

November 2, 2009 Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:35 pm.

Roll Call

Present

Barbara Shanley
Tony Bourgholtzer
Randall Brewster
John Bristow
Alex Michelini
Deborah Grob
Gus Vasiliadis (7:43pm)

Absent

Marthajean Drago
Carol Greene, excused
Yvonne Beatrice, excused

Flag Salute

Sunshine Law: in the absence of the secretary, the Chair read the Sunshine Law

Public Session: Mr. Bristow moved to open the Public Session and Mr. Brewster seconded the motion. All approved.

Vote: 5 yes; 0 no. Bristow, yes; Brewster, yes; Michelini, yes; Bourgholtzer, yes; Grob, yes; Shanley, yes.

No members of the public were present.

Vote: 5 yes; 0 no. Bristow, yes; Brewster, yes; Michelini, yes; Bourgholtzer, yes; Grob, yes; Shanley, yes.

Chair's Report:

Fletcher House Construction Permit Application: The Chair reported that she and Mrs. Grob met with Sue, Tony and Kirk Handley, and their builder to review the roofing and last minute details of the house renovation plans to make sure that they are all on the same page. The revised Historic Easement has been executed and recorded, showing that the first floor windows may be replaced. The Chair will now sign off on the construction permit and the Handley's can start the project. The Committee pointed out to the Handleys that the construction plan shows the rafters extending over the roof line as being cut off and this is not what the Commission agreed upon. The Handley's agreed and will design the roof so the rafters will extend beyond the roof line. They will not be installing a gutter, but will build something in the ground to handle the water run-off.

Winter Farm House: The Chair asked Mrs. Bourgholtzer if she had been able to contact the owner of the Winter's farm house. Mrs. Bourgholtzer reported that she was not successful in contacting him. The Chair reported that as suggested at the October, 2009 meeting, because Ramapo Valley Road is a State road, the Commission needs permission from the State to install the plaque on the State road easement. The Chair will contact the State for the procedures to designate Ramapo Valley Road as a State scenic highway. The Chair commented that she observed that the outside of the Winter's farm house looks like it is being maintained in good condition.

Moffatt Road Cemetery: Karin LaGreca and Maja Britton will be working with the Mahwah High School Environmental Club on November 7, 2009 to clean up the area. The Chair contacted the DPW for use of Township yard tools, rakes, shovels, etc. The A&P donated a case of water for the working crew.

Young House: The Chair received photos of the windows to be replaced from Mr. Gaelick, the owner. The replacement windows have been ordered and he is hoping to have them installed by January 2010.

Let the minutes reflect that Mr. Vasiliadis joined the meeting.

Darlington School House: The Chair reported that she and Mrs. Greene attended the October 8, 2009 Township Council meeting because the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference Committee (NYNJTC) was scheduled to give their presentation on Darlington School House building expansion proposal.

They attended the meeting anticipating that the Council would be opposed to the NYNJTC's request to use Continental Soldiers Park (CSP) parking lot for excess parking for NYNJTC. The NYNJTC proposed a pathway from Darlington School House to CSP. The Council was opposed to the pathway, not the use of the parking lot, because the pathway would cause increased traffic to and from Ramapo Reservation and CSP which would impact the public utilizing CSP.

The Chair suggested that the HPC show its support of the NYNJTC. The Chair stressed that this could be a difficult problem and may put a stop to the project. There is a time line on the grant and if NJNYTC does not meet the deadline, it will lose the grant.

The NYNJTC representatives are coming back to the November 12th Township Council and the Chair encouraged the Commission to attend the meeting.

Mr. Vasiliadis reported that the NYNJTC has postponed the start of the first phase of the reconstruction project, for the Darlington School House. If the NYNJTC does not meet the grant deadline it will lose the grant, and will cancel its ownership agreement with the Township and the Darlington School House will be in jeopardy.

Chai Lifeline, Inc: The Chair and Mr. Vasiliadis were not able to attend the October 7, 2009 Board of Adjustment (BOA) meeting. However, the Chair reported that they would not have been able to speak anyway, until the BOA settles the zoning issue of the property. They will try to attend the next meeting.

Continental Soldiers Park Well: The Chair reported that Recreation Director, Dawn DaPuzzo, contacted her regarding the replacement roof of the well at Continental Soldiers Park. The Recreation Department has money for the construction of the roof. However, they wanted the HPC to give them direction on the style and construction of the roof. After researching the era of the well, the Chair suggested cedar shakes, and a hipped style roof.

Mr. Brewster reported that his parents just replaced their well roof and suggested that Mrs. DaPuzzo contact them for suggestions. The Chair will inform Mrs. DaPuzzo.

Historic Awards: The Chair contacted the owners of the Montessori school and will meet with them November 9th to walk through the building and go over the history and background of the building for the presentation.

Mahwah Library: Mr. Micheleni and Mrs. Beatrice met and put together a report proposing a history room at the Mahwah library for Mahwah archived documents. Mr. Micheleni contacted the Library

Board of Trustees to present the proposal. Mr. Michelini circulated the report to the Commission members.

Mr. Michelini reported that there are dozens of libraries in New Jersey that have history rooms, and thanked Mr. Bristow for suggesting that he visit the Suffern Library, since they have an excellent history room.

Mr. Michelini attended the Mahwah Library Board of Trustees (MLBT) meeting and presented the history room proposal to them. The MLBT president, Mr. Koster, reported that he had participated in the planning of the Suffern Library. He indicated that the MLBT would be interested in the proposal and requested that Mr. Michelini present at the MLBT's November 18, 2009 meeting suggestions on the size of the room and what contents would be housed there. The Mayor asked whether the HPC had any commitments on the materials that would go into the history room. Mr. Michelini replied that there are several sources of materials and if the sources knew that they would be stored in a safe location, they would be willing to release their archived materials. Mr. Michelini stressed that Mahwah has a very rich history that needs to be preserved and if it doesn't act now, it may lose its resources.

Mr. Michelini reported that the Museum does not have the space or personnel to store and allow public access to these documents.

Mr. Michelini asked for input from the Commission.

Mrs. Grob asked if Mr. Michelini had approached the Museum Committee. Mr. Michelini plans to meet with them.

Mr. Michelini reported that approaching the MLBT was the first step, and he feels that they are interested. Therefore, he and Mrs. Beatrice will pursue the project. Mr. Michelini presented the Commission with a preliminary report

Mr. Brewster asked how we measure what we have and what we can display. Mr. Michelini replied that the Library needs to be in charge of the archived documents. The decision of what goes into the room should be the library with the Commission's input. The HPC should be the coordinator with authenticating the documents. Not everyone's letter from grandma needs to be archived. Archiving items documenting Mahwah's history is very important. This proposal is not a museum. It is a local history room for written document materials for local history research.

Mr. Michelini cited several surrounding towns that have a "History Room" in their libraries. Mr. Michelini reported that the first step is to obtain a room from the library, the second step is to obtain the archived materials, and the third step is to work with the library to maintain and add to these documents.

Mr. Michelini's will approach the Mahwah Historic Museum Committee to ask them if they would be willing to share copies of the museum's written collection with the library for the history room. Mrs. Shanley suggested that we contact the other sources and get commitments from them that they would be willing to surrender the documents to the library.

Mr. Michelini reported that the original documents will be under lock and key, and copies would be for public access.

Mr. Michelini reported that the first step is the most important, because without a location, there is no history room. The documents are there and will most probably grow, once the public knows that there is a safe location for the materials. As guardians of Mahwah history, the Commission needs to take the first step. Mr. Michelini asked that the Commission contact the Reformed Church, Mrs. Greene, and the Mahwah Museum if they would be in favor of the "History Room" in the library and would they surrender their archives historic documents to the library.

The Chair asked Mr. Bristow if he would contact the Museum, he agreed. Mr. Bristow stated that "as Township Historian I have a lot of materials, most of it is from Janet Brown". Mr. Michelini asked Mr. Bristow if he would be willing to turn over these materials and Mr. Bristow said "yes sure". Mr. Michelini asked how many boxes he had and Mr. Bristow stated "he could not estimate that". The Chair will join Mr. Michelini at the MLBT November 18 meeting.

Applications: None at this time.

Old Business: None at this time.

Aronow Stone Cottage: The Chair reported that she has spoken with Property Maintenance Inspector, Mr. Mulvey, and informed him that as per the Planning Board resolution that property must be maintained and he needs to inform the owner of the property.

Budget:

The Chair reported that the Commission did not ask for funds for a 2009 Historic Plaque in the 2009 budget. However, the Chair is requesting funds for that item in the 2010 budget and funds for training and seminars.

Minutes:

October 5, 2009 Minutes: The Chair reported that the attorney requested that the word exact be taken out in any reference to the Fletcher House replacement windows in the minutes. Mrs. Shanley requested to correct the spelling of Karen LaGreca to Karin LaGreca.

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. After polling the members in attendance it was determined that not all in attendance were present at the October 5, 2009. Therefore, the Chair asked for a motion to table the approval of the October 5, 2009 minutes until the December 7, 2009 meeting.

Mr. Vasiliadis moved to table the approval of the October 5, 2009 minutes until the December 7, 2009 meeting and Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All approved.

Vote: 7 yes; 0 no: Bristow, yes; Bourgholtzer, yes; Brewster, yes; Grob, yes; Michelini, yes; Vasiliadis, yes; Shanley, yes.

Adjourn: Mr. Bristow moved to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All approved.

Vote: 7 yes; 0 no: Bristow, yes; Bourgholtzer, yes; Brewster, yes; Grob, yes; Michelini, yes; Vasiliadis, yes; Shanley, yes.

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

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