



MINUTES

Thursday, June 18, 2015
7:30 pm @ Hightstown-East Windsor
Historical Society



Historic Preservation
Commission

Call to order:

2014 Chairman Pratt called the meeting to order at 7:55pm.

Open Public Meeting Act Statement: Rick Pratt read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Cardoso (PC):	Present	Commissioner Egan (DE):	<i>Absent</i>
Commissioner Carney (WC):	Present	Commissioner: Honsel (JH)	Present
Commissioner Pratt (RP):	Present	Commissioner, Alt. #1: (Vacant)	--
Commissioner Teller (RT):	<i>Absent</i>	Commissioner, Alt. #2: (Vacant)	--
Commissioner von Riegen (RvR):	<i>Absent</i>		

Council Liaison C. Montferrat (CM): *Absent*

Planning Bd. Liaison F. Montferrat (FM): Present

Minutes: May, 21 2015 minutes were moved by PC & 2nd by JH. All members voted in approval.

Public Comment: None.

Guests: None.

Opinion Requests:

167-169 Stockton Street – Joe Mannino removed the concrete block from all four openings. On the right he installed bluestone on the flat, flush with the stone. In the front he built wood frames and installed plywood in lieu of glass. He painted the frame and plywood to match the trim of the doors. The HPC voted to accept both “fixes.”

126 Stockton Street – Mr. Hidalgo was directed to attend the HPC meeting regarding a formal opinion for the window that he removed. He had come to the HPC in February, but never returned. Since the February meeting he also renovated the front steps and added a handrail. The building department noted that the step heights were different and therefore didn’t meet code. He was issued a fine by the building department. It was determined during the meeting that Mr. Hidalgo did not replace the steps, he coated them with concrete and they were always uneven. He thought that the housing inspector directed him to install the railing and he didn’t need to come to the HPC.

Regarding the façade: The HPC determined that historically the house did not have a box window, that there were three evenly spaced windows on the second floor and the roof over the door was flat. On the second floor the upper left window was moved over to the right prior to Mr. Hidalgo’s purchase of the house. The HPC is willing to work with him on not replacing the box window if he will do some other things to bring the house back closer to its historic condition. The HPC asked that the second floor window be moved back to the left, however that is now a bathroom with a tub, and moving the window would move it into the tub. Over the door, Commissioner Pratt showed the HPC and Mr. Hidalgo a roof that exists in the district at the southeast corner of Church and Stockton, facing Church. Members of the HPC will assist Mr. Hidalgo with the brackets and decoration. As for the box window,

two vinyl windows were installed. They do not align with the upper windows and they are too short. No agreement was made for this aspect of the house. Mr. Hidalgo asked that he have 2-3 years to get the work done with milestones of \$4,000 per year. The HPC agreed in concept, but will need to consult with the HPC attorney before implementing. The HPC would also appreciate Mr. Hidalgo replacing the vinyl siding as it is falling off. The commissioners noted to him that these renovations would only increase his property value.

Post Meeting: Chairman Pratt spoke with Construction Official George Chin and Housing Officer Dave Bell, June 19th informing them that the steps were existing with a concrete coating. Mr. Chin and Mr. Bell agreed that the steps could remain as they are if a railing was installed on the right side – facing the house. Mr. Pratt noted that no railings are found in the district on this style house. Mr. Chin and Mr. Bell said that since this house is an apartment and inspected by the Borough, they need a railing. Mr. Chin said maybe wrought iron. On June 23rd, Mr. Pratt got a quote from Carfaro (the supplier/installer of an aluminum wrought iron style railing that has been installed on the Grubb's house (not in the district) on the northwest corner of Morrison and Summit. The quote was for under \$600. Mr. Chin said that if the railing and HPC requested changes were less than \$2,000, the borough would waive the fine.

Old Business:

Certified Local Government: RP walked through each comment and its result in the ordinance at the meeting. The Commissioners had two questions: 1. Can the waiting period for demolitions be extended, and how far? 2. Can there be a monetary fine for violating the ordinance rather than leaving it up to the judge. As a recent example Mr. Hidalgo was being fined \$2,000/month. The judge reduced it to \$500/month for two months. This isn't enough of a deterrent according to the commission. RP also asked if we should change the minimum number of commissioners from 7 to 5 with two alternates since for the last several years it has been difficult to fill all positions. Since (see New Business) there are two people interested in joining the commission, we could fill the two vacancies. The commission decided to stay with 7. The original commission was 5. Two additional seats were added in about 2010.

Post Meeting: RP submitted the revised ordinance to the SHPO with these two questions in the body of the email. No response as of 6/24/15. RP also spoke to Gary Rosensweig, the Planning Board attorney about the two questions. He had no input on #1, and understands the need for #2. He asked that RP ask Fred Raffetto, the Borough attorney if it was okay for Gary to work with the HPC. RP emailed Fred and he is fine with it.

Steward of Hightstown History: The award was presented to Keith White at the June 6 council meeting.

Historic District Descriptive Sign: (6/18/15 - Nothing new to report) RP sent the language to WC for his review as per his request. WC made suggested edits but felt more editing was necessary. He thought, and the HPC agreed that the sign shouldn't describe what we've done, but be more of a history lesson. JH will review from this point and report back at the next meeting. Related to this the suggested location on back of the Hightstown sign in the Prayer Garden on Stockton Street, was met with surprise from the Church trustees, (As it was mentioned in the HEWHS Spring 2015 newsletter. They asked for a formal request and list of maintenance requirements and who will maintain the area. RP sent an email to the church trustees, c/o Ed Kelley noting that it will not be touching the ground and no additional maintenance would be required. Post Meeting: RP received an email from Ed Kelley 5/22/15 approving the sign with stipulations. The email was sent to the clerk for the file. Post Meeting: RP noted that at the March meeting, the commissioners asked that the sign include the borough seal at the top.

Preserve America Community: Preserve America deemed our application complete and has forwarded it on to the National Park Service (NPS) and the White House. She said that it would take about a week once the NPS approved, depending on the workload at the White House to hear back with an official response.

Walking Tour Brochure / Phone App: Topic was not discussed.

Classic Towns Program (DVRPC): RP made all edits and returned to the dvrpc. RP has collected additional checks and has promises totaling \$400 more than the required first year payment.

Historic Element: HPC to discuss at a later meeting.

Budget: \$1,900 is slated to be part of the budget when it is approved.

Fine Homebuilding Porch Gallery: RP developed a partnership with *Fine homebuilding* magazine as part of the Historical Society newsletter to reprint a how-to article in each issue. In the course of the partnership discussion, *Fine Homebuilding* asked that Hightstown and East Windsor residents send in pictures of their porches to be part of an issue of the magazine. Pictures are to be sent to mfriedman@taunton.com by July 31, 2015.

Post Meeting: RP walked the town 6/13/15 and took pictures of ten porches. 6/24/15, RP sent these ten pictures with addresses and owners to Maureen Friedman. If those owners submit their own pictures, the best photo will be used. Keith Jackson at 201 Stockton said that he would submit his own picture. Chris Moraitis at 208 Stockton said that he would take his own pictures.

New Business:

New Commissioners. During the Steward of Hightstown History presentation, Keith White expressed interest in joining the HPC. He asked that RP email him what is entailed. Philippe has someone interested also.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 pm. **Next Meeting:** July 16, 2015 – 7:30pm, HEWHS