer and help assist. Mr. Walsh stated that the residents are important and interested in being a part of the process and want to help. Ms. Lori Morris, Cranbury resident, feels that the ideas are good options; she questioned about adding the hamlet to the district and wondered about the criteria for the area. HPC stated that it would be a stand-alone district and follow the guidelines set forth in Chapter 93.

Mr. Walsh informed HPC that he received an email from Mr. Szabo. Mr. Walsh relayed that while Mr. Szabo was docenting at the Museum one weekend, an opportunity arose where Ms. Karen Kelley of the CHPS (Cranbury Historic and Preservation Society) and Mr. Kilbride, and he were all present together. Introductions were made and a conversation regarding the C&ARR and depot ensued. All had an interest and added to the conversation. Additionally, Mr. Szabo learned that Ms. Kelly had the opportunity to tour the depot some months back.

Mr. Golisano stated that the mentioned three observations should be re-prioritized. He feels that the depot should be the first concern and be preserved. The hamlet can be listed second, with the rail line last. He expressed that there is a possible risk the depot property could change ownership. Ms. Suttmeier agreed there is a risk the depot could risk be sold, whereas the homeowners within the hamlet have an interest. Ms. Marlowe stated that the owner's consent is required for the structure to be listed.

Mr. Golisano opined that preservation topics for this area be addressed by the HPC and that Rails to Trails be best addressed by a committee that oversees open space and recreational areas. HPC addresses concerns that they are charged with.

Discussion ensued of possible topics to explore that are not suitable to take place during a public meeting. Ms. Spann directed HPC to put together their objectives and to work with the Township and Administrator.

Ms. Marlowe explained that restrictions will be placed upon the property and future buyers must made aware of them. The depot would add support for the hamlet, since the depot has more historical significance. The rail line also has historical significance since it has a SHPO Opinion. This means that an opinion of eligibility issued by the State Historic Preservation Officer and the opinion will have an effect on historic properties not listed on the National Register.

Mr. Walsh had visited the area and could not locate any signage about historic designation. Mr. Golisano stated that there is signage on Route 133. Another two cast aluminum, double sided, identical signs are installed on Hightstown Cranbury Station Road just south of the Turnpike overpass stating C&ARR's historic significance.

The residents expressed their gratitude and thanked HPC for considering and acknowledging this area. Mr. Walsh conveyed to the residents that HPC is happy to hear and listen to concerns. It is good to know of their excitement and the interest level makes it easier to support as the project moves forward.

Ms. Suttmeier offered to research the Rails to Trails organization. Mr. Golisano felt that communicating with the Parks or Recreation Commission should be done. It may be that this will bounce back to HPC due to the historic aspect. Mr. Walsh agreed and stated that it would be good to know about Rails to Trails organization.

Ms. Spann expressed her gratitude towards the progress that HPC made and thanked them for including her in with the conversations. Mr. Walsh conveyed that the HPC values Ms. Spann's input and support.

Trenton Road Historic House: The owners of the property that the house sits upon is Township property. The CHPS will most likely be seeking a certificate of eligibility for this property so it can be eligible for grant funding. Information has been collected but at some point the Township Committee will be needed to sign-off when this happens. Ms. Marlowe is uncertain on the process. Ms. Spann stated a lease has been agreed to and the TC would not have a problem of supporting this. Mr. Golisano spoke that this property would be the first for Cranbury to secure a designation for an individual farm house outside of the historic district. Ms. Marlowe said in order to

receive grant funds, the property must be listed individually on the National Register or within the historic district; this property is neither.

Ms. Suttmeier stated that last time HPC talked positively of having a thematic farming district idea. Ms. Ryan suggested that with all the research that Mr. Golisano and others have done prior to the move, there is plenty of support documentation for submission. Ms. Marlowe attended a grant application workshop so she is aware of the steps.

## **APPLICATIONS**

None.

## **MINUTES**

The minutes from the February 4, and February 18, 2020, meetings were reviewed, discussed with amendments. They will be placed on the March 17<sup>th</sup> agenda for review.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

New Homeowner Letters: None sent.

## **DISCUSSION**

2019 Year End Report: Mr. Walsh reported that the 2019 Year End report, with Mr. Banks, went well at the February 24<sup>th</sup> Township Committee meeting. Mr. Banks reported on the 2019 business and Mr. Walsh gave an overview of 2020, briefly speaking of the Hamlet. Ms. Spann reported that the Township Committee was impressed. She added the report was thorough and beautifully done.

## **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

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

## **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 March 3, 2020 consisting of 2 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 5<sup>th</sup> day of May 2020.

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Linda M. Scott, Recording Secretary