

MADISON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Regular Meeting – June 9, 2020

Meeting conducted remotely through Zoom, with assistance from Michael Pellessier, Communications & Technology Coordinator for the Borough of Madison.

Attending: Madison Historic Preservation (“HPC”) Chair Janet Foster; Executive Chairs Mary Ellen Lenahan and Dr. Jill Rhodes; Members John Forte, Max Hart, David Luber, John Solu and Carmine Toto; Council Liaison Carmela Vitale; HPC Attorney Jason Hyndman; Recording Secretary Laurie Hagerich. Absent: Member Chris Kellogg.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Foster at 7:40 pm and she announced the meeting was called in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Roll call was taken by Ms. Hagerich.

The minutes of the May 12, 2020 Public Meeting were considered and on motion made, seconded and unanimously approved, the minutes were accepted as written.

Sign & Façade Update:

There were no new Sign and Façade Applications.

Old Business:

Update on Preservation Celebration and recognition of historic sites:

Ms. Lenahan reported contact was made with owners of the possible sites, 9 Myrtle Avenue, 34 Ridgedale Avenue and 37 Crescent Road. She made visual review of 9 Myrtle Avenue and feels this home is a good candidate. She will contact homeowners Monika and Scott Stebbins and get more information on the home. The home at 34 Ridgedale Avenue is still a work in progress and would be a good candidate for a future year. Mr. Forte met with Mr. and Mrs. Leo, owners of 37 Crescent Road, and was given a booklet of pertinent information, including a historical photograph. This information will be copied and given to the Madison Historical Society. A mock-up of a lawn sign was made by Mr. Forte’s daughter, Clara, and he will work on preparing news articles on both properties with photos and information for posting on the Borough website and social media pages.

Ms. Foster proposed a third candidate to highlight historic preservation, an acknowledgment of efforts by members of the Department of Public Works in preserving a 19th Century ceramic bottle found during one of its recent projects on Rosedale Avenue. Mr. Luber will get more information on the names of the employees and will provide a picture of the bottle. The awards are projected to be made in September.

Report of Subcommittee for Ordinance revision and Design Guidelines:

Attorney Jason Hyndman was present for this portion of the meeting. Dr. Rhodes reported all comments from HPC members have been incorporated in a revised draft of the ordinance, which was sent by email to all members, along with a copy showing revisions in yellow. Dr. Rhodes explained the major changes in the Ordinance were highlighted in yellow in the draft document, and briefly introduced special points for Commission member's consideration. Goals of the Ordinance Subcommittee included to strive for clarity and brevity and to have a stronger ordinance. All Commission members were asked to review the revised draft and report comments to Dr. Rhodes by June 19, so

she can pass them on to Mr. Hyndman. Ms. Vitale suggested the draft ordinance be formally presented to the Planning Board Chair in September and then presented to the Mayor and Council in October. Mr. Forte stressed the importance of having support of the Planning Board.

There was discussion of division of responsibilities between HPC and the Borough in applying for grants in view of the current grant application for the Masonic Lodge which was subsequently discussed. Mr. Hyndman will work on language to clarify this issue.

Ms. Vitale asked how the revised Ordinance would fit into the new Master Plan. Mr. Luber, HPC's representative to the Master Plan Steering Committee, will insure the Master Plan's planners are given a copy of the Ordinance revision when it is ready.

Mr. Hyndman recommended HPC reach out to the Planning Board chair to get its support and let them and the Council know the document will be presented. In order to have the revised Ordinance passed by the end of the year, Ms. Vitale recommended a formal presentation be made to the Planning Board in September with presentation to the Mayor and Council in October. Ms. Rhodes also felt there is a strong need for public education to get their support for the revision.

Other Business:

Grant Application by the Masonic Lodge

Ms. Foster gave an update on some current preservation projects. The Masonic Lodge, 170 Main Street (the former Presbyterian Church, built 1832) has applied for a grant from Morris County Historic Preservation Trust in cooperation with the Borough of Madison to develop specific plans needed to guide restoration work and conversion of the building into a publicly-accessible civic center.

Grant Application by Madison Borough for Hartley Dodge Memorial Front Plaza

The Borough will be making another grant application to the New Jersey Historic Trust for the reconstruction of the front plaza at Hartley Dodge Memorial. On June 1, 2020, the HPC was asked to review that application and to write a letter of support for this project, due on June 4. Ms. Foster sent a draft copy of a letter to Dr. Rhodes and Ms. Lenahan for their review and comment prior to sending a final letter to the Borough for inclusion in the grant application.

Design Guideline Request for Proposal- Madison Ordinance

Only one response was received for the Request for Proposal sent out to three architecture firms for preparation of Design Guidelines that would explain and illustrate the design goals of the ordinance to property owners. Additional RFP's have been sent out so that a comparison of bids can be made.

Saxum's Required Madison Movie Theater Documentation

As an update on Saxum Real Estate appeal regarding the Madison Theater decision, Ms. Foster received word from Saxum's attorney that a reputable firm has been hired to provide documentation of the theater building prior to its demolition, required by one of the conditions in HPC's resolution on the theater project. This should be completed in July. According to the HPC resolution, the Commission will have an opportunity to review that work prior to formally accepting it on behalf of the Borough.

16 Waverly Place- Planning Board approves

The building at 16 Waverly Place, formerly Investor's Bank, will be demolished and revised plans for a new building, including HPC's recommendations from a review carried out a year ago, were approved by the Planning Board at their May 14, 2020 meeting.

Preservation NJ's 10 Most Endangered Sites

Ms. Foster mentioned Preservation NJ's list of 10 Most Endangered Historic Sites published in May. The list, with photographs, can be accessed at <https://www.nj.com/news/2020/05/here-are-njs-10-most-endangered-historic-sites-for-2020.html>

Possible Sales of Federal Post Office Buildings- Morristown First

Mr. Solu mentioned the Town of Morristown is in process of purchasing the Federal Post Office building there. HPC and the Borough should be aware that the Federal Government may at some future time be putting the Madison Post Office up for sale. New uses for old buildings should be one of HPC's issues to be considered now rather than later.

Madison Library Submits Proposal for Interior Work

Mr. Luber mentioned the Madison Library submitted a proposal for interior work, including asbestos removal.

Close of Public Meeting and move into Executive Session

At 8:58 pm there being no Public Comment, Ms. Foster moved to close the public portion of the meeting and to move into Executive Session. This motion was seconded and unanimously carried. The minutes of the Executive Session appear separately.

Reconvening of Regular Meeting and Setting Date for Next Meeting on July 14, 2020

After re-convening the Regular Meeting at 9:21 PM, Ms. Foster asked all members to carry out their assignments, and announced that the date of the next Regular Meeting was set for July 14, 2020.

No Other Business and Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Laurie Hagerich, Recording Secretary