

**MINUTES
OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY
APRIL 5, 2022**

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was held on April 5, 2022 at 7:00 pm by remote access videoconferencing in response to COVID-19 and the Open Public Meeting Act guidelines.

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 Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) was provided 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 3, 2020 and sent to the Trenton Times, Home News, and Cranbury Press on July 3, 2020.

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: Matthew Scott, Township Committee Liaison
Robin Tillou, Historic Preservation Commission Secretary

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

**HPC142-22, #23 N. Main Street, Block 23 Lot(s) 63.011 & 70.02 – Auxiliary
Gym/Addition/Multiple Alterations**

Mr. Frank Brennan of Brennan Law Firm was present and is representing the Owner/Applicant for 23 N. Main Street conceptual review.

Mr. Brennan explained the construction was a part of a public referendum which includes the construction of the auxiliary gym connected to the existing building, the construction of the auditorium/performing arts center, fire lane to the auxiliary gym addition and other construction such as sidewalks, walkways, curbing, stormwater measures, parking area, circulation improvements and relocation of dumpsters. The school has been in existence since 1896/1897. There have been six major additions to the school since then.

Dr. Susan Genco, Cranbury School Superintendent/Principal, introduced “3D Fly-Thru” video depicting the details of the construction involved and renderings of what is being proposed. [Referendum 2021 - Full STEAM Ahead - Dec. 14 Referendum - Full STEAM Ahead - Cranbury School District](#)

Mr. William Bannister, Parette Somjen Architects, Applicant's architect, stated the auxiliary gym design is tucked away in the back corner. The façade will not be seen from the street. The elements that are adjacent to those spaces were taken into consideration. The height of the building was taken into consideration to harmonize and blend in as if it were there the entire time.

Mr. Bannister exhibited the west elevation of the existing school and the addition of the auxiliary gym.

Ms. Suttmeier asked what construction is currently occurring at the auxiliary gym.

Mr. Bannister stated they have started to stage and prepare for the underground construction that will occur.

Mr. Szabo asked if the trees shown would be removed and replanted.

Mr. Bannister stated they will be removed, but nothing is planned to be replanted. The Board of Education could plant more trees.

Mr. Geier stated there are major differences between what was submitted and what was just shown in the video. The elevation of the building facing the parking lot that was provided in the packet do not show any windows and the fly thru that was just presented showed windows.

Mr. Bannister stated the fly thru video is the most recent renderings we have. The plans that were submitted to HPC are the plans that were submitted to the Planning Board/Department of Education, which was done in 2021.

Mr. Geier stated to make an opinion to the Zoning Board of Education will be difficult without fully developed drawings given the historic nature which the building exists.

Mr. Brennan stated the HPC's role is to offer comment and input, but to comment whether you believe the proposed use variance for school purposes is objectionable to you as the Historic Preservation Commission from a historical point of view.

Ms. Suttmeier stated she does appreciate what Mr. Geier is requesting and would also like to see the drawings when it is done.

Vice Chair Golisano stated he is not in agreeance with the role of the HPC being only for the use variance, we can comment with our experience as a historic commission to help guide the design process. The design guidelines are a good reference. The rendering for the auditorium space behind the stage was taller than the spire unless that was to get away from drawing the back of the building. Keep in mind that rooftop equipment will be going on the top of the building and screening will be done that will add additional height to the building that could block views of the clock tower from the rear parking lot or the new library. The blank wall effect may happen on the large vertical element on the north side. We had requested massing studies or more detailed elevations/renderings, but as you move towards the next stage you may have to voluntarily come to HPC again.

Mr. Geier stated any rooftop equipment should be delineated on the drawings and the rooftop equipment should be screened off.

Mr. Walsh agrees to not see anything large and encumber some behind the current spire where the clock tower is because that ruins the historical context of that building.

Chair Ryan is concerned for what will be peeking out to the north side on the lower scale for the new curbed entrance area. She would like to see what we will be able to see of the new auditorium lobby entrance peeking out from the side of the historic vista looking towards the old school building.

Mr. Bannister stated it will not be peeking out. He does not believe it will protrude enough out to be able to see it from Main Street. There is no intention to go rogue and have this major design element to be completely different from what is currently out there and not blend in and will take into consideration the historical elements around it.

Ms. Lisa Rue, Board of Education Member, stated we want this to fit into our town and would not want this to be a standout. It would be great to come back to the HPC. One note is safety is something that must be considered, for example, not as many windows due to safety concerns.

Dr. Genco stated this is an opportunity to tie in where the tradition meets the innovation. The gymnasium on the far side looks more modern and on the opposite side is the first schoolhouse from 1896 and we want to ensure there is cohesion.

Mr. Geier asked what the overall schedule of the project is.

Mr. Bannister stated the gym area documents are complete and are now waiting for approval to start. The remaining upgrades are just advancing conceptual designs with regard to phasing that will continue from April – June. It should be out to bid in October and will be under construction within 15 months is the plan.

Chair Ryan opened the meeting for public comment. With no public comment, Chair Ryan closed the public forum for this concept review.

NEW BUSINESS

The Cranbury Inn – 21 S. Main Street, Block 35, Lot 7.01 – Historic Status

Mr. Frank Brennan of Brennan Law Firm was present and is representing the Prospective Buyer of 21 N. Main Street, Mr. Bill Arnold. Others present regarding this application: Mr. Tom and Mrs. Gloria Ingegneri, current owners of 21 N. Main Street and Mr. John Adiletta, associate of Mr. and Mrs. Ingegneri.

Mr. Brennan explained as part of the Mr. Arnold's purchase of the Cranbury Inn he is getting financing through the Small Business Administration (SBA). Mr. Arnold owns a few other establishments that are high end wine stores. As part of the SBA application, they are asking for input from a historic preservation from the state level.

Mr. Arnold explained he has been working on the purchase of 21 S. Main Street and First Bank handles loan packaging in compliance with a third party through Innovative Financing Solutions which asked the question of citing section 106 review which is evaluating if there will be any adverse impact to historical sites that is on the National Registry. They had made the case they were not going to make any exterior changes and the property was not the same property that had been nominated in 1980. There was a significant addition to the Cranbury Inn in 2005, a demo of part of the building in the kitchen wing and interior renovations. We had advised that there will be interior renovations to update it to be lighter and brighter to make a connection to the existing liquor store and the entry foyer. He was hoping for a quick resolution that they did not need to do a review due to the current interior condition being modified in

such a way that federal funds would not be inversely impacting the historical context. He is proposing the HPC to contact the state with a letter of no interest or there would be no adverse impact with the work they he will be doing due to the current nature of the property.

Mr. Geier asked if the building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Chair Ryan stated it is due to being in the Historic District.

Mr. Ingegneri stated the interior has never been in question in the 30 years since he has owned the Cranbury Inn.

Chair Ryan stated that she had spoken with our Certified Local Government contact, Lindsey Thivierge. Ms. Thivierge explained how the SBA loan works, a sign off of section 106 is required, but the state can make a condition and they will sign off before they have all the information they need for a thorough review. The condition is local commission provide their input on any proposed renovations/changes/plans. When the time comes when you are doing renovations that the local commission would provide our input and reflections on the application for them to review. It sounded like they were not intended to delay closing and loan approval but would be asking the HPC for input on the interior.

Mr. Brennan requested Lindsey Thivierge's contact information to have direct conversations with her.

Vice Chair Golisano stated a possible solution is if the SBA spoke directly with the Historic Preservation Office for the State.

Mr. Arnold stated there is a local SBA attorney that is supposed to be consulting with the bank and the State.

Chair Ryan stated the state does guard their 30-day review time and stipulates it is 30 business days.

OLD BUSINESS

2021 Year End Report

Ms. Tillou stated she had submitted the CLG Annual Report for 2021 to Ms. Lindsay Thivierge, Historic Preservation Specialist 2/Certified Local Government Coordinator, Historic Preservation Office NJDEP. The State had sent receipt that they did receive the Annual Report.

Vice-Chair Golisano stated he had presented to the Township Committee March 28, 2022 and had advised them of HPC's work in the last year and of our accomplishments and goals. They asked about the purview for the Cranbury School review and HPC's advisory role. The Committee also had questions regarding historic trees.

Chair Ryan stated the ordinance in regards to trees states "Encourage the proper maintenance and preservation of historic settings and landscapes." And the design guidelines state "While the Historic Preservation Commission does not regulate residential plantings, it recommends that older trees and plant material be considered before they are removed."

Mr. Szabo advised we have worked with the Shade Tree Commission for a tree on Park Place West and North Main Street. The new sidewalk went around it because they did not want to cut the roots, but it

had ended up dying. We do work with Shade Tree Commission to get their advice and decide on older trees.

Camden RR/Cranbury Station Hamlet HD Signage

Ms. Evelyn Spann, Township Committee, stated Mr. Scott and her had discussed Gateway signs. Gateway Signs are meant to be traffic signaling/traffic calming and will help mitigate trucks from going into Halsey Reed Road. We will explore the gateway signage. There are other areas in Cranbury that would benefit, but we will start with the Hamlet district.

Ms. Suttmeier stated she would like to discuss her presentation for signage in Cranbury when there is more time in the meeting to discuss. She will follow up with the Historical and Preservation Society for further clarification of who owns what sign.

The Commission had a lengthy conversation regarding signage throughout Cranbury Township.

Vice-Chair Golisano would like an example of what a gateway sign is.

Ms. Spann stated she would send them to Ms. Suttmeier.

MINUTES March 15, 2022 Meeting

Chair Ryan made the motion to approve the minutes as amended by Mr. Golisano. Mr. Golisano offered a second.

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Ryan opened the meeting to the public.

Janice Mondoker, 92 Halsey Reed Road, asked where the Hamlet designation is in the process for the National Register.

Ms. Tillou stated she will be submitting the application to the state which once approved that will automatically put the Cranbury Station Hamlet District on the National Register of Historic Places.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, a motion was made by Chair Ryan to adjourn the meeting and Vice Chair Golisano offered a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 9:00 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 five pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting held on April 5, 2022.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name on this day of April 20, 2022.

Robin Tillou
Robin Tillou
Recording Secretary
Historic Preservation Commission