

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

January 5, 2015 Minutes (**corrected**)

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm.

Roll Call

Present

Randy Brewster  
Deborah Grob  
Gus Vasiliadis  
Ronald Wohlberg  
Leda Dunn-Wettre  
Yvonne Beatrice  
Barbara Shanley

Absent

Jack Bolan, Excused  
Marc Foner  
Carol Greene, excused  
Anne Powley, excused

**Sunshine Law:** The secretary read the Sunshine Law.

**Flag Salute**

**Public Session:** Mrs. Grob moved to open the Public Session and Mrs. Beatrice seconded the motion. All approved.

The Chair recognized Mr. Dennis Kievit, Campgaw Road, Mahwah, NJ. Mr. Kievit reported that his family has been in this area for six or seven generations, his ancestors are Storms, Pulis, Winters and Vanderbecks. The Vanderbecks grew up in the Fardale section of Mahwah, bordering Allendale, and their family cemetery is located on Vanderbeck Lane in Mahwah. Mr. Kievit submitted to the Commission a copy of a letter from his cousin stating that the cemetery was donated to the Township in the 1980's and a copy of the people who are buried in the Vanderbeck cemetery. Mr. Kievit reported that his cousin was visiting this area and drove by the Vanderbeck cemetery and was upset that the cemetery was over grown with vegetation and in a state of disrepair. Mr. Kievit reported to the Commission that his cousin stated in his letter that his family donated the cemetery to the Township and thought that it would be maintained. Mr. Kievit stated that he is here on behalf of his family to ask what happened to the maintenance of the cemetery and what needs to be done to correct the lack of maintenance.

The Chair asked Mr. Kievit if he had any documentation of the owner donating the cemetery to the Township. Mr. Kievit replied that his cousin stated that the family donated the cemetery to the Township in the 1980's, but he does not have a copy of the documentation.

The Commission told Mr. Kievit that they would look into the ownership of the cemetery. However, they cannot do anything to the cemetery until the ownership is determined. Mr. Kievit replied that he would contact his cousin and ask for a copy of the deed or documentation stating that the family donated the Vanderbeck cemetery to the Township.

Mr. Wohlberg moved to close the Public Session and Mr. Vasiliadis seconded the motion. All approved.

The Chair asked if any of the members know where the Vanderbeck Cemetery is located. Mr. Brewster stated that he will contact the Bolkema family, whose property borders that area and see if the Commission can gain access to the cemetery through their property.

Mrs. Wettre moved to re-open to Public Session and Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All agreed.

The Chair asked Mr. Kievit if he would contact his cousin and ask for a copy of the donation or any documentation to determine the Vanderbeck Cemetery ownership. Mr. Brewster invited Mr. Kievit back to the HPC February 2, 2015

meeting to report on his findings. In the meantime, the Commission will check with the Township Tax Assessor and Township Clerk if the Township has any documentation on the Vanderbeck Cemetery plot.

Mrs. Grob moved to close the Public Session and Mr. Wholberg seconded the motion. All approved.

**Minutes:** November 3, 2014 meeting. Mrs. Beatrice corrected the November 3, 2015 minutes under HPC Historic Home Brochure to read as follows: **“HPC Historic Home Brochure: No report at this time. Mrs. Greene stated that the HPC Historic Home Brochure is different from the tri-fold HPC information brochure. Mrs. Shanley stated that the tri-fold brochure can be reprinted and handed out to residents at Mahwah Day and that Mrs. Powley and Mr. Foner are detailing all the historic markers and historic designated homes on the ordinance for the Historic Home Brochure.”** All agreed.

Mr. Wholberg moved to approve the November 3, 2015 minutes as corrected and Mrs. Wettre seconded the motion. All approved.

#### **Chair’s Report:**

**Mahwah Heritage Awards:** The Chair asked if there were any nominations for Mahwah Heritage Awards from the Commission for 2014. There were no nominations. The Chair stated that nominations will be requested again in the Fall of 2015. Mr. Vasiliadis commented that the New Jersey/New York Trail Conference should be finished with the Darlington Schoolhouse renovation by then and that it would be a good nomination for 2015.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**Train Station Museum:** Mrs. Shanley reported that there has been discussion regarding the Department of Public Works (DPW) property. There are ongoing discussions regarding re-locating the DPW. Discussions regarding the designation of the property or change its designation was on the December 22, 2015 Planning Board meeting. Mrs. Beatrice attended the meeting and reported that the item was tabled until the January 12, 2015 Planning Board meeting. The Mayor met with members of the Museum Society and Historic Preservation Commission to clarify the status of the Train Station Museum Complex(OTSMC) buildings. The Chair asked for volunteers for an OTSMC Ad Hoc Committee to establish the HPC’s position on relocating the OTSMC buildings. The Chair stated that she does not believe moving the OTSMC buildings is practicable and would cause damage to the buildings that cannot be repaired. Mr. Vasiliadis stated that the land should be a public park that would include the OTSMC buildings. Mr. Brewster agreed that a park would create a Township focal point, which the Township needs. Mr. Brewster stated that there is inadequate parking at Commodore Perry Field for Township sports games or practices and Mahwah Day and the DPW area would be a good park location which could include additional parking area for Township events. Mrs. Beatrice stated that it should be called Mahwah Historic Park, and any re-development should include the OTSMC buildings. Mrs. Wettre stated that she is a little disturbed that there is much more emphasis on Township ratables under the current regime than on maintaining the history and character of the Township, which is a little shortsighted.

Mrs. Wettre moved to re-open to Public Session and Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All approved.

The chair recognized Mr. Dennis Kievit. Mr. Kievit stated that the Old Train Station and Caboose were originally located at that site as a permanent historic marker of the Township.

Mrs. Grob asked what the State or National status was on the OTSMC. The Chair reported that Robert Adler applied for County, State or National historic designation and was denied because the OTSMC was located too far its original locations. The Chair asked members to please attend the January 12, 2015 Planning Board meeting to state their objections of moving the OTSMC.

Mrs. Grob moved to close the Public Session and Mr. Brewster seconded the motion. All approved.

**Winter Farmhouse:** Mrs. Shanley reported that Mrs. Wettre prepared a mission statement. Mrs. Wettre reported that she is waiting for the applicant to submit its application, which may have additional statements in it that may need to be addressed so it cannot be finalized until the application is submitted. The Chair reported that the Township Attorney sent a letter to Mr. Alvarez regarding the emergency repairs that needed to be done to the house. Mr. Alvarez agreed to fix the outside cellar door, chimney, and broken windows after the holidays. Administrative Officer/Zoning Officer, Michael Kelly, and Property Maintenance Inspector were away during the holidays. Upon their return, Mr. Kelly will follow up on the repairs. Mr. Brewster stated that the Winter Farmhouse is a reminder of Mahwah's farmland history which we need to maintain.

**HPC Historic Home Brochure:** Mrs. Powley: No report at this time.

**Quackenbush Barn:** Mrs. Powley: No report at this time.

**Carmelite Retreat:** Mrs. Greene: No report at this time.

**Apple Ridge Country Club Subdivision:** Mrs. Wettre reported that she and Mr. Bolan inspected the Apple Ridge property. As part of the sub-division approval, the applicant identified three structures on the property that were older than 50 years. One was a culvert, and the other two were dwellings. One dwelling probably dates back to the 1800's and housed the groundskeeper and cook. The dwelling had been altered and it was determined that it would not be something that the HPC would argue for historic preservation. The other dwelling was not historic. Therefore, it is their recommendation to approve Docket #559PF, Apple Ridge Mahwah, LLC Block 127, Lots 1, and 3-7 Major Subdivision. Mr. Bolan took photos and Mrs. Wettre will ask him to forward them to the secretary for the files.

Mrs. Wettre moved the approve Docket #559PF, Apple Ridge Mahwah, LLC Block 127, Lot 1,3-7 Major Sub-Division and Mrs. Grob seconded the motion.

Vote: 7 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain: Beatrice, yes; Brewster, yes; Grob, yes; Vasiliadis, yes; Wettre, yes; Wholberg, yes; Shanley, yes.

**Mahwah Museum:** Mrs. Greene: No report at this time. Mrs. Shanley reported that the Mahwah Museum Society will be sponsoring a lecture on Bergen County Cemeteries in February and it may be a chance for the HPC to inquire about the Vanderbeck Cemetery.

**Joyce Kilmer Poetry Contest:** Mrs. Shanley apologized that she had dropped the ball on contacting In Serra regarding the monetary donation for the first, second and third place winners. Mrs. Beatrice suggested that perhaps Mr. Michelini might be interested in pursuing this project. Mrs. Shanley will reach out to him.

**HPC Web Site Page:** Mrs. Grob reported that she had consolidated the FAQ's and again asked the members to read it through so they can finalize it at the February 2, 2015 HPC meeting. She will again email a copy to the members. All agreed.

**New Business:** Alternate II: The Chair reported that Mr. Marc Foner has taken a job which prevents him from attending the HPC meetings. The Chair asked the members permission to ask Mr. Foner for his resignation and to solicit for a replacement. All agreed.

The Chair also reported that Mrs. Wettre has applied for a New Jersey State Federal Magistrate Judgeship in the District Court of Newark and has been approved and will be appointed sometime in late March or April. Unfortunately, this appointment does not allow her to be on any Board, Committee or Commission that may cause a conflict of interest. She will continue as a member of the HPC until she is sworn in. The Commission congratulated her and thanked her for her contributions to the HPC and stated that she will be sadly missed.

Application: Francine Kern Application, Ackerman Farmhouse:

Mrs. Shanley stated that the HPC disapproved the use variance of the Ackerman House stating that it would change the historic significance of the Ackerman Farmhouse. However, the Board of Adjustment (BOA) approved the use variance to include use as a Realtors Office. At the Board of Adjustment meeting, Mrs. Shanley requested that the owners list the Ackerman Farmhouse and Stone Well on the Township Ordinance as historic structures as part of the application. The BOA disagreed. However, did state that the Kern's shall consult with the HPC with any future plans to the Ackerman Farmhouse and Stone Well. Mrs. Grob stated that the application does not show any changes to the Ackerman Farmhouse. Mrs. Shanley stated that the stone well is not included in the submitted application and needs to be. The application is for the parking lot and removes the stone well.

Mrs. Grob moved to reject Docket # Ackerman Farmhouse because the plans do not include the stone well. As agreed by the applicant in the original application, the stone well is to be included in any renovation plans and repairs to the stone well will be done including the shingled roof. The HPC recommends that the stone well to be relocated to the Wyckoff Avenue back side corner of the Ackerman Farmhouse and placed on a concrete slab to insure the stability of the stone well and Mr. Vasiliadis seconded the motion. All approved.

Vote: 7 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain: Beatrice, yes; Brewster, yes; Grob, yes; Vasiliadis, yes; Wettre, yes; Wholberg, yes; Shanley, yes.

**Old Business:** The Chair stated that the County stated that the Cleveland Bridge will remain with the attached Bailey bridge structure. However, the Bailey bridge, which was to be a temporary structure, was placed over the Cleveland Bridge, and is on its own supports. The HPC's concern is that the condition of the Cleveland Bridge has not been addressed and needs to be repaired and preserved. When Mrs. Powley returns to the February meeting the HPC needs to address the repairs and preservation of the Cleveland Bridge.

**General Discussion:**

Mrs. Wettre moved to adjourn the HPC meeting and Mr. Brewster seconded the motion. All approved.

These minutes are a synopsis of the MHPC tapes, which are on file at the Township Municipal Building.

/dms