

MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TUESDAY JANUARY 20, 2009

A regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held at the Hopewell Township Municipal Building auditorium on January 20, 2009 in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Chair Max Hayden called the meeting to order at 7:40pm.

Commission members present: David Blackwell, Pam Crabtree, Max Hayden, Erika Kotite(7:45pm), Moira Lawrence, & Phil Robbins.

Township Administration Representative: Robert Miller, Zoning Office & Paul Pogorzelski. Township Administrator/Engineer

Recording Secretary: Deborah Rishko

Excused: Betsy Ackerman

County Representatives: Donna Lewis & Marisa Wieczorek

Members of the Public: Bruce Gunther

Minutes for Approval

The minutes of the November and December meeting were approved.

Certificate of Appropriateness Review

Ms. Lewis and Ms. Wieczorek updated the HPC members on the progress of the Hunt house project before discussing the COA. Ms. Lewis explained that the bid process had recently been completed and that the Board of Freeholders still needed to vote to approve the contract. They stated that most of the funds will be expended by May and that it is possible to apply for an extension on the time frame for the use of the funds if that is needed. They reiterated that the house will be used as the headquarters for the park commission and a trailhead for the Lawrence Hopewell trail system. They added that a wetlands delineation study was done as part of the well and septic plan. Mr. Hayden thanked Ms. Lewis and Ms. Wieczorek for their participation in and dedication to the Hunt house project. The COA was presented and the plans were reviewed by the HPC members. Mr. Robbins expressed concern over the limited budget and asked about the decisions made regarding the removal and reconstruction of parts of the foundation. Ms. Lewis stated that the architects and structural engineers made those decisions and that the county does not start out with a budget they start out with a project and then work within the SHPO guidelines to complete it. She added that the budget figures given did not include additional monies that will be spent on the office fit out and site work. There was a discussion about the selection of an appropriate fire suppression system and how a high pressure mist system with tanks to be located in the basement was the final choice. Mr. Hayden question the 16" lift between the two level and if a ramp had been considered. The county representatives responded that it had been considered but was not feasible. Mr. Blackwell asked about the intended design of the fireplace. Ms. Lewis

stated that it would be federal style.

Motion: by Ms. Crabtree seconded by Mr. Robbins to approve the COA application.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes - Mr. Blackwell, Ms. Crabtree, Mr. Hayden, Ms. Kotite, Ms. Lawrence & Mr. Robbins.

Nays: none

The commissioners discussed the history of the Hunt house project and how progress has been slow but they are happy to see that things are finally starting to take shape. They expressed wanting to continue to have a more collaborative relationship with county officials. Mr. Blackwell asked if architects could specify type and appearance of stonework to sufficiently replicate historic context. Mr. Hayden said yes and that the HPC members can assist the professionals on the project and that he will send a note to Mr. Mills to request that they be kept involved.

Review of HPC mail

Mr. Hayden stated that a letter regarding a balloon test for a cell tower on the former Twin Pines airport site was received. Mr. Hayden also distributed material regarding the 2009 New Jersey Historic Preservation Conference at Rowan University at which he will be speaking. He also distributed materials about his speaking engagement titled “The Moving of a House” a benefit evening for the Hopewell Borough Playground project.

Committee Reports:

County Historic Properties Committee:

The commissioners discussed Kuser mountain/Strawberry Hill and if there are any plans for renovation. There was a discussion about partnering with friends groups to get those kind of projects off the ground. Mr. Hayden mentioned that Somerset County has been very successful with those types of partnerships. Mr. Blackwell explained that the Kuser farm was willed to 3 children in a package of 140 deeds. Mr. Pogorzelski said he would like to coordinate with the HPC to map the property.

Landmarks Designation Committee:

The commissioners discussed making a site visit to the Cornelius Larison house at the Pennytown complex. Mr. Hayden mentioned the Mt. Rose schoolhouse for designation consideration. Also mentioned was the Blackwell farm on Pennington Titusville Road. The Moore farmhouse on the Hopewell Valley golf course was discussed as was the history of the golf course property. The commissioners discussed possible plans to convert the building into a mini conference center. The Oldis house on the west side of Scotch Road and the possibility of turning it into a gateway/visitor’s center for the county was discussed. Mr. Hayden said he discussed the idea with Mr. Pogorzelski and that the Historical Society of Princeton would be willing to participate. Mr. Robbins suggested designating spring houses and mentioned that there is one of interest on Fiddlers Creek Road. Mr. Blackwell noted that the Hunt (Weart) house on Hopewell Amwell Road is federally designated and should be considered.

Community Outreach/ Public Relations:

Mr. Miller distributed the revised brochure for approval of HPC members. There was a discussion regarding the map and how it was too busy if all the new designations and previous elements were included. The commissioners discussed noting on the brochure that an additional map was available for viewing on the township website. The

bookmark project is on hold until funding is approved. Mr. Blackwell mentioned a project to clear the Cornell family cemetery site near Silo Road. Mr. Hayden mentioned that the Veterans Association is having a celebration on May 23 that will include reenactments, exhibitions, food prepared by local chefs and MASH units. There was a discussion regarding whether the HPC would also become involved in that event. The commissioners discussed the Spirit of the Jerseys fair also held in May. Mr. Robbins stated the Mt. Rose Task Force has not yet made a presentation the township committee.

Survey & Planning:

The Hunter Estate subdivision is again on hold due to plans to try to get preservation funding. Mr. Robbins stated that he has photos of the property.

Block 8 lot 44.02 comment pending.

Old Business:

Mr. Pogorzelski asked about the HPC interest in the Twin Pines site. The commissioners stated that they were interested in researching the history of the airport to commemorate it in some way at the site and not to designate it.

New Business:

Mr. Blackwell stated that a resident is interested in installing a monument and suggested that the HPC members discuss whether or not a standard is established for monuments.

Mr. Pogorzelski said that the Environmental Commission wanted to know if the HPC has any information on or interest in historic trails. Mr. Blackwell said there was not much to say regarding foot trails. Mr. Miller stated that there are signs at the gateways to the township on Rt 29 and Rt 518 and wanted the HPC to consider designing new signs.

At 9:55pm there being no further business the meeting was adjourned.