

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

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission was held on September 15th, 2020 at 7:00 pm by remote access videoconferencing in response to COVID-19 and the updated Open Public Meeting Act guidelines.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) was provided on December 16, 2019, 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. Notification of remote access meetings going forward, until further notice, was posted on the Township website on July 3rd, 2020 and sent to the Trenton Times, Home News, and Cranbury Press on July 3rd, 2020.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Mr. Walsh called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and Ms. Scott performed as recording secretary.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Banks, Mr. Golisano, Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Ryan (7:02 pm), Ms. Suttmeier (7:04 pm), Mr. Szabo, and Mr. Walsh.

NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms. Evelyn Spann, Township Liaison; Mr. Nick Moroldo, Monroe Resident; Ms. Kathleen Moroldo, Monroe Resident; Ms. Lorraine Morris, Cranbury Resident

APPLICATIONS

HPC064-20, #18 Station Road, (B18, L16) within Historic District

Property owner, Mr. Jonathan Bichsel, was present for discussion of the proposed replacement windows. Mr. Bichsel purchased the home in January 2017 and has since been undertaking upgrades to the property. The windows, which are wood frame and deteriorated and rotted beyond repair, have been receiving attention. This was a continuation of the discussion tabled at the September 1st HPC meeting in order to allow Mr. Bichsel time to investigate the possibility of additional customization of the front (north elevation) windows to match existing windows on the 1850c three-bay house. The issue addressed previously was the mismatched vertical/horizontal muntin sizes on the existing windows, with the vertical muntins being significantly thicker than the horizontal muntins. Mr. Bichsel reported back that Andersen would be unable to duplicate the mismatched muntin sizes, but could provide equal vertical/horizontal muntin widths of either 1 1/8" or 5/8". Mr. Bichsel stated his willingness to pursue customization with another vendor if the HPC deemed such essential. However, given that such customization would be cost prohibitive at this time, Mr. Bichsel noted that he would leave the front windows as is for now, replacing only the windows on other elevations of the house upon approval by HPC. Mr. Walsh thanked Mr. Bichsel for his efforts to pursue options for customization in order to maintain the integrity of the house. Upon discussion, the Commission determined that further customization of the front windows would not be required due to the difficulty in matching the existing unusual window style and the associated extra cost on the homeowner. The Commission commended Mr. Bichsel again for his efforts to investigate and report back on options for further customization of the windows. Thus, the Commission agreed with the use of the 4/4, simulated divided lite with equal 5/8" vertical/horizontal muntins (Andersen 400 Series) for the front five windows (north elevation). These will ensure uniformity with the eight windows (Simonton 6100 Window) on the other elevations of the house, providing for an overall coherent look. Further, all windows will have full screens, which will help to mask the muntins. The Commission suggested to Mr. Bichsel that he retain with the house one of the original front five

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windows (north elevation) for historical record, as well as save any unusual glass (e.g., bubbled, wavy) from those windows for historical record or possible reuse elsewhere in Cranbury Township. Mr. Bichsel agreed.

Roll call was taken for approval of the submitted application: AYES: Mr. Golisano, Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Ryan, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Walsh. INELIGIBLE: Mr. Banks and Ms. Suttmeier.

OLD BUSINESS

Proposed Changes to the Historic District and Buffer Areas:

The HPC proceeded with discussion of the Proposed Amendment to the Cranbury Village Historic District and Buffer based on the two updated maps prepared by Mr. Richard Preiss reflecting the changes from the August 18th meeting. Points discussed included:

- Exclusion from the Historic District of the Bennett Place entrance and the Village Park entrance. HPC accepts this proposed change.
- Inclusion within the Historic District of 40 Station Road (Block 18, Lot 38), which was an individual site (8c), as well as the inclusion of the two (2) additional adjacent properties directly to its West. HPC accepts this proposed change.
- Need for a description of the identified Historic Buffer Area properties to indicate that the view from the Lakefront sides of the properties is the main consideration and not the view from the Evans Drive side.
- Inclusion in the Historic District of the access/utility easement for Block 23, Lot 14.03, along with the 55' wide utility and ingress/egress on Park Place West.
- Clarification regarding flag lots:
 - 22 Station Road (Block 18, Lot 36.01): The driveway entrance for this property is a 40' W drainage easement. Verification is needed to confirm that this is one lot, as the house in the rear does not need to be included in the Historic District but the driveway can be included if it is a separate lot.
 - 12 Station Road (Block 18, Lot 13): The HPC seeks the inclusion of this single parcel in the Historic District.
 - 17 Bunker Hill (Block 23, Lot 14.02): The entire parcel of this property should be included in the Historic District. Currently, it is shown only partly colored. A carriage barn sits on the corner of the south corner of this lot.
- Properties at 158 North Main (8b) and 165 North Main (8c) are still considered to be individual sites and, as such, should be shaded blue on the map.

Mr. Walsh instructed Ms. Scott to send the maps to Mr. Preiss with the above changes for approval in order to advance the changes to the Township Committee.

Mr. Golisano stated that the draft map should be compared to the tax map for justification of the property lines.

Cranbury Hamlet, Station Depot, Railway:

Ms. Elizabeth Leheny was unavailable to attend the September 15th, 2020 HPC meeting for discussion of the Hamlet and Depot. Mr. Walsh extended his apologies to the Hamlet residents who were in attendance, as the discussion could not proceed in Ms. Leheny's absence. Mr. Walsh provided an overview of the issues and again encouraged the completion of the designation forms, gathering from current Hamlet homeowners as much information as possible (e.g., date, photos, etc.). Ms. Leheny will complete the deed work for the designation. Ms. Suttmeier noted that she was able to compile research on the 96 Halsey Reed Road property; however, she requested Mr. Golisano's architectural expertise in identifying the possible historically significant of structures on the property that had been modified over time. Mr. Walsh agreed with this request and added that the designation documents would be reviewed at the October 6th, 2020 meeting to determine if the information contained therein presents a sufficiently compelling case for inclusion of the Hamlet within the HD. Ms. Moroldo noted that she contacted the Monroe Historical Society for supporting information; however, due to continuing COVID closures, she has had difficulty obtaining complete information. She noted, though, that old maps seem to indicate that the Hamlet was originally part of Monroe Township.

Mr. Walsh indicated that this agenda item would be moved to the October 6th, 2020 HPC meeting at which it is anticipated that Ms. Leheny will be in attendance. Mr. Walsh reiterated that the order of priority for addressing these sites is: (1) Hamlet, (2) Depot, and (3) Railway.

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New Homeowner Letters

No new homeowner letters were sent. Ms. Scott noted that there have been recent home sales within the Historic District; however, letters are not typically sent until one to two months after the closing date for a property.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 HPC Budget

The HPC budget request for 2021 was considered. Ms. Scott led a line-by-line review and discussion of the current Commission budget. It was determined that the budget request for all line items, except for training, would remain flat for 2021 due to the impact of COVID precluding full expenditures of budgeted funds in most lines. However, the HPC did recommend the reduction in the training budget line by 50 percent. Over the past one to two years, more training opportunities have become available online and at no cost. Such opportunities expanded during COVID and it is anticipated that such free, online offerings will continue into 2021. Therefore, the full amount budgeted for training in 2020 would not be necessary in 2021. There was some discussion regarding the budget line for books, which are housed in the Public Library. Mr. Golisano indicated that he would recommend new titles for purchase with the funds that remain in this line for 2020. Mr. Walsh asked that Mr. Golisano bring to the October 6th, 2020 HPC meeting the titles and costs of those books.

The Commission members agreed unanimously to advance the budget with the proposed reduction in the training line.

2021 Meeting Dates:

Ms. Scott presented the dates for the 2021 HPC, noting that again in 2021, there would be no meeting on the first Tuesday of November due to election day.

There was no discussion.

2020 Volunteer Term Dates:

Ms. Scott stated that Mr. Szabo's volunteer term date will expire on December 31st, 2020. Mr. Szabo indicated that he would likely make his decision by the November 3rd, 2020 HPC meeting regarding continued service. Ms. Scott reminded Mr. Szabo that sufficient advance notification must be provided in order to inform the Township Committee in a timely manner and to contact other interested candidates for service on the HPC should Mr. Szabo decide to discontinue his service.

MINUTES

The minutes from the September 1st, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Two corrections to the minutes were noted: Mr. Banks's presence at the September 1st meeting was added, and the date of the meeting was corrected on page 3.

Roll call to approve as amended: AYES: Mr. Golisano, Ms. Marlowe, Ms. Ryan, Mr. Szabo, and Mr. Walsh. INELIGIBLE: Mr. Banks and Ms. Suttmeier.

DISCUSSION

HPC067-20, #55 North Main Street (B23, L50.01):

Ms. Scott stated that she received application HPC067-20 as a revision of HPC008-19 to install new rear building stairs and egress doors to the southern half of the building on the west-facing façade. These building elements were originally shown and approved in HPC004-19. The owners are now ready to proceed with this phase of the work. Zoning approval has now been obtained; therefore, the application is being returned to the HPC as HPC067-20 for re-review. This item was presented for conceptual discussion only at the September 15th, 2020 meeting. Mr. Golisano, being the architect for the project, recused himself from his role on the board for purposes of this discussion.

Mr. Golisano noted that two windows had been removed and replaced with simulated divided lite, slightly smaller in size. The doors are more of a security type with a flat panel design. The upper level staircase will be a steel rectangular frame with black powder coating to give a wrought iron look. Concrete steps will be installed on the lower level. Mr. Golisano noted also that care was taken to ensure an appropriate look for the rear of the building as it may look onto the future new Public Library.

Demolition needs to proceed to prepare for this work. Mr. Golisano noted that he is not seeking approval at this time due to late submission of the application. His intent with the conceptual discussion was to determine if there were any concerns and to proceed to the extent appropriate as soon as possible. He noted also that Cranbury Pizza will be the new occupants of the space.

Mr. Walsh indicated that the façade as originally proposed is the same as proposed under HPC067-20, with perhaps only slight variations due to graphics. He reiterated that Mr. Golisano was seeking only to gain some comfort level that the work could proceed. As such, Mr. Walsh stated that demolition could proceed and that the application would be returned to the October 6th, 2020 HPC meeting to address any changes proposed to the work. Ms. Scott noted that since zoning approval has already been obtained, the HPC would be amiable to the project; however, the application must be placed on the next agenda to allow for public comment.

The Commission members agreed unanimously that demolition work could proceed.

Retirement of Linda Scott, Recording Secretary and Administrative Officer of the HPC:

Mr. Walsh acknowledged Ms. Scott's retirement and commended her for always being prepared, thorough, knowledgeable, and patient in her service to the HPC over the many years of her tenure.

1st Constitution Bank, 74 North Main Street:

Ms. Scott reported that she contacted the 1st Constitution Bank in regard to the new, smaller window that was installed after the building suffered damage due to an automobile crash on August 21st, 2020. She learned that that new, smaller window is only temporary and that the permanent replacement window will be of the same size as the others on the building.

Township Liaison Update:

Ms. Spann reported on the re-opening of Town Hall to the public, noting that board and commission meetings will continue on a virtual basis due to lack of adequate space for social distancing in meeting rooms. Ms. Spann reported also that the Public Library is close to signing a new lease pending assessment of stress and load bearing considerations on main floor of new location.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

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

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 four (4) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting held on September 15th, 2020.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name on this ____ day of October 2020.

Lori Thompson
Recording Secretary
Historic Preservation Commission