

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

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

A regular meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission was held in Town Hall, Cranbury, New Jersey, on October 21, 2008 beginning at 7:30 pm.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Bobbie Marlowe, HPC Chair, called the meeting to order and acted as Chairperson thereof, and Linda M. Scott acted as Recording Secretary of the meeting.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant of the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-5) was provided of this meeting's date, time, place and 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.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chairwoman Bobbie Marlowe, Wayne Girardet, Alana Stops and Harry Williams (arrived 7:50pm) were present.

MINUTES

The minutes of the October 7, 2008 meeting were reviewed and amended with a motion to approve by Wayne Girardet, second by Harry Williams, all in favor.

APPLICATIONS

24 Station Road, (B18,L18) In Historic District, Classified H; Architect Bill Gittings and homeowner Michael Franke were present for discussion regarding revisions to their previously approved application. Revisions include adding a small overhang roof to a side door entrance and change the columns to square posts on the front porch. Construction drawings were stamped after HPC approval then returned to Mr. Gittings for proper distribution.

A verbal roll call was taken to approve the revisions: AYES; Ms. Marlowe, Mr. Girardet, and Ms. Stops.

A separate application was submitted to build a freestanding garage located in the rear of property. An existing drive leads to rear yard. The garage will measure 27'x 21', siding will be same as the house material, two Anderson 6/1 windows on left (north) elevation, a 16' x7' garage door and a single door are proposed for the front (west) elevation. Roof shingles will be GAF Timberline.

A verbal roll call was taken to approve the garage application as presented: AYES; Ms. Marlowe, Mr. Girardet, and Ms. Stops.

14 Cranbury Neck Road (B23,L110) In Buffer Zone; Homeowner Joseph Buonavolonta was present for his application for removal of a secondary (breezeway) entrance (entry door and windows) and fit the opening with proposed matching windows. All windows on the structure are proposed to be replaced with Anderson prairie style. The main front entrance door will be replaced with a ½ light (frosted w/prairie design) Simplicity #DM-684SM. Gutters will be

replaced, re-roof with Timberline shingles and the driveway will be asphalt. Garage door will be fiberglass insulated with faux hinges and handles. HPC expressed that the proposed garage doors have a modern look and felt a more appropriate style would be in keeping with the windows and doors submitted with this application. Mr. Buonavolonta said that he was not certain of the exact look for the garage doors but expressed appreciation for the opinion. HPC suggested that when shopping for the garage doors inform the salesperson that he is looking for prairie style.

Mr. Buonavolonta was not certain what material or style will replace the front post railing (column). HPC encouraged applicant to keep the prairie style in mind when looking for a compatible railing or column. HPC expressed that it is evident the applicant is after a certain style and with careful consideration he will achieve a beautiful end result. HPC also feels that the existing cupola does not lend itself to that style. Mr. Buonavolonta indicated that the cupola could come off but the roof was not re-roofed at this time.

Mr. Buonavolonta expressed that he will attend the November 18th meeting. He will submit details for the garage doors and front porch rail/column. He also stated that when he purchased this home, no where on the deed was it stated that the property was in the Buffer Zone of the Historic District. Bobbie agreed that this type of information is usually not included on deeds. She added that deeds also exclude zoning regulations.

A verbal roll call to approve this application excluding the garage doors and front porch rail/column: AYES: Ms. Marlowe, Mr. Girardet, and Ms. Stops. ABSTAIN: Mr. Williams

12 Cranbury Neck Road, (B23,L107) In Buffer Zone; homeowner Ronald Howarth was present for discussion of a fence and shed application. He explained that currently an existing 6'H by 130'L solid fence made of vinyl was installed that did not receive HPC approval. Mr. Howarth explained that he received notice from the Zoning Officer that the fence is not to code. He proposes to keep the existing rear 25' section of the solid 6' vinyl fence and change the remaining 105' to 5', 50% vinyl fence. Mr. Howarth stated that he was unaware that he needed to apply to HPC for fence approval. The contractor informed him that the installed fence is to code.

Bobbie Marlowe stated that code requirements are not an HPC issue but the project material is. She further explained that it is unfortunate that prior approval was not received before installation; it would have allowed the opportunity to discuss the fence materials. HPC would have recommended a more sympathetic material especially since the fence abuts an older structure that lies within the Historic District. Bobbie stated that this installed vinyl fence has a very modern look and that HPC would have suggested that a natural wood fence that doesn't require much upkeep. She expressed that the contractor was irresponsible and should be held accountable since he didn't research and relay the correct information.

Wayne inquired why Mr. Howarth didn't come to HPC before the installation. Mr. Howarth stated that he thought that 6' is standard. He saw that his neighbor a few homes away had a 6' fence installed.

Harry explained that NJ has regulations that require homeowners to apply for permits before any work begin and that every licensed NJ contractor is aware of this regulation. He recommend that Mr. Howarth call his contractor and explain that he was put in jeopardy by not adhering to the law of the codes and that you would like to have the existing fence taken down and to come before the appropriate boards to get approval for the correct fence, otherwise the consumer should call to the Department of Consumer Affairs might be made. The burden should be on contractor. Harry stated that HPC needs to look at what would have been approved when application is made. No vinyl fences have been approved.

Also on the same application is an existing 22'L x 14'W aluminum shed that did not receive HPC approval. The shed was installed approximately 5 years ago.

Craig Stier and Donna Hitchcock of 10 Cranbury Neck Rd. were present to say that their property abuts the applicant and they wish to speak against the vinyl fence. Ms. Hitchcock feels that this meeting should have taken place long before the fence was put up and several years ago

regarding the installed metal shed. She read a statement citing that the residents of 12 Cranbury Neck Rd. acted in an impulsive and irresponsible way choosing to bypass procedures and guidelines of HPC and Zoning. As residents of Cranbury, everyone knows that most changes made to the property require compliance with HPC to preserve the historical beauty and continuity of the town. They feel strongly that the fence material is not appropriate.

Craig Stier stated that he is not aware of any vinyl fences or metal sheds within Cranbury. He feels that the responsibility falls upon the resident and not the contractor to know the codes and know if work could commence without a permit. Bobbie confirmed that a vinyl fence was installed and some metal sheds, but the installation was prior to the new ordinance.

Mr. Howarth stated that he absolutely plans to rectify the situation. He does not plan to leave it as is. Mr. Howarth said in his defense, the shed was erected 5 years ago and that he does not erect things on a weekly basis or that he tries to get around local ordinances.

Bobbie informed Mr. Howarth that HPC has said no to previous applicants who have wanted to erect a metal shed on their property and that this is unfair to those who comply with guidelines. The shed does not meet HPC criteria but the shed is installed. The secretary will contact the Construction Dept. regarding the shed.

This application is tabled until November 18th when Mr. Howarth and his contractor should attend the next meeting.

Harry indicated that will abstain from this application, being that the Steirs' are customers of williams BUILDER.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Buonavolonta of 14 Cranbury Neck Road questioned HPC "what is the rule if he wanted to install a pool, I can't put a vinyl fence up?" Bobbie replied that vinyl is not an appropriate material and does not blend with the historic neighborhood and that on occasion metal fencing has been approved. The fence needs to be 50% open. He questioned the bushes planted in front of sheds. Bobbie explained bushes can die or be removed. HPC has a responsibility to keep things compatible within the districts while being fair to everyone.

Referring back to the contractor/permit, Mr. Buonavolonta said that he called up asking if a permit is needed to put windows in. The reply was that he didn't need a permit because the windows he is replacing are of the same size.

57 North Main (Hot Wok Café) Bobbie and Diane visited the site twice since the last meeting. The first visit was to view exposed the siding layers. It was agreed that the contractor could proceed with the hardiplank siding and vertical siding. As the job progressed, it was clear that there wasn't much of foundation that could be exposed. Bobbie and Diane felt it would appropriate that the siding be staggered near the foundation in fitting areas. A letter was generated and sent to the owner, with a cc to the contractor, stipulating that the new applied siding be true plumb and not grade plumb.

The Planning Board sent a letter stating that they will be reviewing the Village Commercial (VC) Zone District regulations. Bobbie read this letter out loud and then explained the boundary lines of the VC district. The expansion of the VC may be a personal choice. There are residential homes within the VC that could convert their home into a business and vice versa. The Planning Board is interested in comments that HPC may have for their consideration. Discussion will be held during the November 20th meeting. Not all HPC members may attend the meeting, due to quorum issues.

A CLG certification agreement was signed by the Mayor and forwarded to the State. Several HPC members have received emails saying congratulations on becoming CLG. There may be opportunity to apply for grants that could help defray the cost of the windows on Town Hall.

There has been a reprieve of trees being removed on the dam for approximately one year. All the details are not known but the good news is the trees shall remain for now.

The 2009 Budget was addressed. The completed budget will be submitted to the Finance Dept. There is no increase from 2008 to 2009. Funds will be appropriated for printing and binding the Design Guidelines. Copies should be in the History Center, Town Hall, Library, Zoning Officer and Building Inspector. A portable scanner will be purchased for scanning HPC photos that are not able to be downloaded.

Alana suggested grant funding can be obtained for Saturday workshops at Drew Univ. regarding writing register nominations. This would a useful workshop for anyone who would be interested.

Harry is interested in attending the 25th Annual History Conference on November 22 held at the Trenton Marriott Hotel. The secretary shall make reservations.

Four books have been purchased to add to the HPC library. *Building by the Book* by Robert P. Guter & Janet W. Foster; *The Comfortable House*, by Alan Gowans; *Images of America-Cranbury, Vol. II*, by Peggy S. & Frank J. Brennan, Jr.; *A Field Guide to American Houses*, by Virginia & Lee McAlester.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, a motion duly made by Bobbie Marlowe, seconded by Harry Williams and carried, the meeting was thereupon adjourned.

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 October 21, 2008 consisting of 4 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 18th day of November 2008.

Linda M. Scott, Recording Secretary