

MAHWAH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (MHPC)  
July 7, 2008 MINUTES

Roll Call

Present

Barbara Shanley

Carol Greene

John Bristow

Deborah Grob

Yvonne Beatrice

Absent

Marthajean Drago, excused

Lynn Ballerini, excused

Kenneth Cerullo, excused

Gus Vasiliadis, excused

Randall Brewster, excused

Salute to the flag

The secretary read the Sunshine Law.

Public Session:

The Chair introduced, Mr. Vincent LaBarbiera. Mr. LaBarbiera is a builder who has been hired by the owner of the Crocker Mansion to renovate the Crocker Mansion. The Chair also introduced Mahwah resident, Mr. George Collard. Mrs. Shanley reported that she contacted Mr. Collard for names of possible candidates to fill the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) vacancy created by Mr. Thornton. Mr. Collard expressed an interest in the Commission and volunteered to attend the meeting to obtain a better idea of what the HPC does.

Mr. Bristow moved to open the Public Session and Mrs. Greene seconded the motion. All approved.

The Chair recognized Mr. LaBarbiera. Mr. LaBarbiera reported that he had been notified by the Building Department that they had received phone calls from residents regarding the comings and goings at the Crocker Mansion. The Building Inspector contacted Mr. LaBarbiera and questioned the activities going on at the mansion. Mr. LaBarbiera reported that the only thing going on at the mansion was the killing of mold and the repair of the pipe organ and cleaning. Mr. LaBarbeira handed out his business card and asked the members to call him with any questions they may have. Mr. Ilija Pavlovic is the owner of the mansion and friend of Mr. LaBarbiera. The mansion was purchased under the name of L.P. Homes. Mr. Pavlovic is trying to stay low key about the purchase and asked the Commission to respect his wishes.

Mr. LaBarbiera stated that he has several questions to ask the Commission regarding the restoration of the mansion. His main concern is the replacement of the windows. The windows are in great disrepair and need to be replaced. There are a total of 450 windows that need to be replaced. Mr. LaBarbiera had contacted leaded window manufacturers for window replacement estimates. HOPE Windows restores leaded windows and gave him an estimate of \$2,000,000. The existing windows are single pane glass which is not energy efficient. Mr. LaBarbiera did some further investigation and came up with Kolby, Marvin, and Pella windows for replacement windows. Mr. LaBarbiera asked if the HPC

is looking to replace the windows with the existing mixture of windows, or all one style. The mansion has double hung, casement, and jalousie windows. Mr. LaBarbiera reported that the mansion is very symmetrical and does not understand why the windows are different. He suggests one style window.

The Chair recognized Mr. Collard, who asked if windows had been changed prior to the current owner. Mr. LaBarbiera said it's possible that the upper floor windows were, but he doesn't believe they were changed. The lower basement area windows have been changed within the past ten years.

Mr. LaBarbiera asked if the Commission is willing to entertain alternatives to the existing windows. Pella, Marvin, and Kolby windows are made of extruded aluminum so the outside of the windows are keeping with the metal motif, not wood or vinyl. The cost of the Pella, Marvin or Kolby windows would be in the \$500,000 range.

Mr. LaBarbiera also is trying to keep the same width of the centers of the windows and that the windows remain black.

The immediate area around the front of the mansion would remain the same.

The Gatehouse has white wood windows. Mr. LaBarbiera asked what is the suitable replacement for those windows?

Chair asked if windows are the biggest issue with the restoration of the house. Mr. LaBarbiera replied yes.

Mr. LaBarbiera reported that any window replacement would have to be double pane glass to be energy efficient.

The Chair asked if the Commission could take a walk through tour of the mansion with Mr. LaBarbier to get a better idea of the windows.

The Chair reported that no permits have been issued for any of this work, so the Commission cannot comment on anything at this time, until they review the permit applications.

Mr. LaBarbiera agreed to a walking tour. He will meet with some of the members Tuesday, July 8 at 5:30pm and other members on Saturday, July 12, at 9:30 am.

The Chair gave Mr. LaBarbiera information on graffiti removal.

The builder also reported that the front door and floors need to be refurbished at the Gatehouse.

The restoration of the Gatehouse is a priority, since the owner plans on housing security at the Gatehouse.

The builder also reported that the adjacent properties bordering the Ramapo Valley Road entrance have encroached on the mansion property. The owner is not looking to disturbed landscaped property, however, an agreement with the owners will be established and some of the broken fencing will be replaced.

The owner's attorney, Bruce Whitaker, will be requesting a variance for 6' fencing which will be black chain link fencing, Gerith fencing and wrought iron fencing. The builder asked how he would obtain the Commissions approval for the fencing. He was told that the fencing would need to be included in the application. They will also be asking for a variance for a tennis court and the pool location, since the property has three front yards.

Mrs. Beatrice asked if the mansion would still be viewed by the public. The builder reported that the mansion isn't viewed now unless you trespass. The builder didn't know how to answer that question, since it is a private residence and he respects that the owners wish to retain their privacy.

Mrs. DeScherer asked for the time line of the project. The builder reported that they are looking between 14 and 16 months.

The builder emphasized the owner's sensitivity to keep the mansion restoration as historically correct as possible.

The builder also added that the owners would like to update the basement main cooking area kitchen and make the first floor 500 square foot pantry kitchen into a fully operational kitchen.

The builder is looking to submit the plans within 20 days.

Mrs. DeScherer reported that the Construction Official would submit each application to the HPC for their recommendation and/or approval and the Construction Official will base his application approvals on the HPC recommendations.

All Zoning Soil Permit applications will also be submitted to the HPC for their recommendation and/or approval.

Mrs. DeScherer also mentioned that the Construction Official may require the builder to engage a consultant who is knowledgeable in historic architecture. The builder reported that the owner has engaged Mr. Fred Klenk, an architecture located at Route 208 North, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey 201-848-8844, but he will advise the owner of the request.

The Chair suggested that the builder look up the Secretary of Interior Standards web site for additional information.

Mrs. DeScherer asked what demolition is involved. The builder reported that they are looking to make the first floor flower room into a large guest bathroom with multi stalls.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor bedrooms stay the same, but they are looking to renovate and enlarge the bathrooms by taking out a closet.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor has most of the renovation work. The 15 bedrooms, which were formerly used by the staff, the builder is proposing to create four guest suites for the in-laws and on the mirrored wing create a theater/entertainment room, billiard and lounge room

Mr. LaBarbiera left a set of preliminary plans for the HPC to review and indicated the dotted lines indicate walls that are planned to be opened up or taken down.

The basement lower kitchen area, they would like to create a wine cellar, humidor cigar room, spa area and update the elevator to bring it up to safety code.

All the first floor woodwork needs to be refurbished including the staircase, which runs from the basement to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

The HPC will research for photos of the original interior of the mansion, which the Mahwah Museum may have.

The Commission stated that the open permits are five to six years old and are no longer valid except for the electrical and plumbing permits that were not closed out. Construction Official will require the builder to apply for new building permit applications.

The builder also reported that the electrical, plumbing and heating system needs to be updated to bring it up to code.

The Gatehouse has open permits for the kitchen and electrical. Mr. LaBarbiera will check with Mr. Montroy on the status of the Gatehouse permits. He did report that the Gatehouse has a new kitchen in it that was done prior to the new owners purchase.

The builder reported that most of the 15 fireplaces are marble.

Mrs. DeScherer also inquired if the color scheme of the interior of the house had been determined. The builder replied no, but the owner is willing to work with the HPC on that.

Mr. LaBarbiera thanked the Commission for their assistance and looks forward to working with them on this historic project. The Commission thanked Mr. LaBarbiera for coming to the meeting and told him that they look forward to having him attend their monthly meetings as the restoration progresses.

Mr. Bristow moved to close the Public Session and Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All approved. The Public Session closed at 9:15 p.m.

MINUTES: June 2, 2008 minutes: The Chair reported that Mr. Randall Brewster should be Mr. Randall Brewster, and under Moffatt Road Cemetery: Second sentence change 1 tree to A tree, and on page three third paragraph, second sentence change as Mr. Thornton to, as to Mr. Thornton. Mrs. Grob moved to approve the June 2, 2008 minutes as corrected and Mr. Bristow seconded the motion. All approved.

Chair's Report:

Chair reported that Burgis Associates representative, Kevin Kane, told her that the HPC still has a couple of weeks to present their historic element of the Master Plan to Burgis. The Chair reported that the HPC still has room to add properties. The Chair will email the members a final copy of the report.

Moffatt Road Cemetery: The Chair reported that Mr. Mulvey will follow up on the removal of the dead fallen tree and the removal of the standing dead tree. Mr. Bristow volunteered to meet with the DPW when they remove the tree/s. The Township will speak to the owners of NatureView regarding the trucks backing into the cemetery retaining walls.

Certified Local Government (CLG) Application: The Chair reported that HPC meeting attendance is an integral part of the application. The Chair reported that the HPC must have full attendance at their monthly meetings.

Issac Bogert House: Chair reviewed the history of the application and developers agreement. The owner of the fifth property has filed a law suit against the Township because he cannot develop the property. The HPC has not signed off on the last lot because Mr. Terhune has not fulfilled the requirements of the developers' agreement for the last lot, the greenhouse restoration and landscaping in the back by the pine trees. Mrs. Greene reminded the members that the Issac Bogert House site is the oldest historic site in Mahwah, built in the 1750's. It is not just the house but the site itself is filled with historic artifacts. The Chair will continue to meet with Mr. Terhune and Corinthian Builders to make sure that the project is completed.

Budget: The Chair asked for volunteers to work on the 2009 Budget Sub-Committee. Mrs. Grob volunteered.

Robbie's Music Barn: Robbie's agreed to allow the HPC to take exterior photo's of the Winter Barns' prior to the demolition. Mrs. Greene will contact Robbie's and ask if she could photo the interior.

HPC Historic Awards: the Chair asked that the members consider the DeSilva's stone house on Youngs Road, and the Glasgow house on W. Ramapo Road and Ramapo Valley Road for possible candidates for the 2008 HPC Historic Awards. The Commission will make their final decision at the August 4, 2008 meeting.

2008 Historic Marker: Sites suggested were Winter Farmhouse and Deepdale. The members will research and report their findings at the August 4, 2008 meeting.

Crocker Mansion: The Chair reported that the Commission needs to set guidelines for the Crocker Mansion and present them to the Construction Official. The recommendations should include closing the 2002 permits and requesting the builder to apply for new permits.

Mrs. Greene moved that the Crocker Mansion is classified as an historic site, pursuant to Township Code and permit numbers 02-0284 and 02-0286 issued for alternations and code compliance to the property in 2002, it is the Commissions understanding that the 2002 permits are no longer open and the Commission requests that the Construction Official provide the Commission with a report regarding the status of the 2002 permits including sub-code permits. This also includes the Crocker Mansion Gatehouse permits. Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All approved

Vote: 5 yes 0 no.

Greene, yes; Beatrice, yes; Bristow, yes; Grob, yes; Shanley, yes.

The Chair recommended that the Construction Official request from the Crocker Mansion applicant to retain an architectural consultant who is an expert in historic architecture to give guidance to the Construction Official on the Crocker Mansion application permits that need historic clarification.

Mrs. Greene moved that the HPC recommend three names of architecture consultants whose expertise is in historic architecture to the Construction Code Official who will submit the names to the owner for the owners review and selection. Pursuant to Uniform Construction Code section 5:23-2.19 Special technical services: the HPC recommends that the Construction Code Official request that the owner engage, at the owners' expense, a licensed registered architect, specializing in historic architecture to assistance the Construction Code Official in this renovation project.

Mrs. Grob seconded the motion. All approved.

Vote: 5 yes 0 no.

Greene, yes; Beatrice, yes; Bristow, yes; Grob, yes; Shanley, yes.

General Discussion: The Commission thanked Mrs. Shanley and Mrs. DeScherer for their research on the Crocker Mansion, and congratulated Mrs. Shanley on her outstanding work as HPC Chair.

Mr. Bristow moved to adjourn and Mrs. Grob seconded. All approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

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

/dms

