

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

A regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held at the Municipal Building on Tuesday October 20, 2009 in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Chair Hayden called the meeting to order at 7:46 pm.

Commission members present: Betsy Ackerman, David Blackwell (7:55pm), Pam Crabtree, Max Hayden, Erika Kotite, & Phil Robbins.

Excused: Moira Lawrence

Township Committee: Mayor Sandom

Township Administration: Paul Pogorzelski, Administrator/Engineer

Recording Secretary: Deborah Rishko

General Topics

Review of HPC mail

Preservation NJ sent correspondence regarding the 10 most endangered sites. Letter from Mike Delahanty regarding Jacob's Creek Bridge. Correspondence from McCormick Taylor regarding a study of the Pennington Circle.

Minutes for approval

The minutes of the July meeting were approved with corrections

Special Presentations

Washington Crossing State Park

David Donnelly of the WCSP explained that the park is trying to organize its 100th birthday party to occur in 2012 and that they are in need of ideas, volunteers and photos of happenings in the park.

Project Freedom

Tim Dougherty presented drawings of proposed barrier free housing to be located next to the Hopewell Town Center Shopping center on Denow Road. He explained that his organization offers social services to its residents. Mr. Pogorzelski explained that the plan would be part of the township's affordable housing requirement. Ms. Ackerman asked if the drawings depicted the type of structures that would be built. Mr. Dougherty stated that the town can choose the design they find most suitable.

Jacobs Creek Bridge

Mr. Pogorzelski reported that he had met with Richard Patterson from the Old Barracks regarding the victory trail and that information is available on the township website. Mr. Blackwell asked if there had been any new planning for the site. Mr. Pogorzelski stated that the matter is in the county's hands now and that an archaeological study will be done before winter. Ms. Ackerman asked if there was any sense of how long the bridge will be closed. Mr. Pogorzelski stated that it is being discussed between the county and the SHPO and that the township is not currently part of the discussion. Mr. Blackwell asked what the Crossroads of the American Revolution representatives had to say. Ms. Sandom

said that there is correspondence posted on the website.

Sara Cooper thanked the commissioners for not endorsing the county's plan.

Ronnie Katz of 52 Maddock Road said that she was confused about why the archaeological survey was being done for ecological purposes or to determine if evidence remains from Washington's march. She stated that if the bridge is moved it will no longer be eligible for designation.

Mary Jane Cooper asked if the survey was for ecological purposes or proof of the location of the Victory Trail.

Mr. Hayden stated that the survey is generally done for stream encroachment purposes.

Ms. Ackerman added that the HPC did not trigger the study.

Ms. Crabtree stated that everything that is uncovered will be looked at and that anything uncovered as part of the archaeological survey is seen as part of the environment.

There was a discussion regarding a letter Mayor Sandom and the township committee had sent TO Cate Litvak of the Crossroads of the American Revolution.

Ms. Sandom clarified the information contained in the letter. She stated that there had been requests for commemoration of the site and that the response agreed upon by the committee was to wait until the archaeological survey was completed.

Beth Kerr asked about the process of the archaeological survey.

Ms. Crabtree stated that the HPC designates at the local level and that the HPC does not have experience with Phase I archaeological surveys because they are done at the state level. She said that her experience in the private sector has taught her that decisions are made based on what is found.

Ms. Kerr asked if anything that is found must be turned over.

Ms. Crabtree stated that archaeologists cannot keep artifacts and must give them to the property owners.

Mr. Hayden recommended that a member of the coalition contact Richard Hunter, a former member of the HPC, as he has experience with archaeological surveys.

Mary Jane Cooper asked if the study was being done to see if the bridge can be replaced in its current location.

Ms. Ackerman stated that the HPC is not in a position to answer that.

Mr. Blackwell stated that the survey probably has more to do with the plans to replace the bridge but it will still be applicable to determining where the trail's existence.

Ms. Sandom said that the survey was also requested by the Crossroads of the American Revolution based on the HPC's recommendation.

Mr. Hansbury asked if a survey was done when the water lines were put in for the school.

The commissioners responded that they did not know.

Ms. Crabtree stated that it depends on the funding – if it was locally funded there might not have been a survey.

Mary Alicia Divine thanked the HPC for involving the Crossroads of the American Revolution and stated that the coalition would like to be a part of the archaeological survey process.

Mary Jane Cooper stated that she felt mistreated when the sewer lines were put in due to the blasting that was not supposed to occur but she is happy that the HPC has been responsive to her concerns and it has given her hope.

Ashley Kerr asked if it had been communicated to the county that the HPC would consider rebuilding the existing bridge in place.

Mr. Blackwell stated that the bridge has been deemed eligible for designation and therefore anything done to it has to meet Secretary of the Interior standards.

Ashley Kerr stated that Mr. Hunter told her that the bridge has only been deemed eligible and has not been designated so isn't it true that only the survey must be done?

Mr. Blackwell said that was not his impression and he would have to speak to Mr. Hunter about it.

Mr. Hansbury stated that the Calhoun Street bridge can be rehabbed and the Jacobs Creek Bridge should be rehabbed too.

Mr. Blackwell asked if the HPC can request a copy of the RFP.

Ms. Crabtree explained the type of information the RFP would contain.

Mr. Miller said he would request a copy of the RFP from the county.

County Historic Properties Committee:

Mr. Hayden stated that he will attend an upcoming meeting regarding updates on the Hunt house project.

Township Historic Properties:

Mr. Pogorzelski announced that the county formally consented to convey the ROW on Harbourton Rocktown Road through the Harbourton historic district to the township. He added that the subdivision for the Regan property has been finalized. He stated that previous requests for grant money have been denied but he would continue pursuing grant monies for signage in the district etc. Ms. Kotite asked how grants are located. Mr. Pogorzelski stated that she could start by asking the SHPO.

Ms. Ackerman asked who would write the grants and if an interested member could write them. Ms. Kotite expressed an interest in writing a grant. Mr. Pogorzelski stated that a member could write them but officially the township committee would be submitting the request. The commissioners discussed traffic calming measures in the district. Mr. Hayden suggested that the HPC meet in the district. Ms. Ackerman asked if the grants should be researched. Mr. Pogorzelski said there should be a master plan for the district and that there should be grant money available for that. He added that recently the Veteran's Memorial Park parking lot was chip sealed with red shale and the district might benefit from the same treatment. Ms. Sandom said it is important to find out what the people in the district want as far as traffic calming measures. Ms. Kotite volunteered to research grants and agreed to head a subcommittee for the district with the assistance of Ms. Crabtree.

Landmarks Designation Committee

The commissioners agreed that the Cornelius Larison house, the Moore farmhouse and the Drake farmstead would be designated in 2010. Mr. Pogorzelski expressed concern about the Larison house sitting idle and mentioned that the township would be taking ownership by the end of the month. Mr. Hayden asked if there were any funds for use on the house. Ms. Sandom suggested a site visit. Mr. Hayden inquired about the Pennytown sign and if anyone had saved it. Mr. Pogorzelski said he would check.

Closed Session

Ms. Crabtree made a motion to go into closed session to discuss contract negotiations at 9:25pm. Ms. Ackerman seconded. At 9:40pm regular session was reconvened.

Jacobs Creek Bridge

Beth Kerr asked for information on the criteria for an historic district.

Mr. Blackwell said he would give her information on the restrictions.

Mr. Hayden stated that designations are done to keep egregious things from happening.

The commissioners discussed sponsoring the designation of the Victory Trail throughout the township. Mr. Blackwell addressed the question of whether the trail went towards Pennington by stating that those reports were erroneous and the trail split at West Trenton.

Motion: by Ms. Ackerman to request that the SHPO extend the review of the Victory Trail throughout the township. Mr. Robbins seconded. All were in favor.

Beth Kerr asked what the benefit are if the trail/roadway is designated.

Mr. Robbins stated that a review would be initiated.

Ashley Kerr stated that the bridge site is the most important part of the trail.

Beth Kerr stated that the King Bridge Company has money in trust for maintenance of King bridges.

Mr. Blackwell stated that the slope at the bridge site is what is important.

Mr. Hayden said that the viewshed is important.

New Business:

Mr. Robbins stated there are framed photos, photos and negatives in the main building and in the filing cabinets in the Public Works building. The commissioners agreed to hold the November meeting in the Public Works building to look at the files. Ms. Crabtree asked if she should resign since she will be late to HPC meetings next semester due to a conflict with her teaching schedule. The request was denied.

At 10:10pm there being no further business the meeting was adjourned.