2015 Annual Report

Prepared 03-31-2016 for:

Mayor Robert H. Conley

and the Madison Borough Council Members

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Prepared by:

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and the 2015 Madison Historic Preservation Commission members

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Joseph Longo
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David Luber
Margaret Weisgerber
Carmine Toto
William Van Ryzin

Patrick W. Rowe, Council Liaison 2015

Laurie Hagerich, Recording Secretary
SAVED!!!!
158 Green Avenue
A Cotswald Cottage style
house that was built in 1909.
In the 21st century, the
house will be restored and
expanded slightly, but its
large lot (which could host
two lots and two new
houses) will be preserved.

GOING.......
85 Green Avenue
Will be demolished to
make way for 3 new homes

GOING.......
29 Crecent Road
Will be demolished to
make way for 2 new homes

GONE!!!!
92 Greenwood Avenue
Demolished in 2014 to
make way for 3 new homes
1. Executive Summary

2. List of M.H.P.C. accomplishments in 2015
   a. Inventory update
   b. Digital archive CD of activity and web posted meeting minutes
   c. Annual preservation seminar
   d. Preservation week celebration
   e. Green fair participation
   f. District oversight
   g. Budget report
   h. Attendance report
   i. Summary of applications reviewed this year

3. Current M.H.P.C. administrative improvement projects
   a. Meeting protocol
   b. Resource library
   c. Promotional material
   d. Legal and professional help
   e. Annual review of by-laws and design guidelines
   f. Coordination with and representation from related groups

   a. Improve our project review process
   b. Complete more of our own initiatives
   c. Raise awareness of the importance of preservation

ATTACHMENT A – 2015 Preservation Week Poster
ATTACHMENT B – Historic homes demolished in 2015
ATTACHMENT C – 2015 M.H.P.C. Attendance Report
Executive Summary

At the end of 2015, the Madison Historic Preservation Commission is pleased to announce a successful year of administering the following duties and responsibilities:

(1) To identify, record and maintain a system for survey and inventory of all buildings, sites, places, improvements and structures of historical or architectural significance based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (Standards and Guidelines for Identification); and to aid the public in understanding their worth, methods of preservation, techniques of gathering documentation and related matters.

(2) To make recommendations to the Planning Board on the historic preservation plan element of the Master Plan and on the implications for preservation of historic sites of any other Master Plan elements.

(3) To advise the Planning Board on the inclusion of historic sites and landmarks in the recommended capital improvement program.

(4) To participate in the Technical Coordinating Committee and advise the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment pursuant to NJ.S.A. 40:55D-110.

(5) To provide written reports pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-111 on the application of the Zoning Ordinance provisions concerning historic preservation.

(6) To carry out such other advisory, educational and informational functions as will promote historic preservation in the borough.

The Members of the Historic Preservation Commission (for 2016) are:

Four-year term through December 31, 2016: John Forte, Regular - Class C
Carmen Toto, Regular - Class C
Janet Foster (co-Chair), Regular - Class A

Four-year term through December 31, 2017: John Solu (co-Chair), Regular - Class C

Two-year term through December 31, 2018: Wm. Van Ryzin, Regular - Class A

Four-year term through December 31, 2019: Joseph Longo, Regular - Class B
Alberta Marcy, Regular - Class C

Two-year term through December 31, 2017: Margaret Weisgerber, Alt #1 – Class C

Two-year term through December 31, 2016: David Luber, Alt #2 – Class B

One-year term through December 31, 2016: Patrick Rowe, Council Liaison

Laurie Hagerich, Recording Secretary
List of MHPC accomplishments in 2015

a.) Inventory Management – In 1986 Madison created its first inventory of buildings that were considered to be of historical significance and/or were considered to be important contributors to the overall character of the Borough of Madison. This list is updated by M.H.P.C. as changes occur and the Commission plans to post the list on the Rosenet web page. See attachment B for homes removed this year.

b.) Bottle Hill District Improvements – in 2015 many HPC members helped shape the design of the road improvements along Ridgedale Avenue. Thanks to these efforts, the Sayre Court and Central Avenue intersections were narrowed to help calm the traffic in this important Historic District. They also influenced the lighting, the color schemes, and some of the material selections.

c.) Digital Archive CD – A digital archive of all the materials that were submitted for review and the minutes from the meetings is maintained by the commission. All of the meeting minutes are posted on the Rosenet web site.

d.) Preservation Seminar - In order to extend our efforts and increase our preservation knowledge, several board members attend informative seminars.

e.) Preservation Week Celebration –

   i. The Madison Historic Preservation Commission is noting Historic Preservation Month by bringing attention to the increasing numbers of demolitions of historic houses on “oversized” lots, in order to subdivide the lots. There have also been a few historic homeowners who are choosing to preserve their homes along with their traditional settings, and these instances of preservation are celebrated.

   ii. The National Trust for Historic Preservation designated May as “Historic Preservation Month” over three decades ago. It’s a reminder to everyone concerned with preserving historic places to showcase what’s been happening in each community.

   iii. See the 2015 - Preservation Week Poster Attachment A

f.) Madison Green Fair Participation – At the fair MHPC presents informative facts about how saving buildings can help to preserve our environment.

g.) District Oversight - The board carefully reviewed, commented on, and approved numerous applications in Madison’s Historic Districts (see web posted meeting minutes).

h.) Budget Report – This year no public funds were used by the commission.

i.) Board member meeting attendance report - (Attachment C)

j.) Summary of applications reviewed this year – See web posted meeting minutes.
M.H.P.C. administrative improvement projects

a.) **Meeting Protocol** – The board meetings currently follow standard meeting protocol but we are always trying to find ways to improve our performance. The meetings typically cover three categories which are M.H.P.C. Business or Initiatives, T.C.C. Application review, and Sign & Façade application review. In 2015 the S&F liaison helped applicants prepare their applications which, in many cases, resulted in faster approval time. Many applications were approved in one meeting. Sample applications are now visible on the web (in Annual Reports).

b.) **Resource library** – We currently maintain a binder that contains our by-laws, inventory list, secretary of the interior national design standards, and other pertinent information that we may need to refer to during a project review. In 2013 we began organizing some of these resources on the web and in 2016 we hope to have residential design standards for the Bottle Hill District.

c.) **Promotional Material** – We are considering ways to promote the MHPC to the community in an effort to make people better understand our role and perhaps attract interest or new members.

d.) **Legal and professional help** – Our board does not have a legal representative present at the meetings. The applicants often do have legal representation. When faced with legal or technical questions outside our knowledge, we need to delay our action until such answers can be found.

e.) **Annual review of by-laws and design guidelines** – No changes have been made to the MHPC design guidelines or By-Laws in 2015.

f.) **Coordination with and representation from related groups** - Several of our members serve related groups, which allows us to be considerate their objectives. Kathy Solu is serving as our sign and façade liaison, which has made it easier to review their applications. In 2013 David Luber was our Historical Society liaison and Wm. Van Ryzin also attended open space committee meetings.

M.H.P.C. goals for 2016

a.) **Simplify and speed up our review process** – In 2015 we continued to improve our process by maintaining a sign and facade liaison and providing “sample” projects to help applicants prepare (see 2012 Annual Report). In 2016 we hope to simplify the process even further by providing M.H.P.C. residential design guidelines, a sign and façade “Sign Book”, and more sample projects on the web for applicants to use for guidance when applying.
b.) Complete more of our own initiatives – The best way to improve our service to the community is to take more initiatives to improve our process. The M.H.P.C. will be more effective in its mission if it can collect, evaluate, and enact these initiatives when our application load is light.

c.) Raise awareness –

i. Zoning, the use of land and the size of lots, is established town-by-town. It takes precedence over preservation, or indeed over any other land-use regulations. Thus, in Madison we have seen in the past couple of years a number of houses demolished so that their land could be divided up into multiple lots. This is perfectly legal under current zoning, so there is no recourse for the Preservation Commission, or the community, to counter the action. The large one-time payout of selling land for redevelopment in today’s real estate market makes a plea to save an old house in the middle of that land seem economically foolish. But the cumulative impact of destroying the buildings and their lawns and gardens that give character to our neighborhoods is undermining the real value of our community. With fewer larger lots to support mature trees, with more impervious coverage on the land, and more people living in more houses, each drawing water from our aquifer, we are destroying the quality of life for everyone.

ii. Historic Preservation and Environmental Conservation are linked – both require considering long-term consequences for present actions. This month, the Historic Preservation Commission offers their praise to those who have saved historic buildings, especially where the building lot itself is “subdividable” according to local zoning. The Historic Preservation Commission is again urging the Planning Board and Zoning Board to revisit local zoning and applications for variances, to help promote preservation of existing buildings rather than make new construction on smaller lots the default option.

iii. Madison’s Historic Preservation Commission, established by ordinance within the Borough of Madison in 1993, is operated by volunteers appointed by the mayor. The Commission’s responsibilities include identification of historic sites, make recommendations to the Planning Board and Zoning Board when historic sites are also the subject of an application to those boards, and review exterior changes to structures within designated historic districts. Presently, there are two regulated historic districts, the Madison Civic and Commercial Historic District (downtown) and the Bottle Hill Historic District (Ridgedale Avenue). In addition to having been designated local historic districts, subject to design review as per local ordinance, both districts are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places for their contribution to our nation’s history and architecture. Over one hundred individual buildings are also listed in Madison’s Master Plan as “significant” for their history and architecture.

iv. We have a limited inventory of properties that have been identified as contributors to the character of Madison. In 2016 we hope to make more people aware of the importance of preservation.
This home was demolished in 2015 to make way for two new homes.

Preserving these buildings maintains the character of our Town while also preserving natural resources and our environment.
This house on Greenwood was demolished and will be replaced with 3 new houses

This house on Ridgedale will be demolished and replaced with 3 new houses

This house on Crescent was demolished and will be replaced with 2 new houses

This house on Pomeroy was demolished will be replaced with 1 new house
RECENT CHANGES TO OUR
HISTORIC MADISON HOMES

MADISON OBSERVES PRESERVATION WEEK 2015
by recognizing recent changes to our historic inventory

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from the MADISON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ATTACHMENT A: PRESERVATION WEEK POSTER, 2015