



Hightstown Historic Preservation Commission

Thursday, May 20, 2010
7:30 pm @ Borough Hall



MINUTES

Call to order: Chairman Pratt called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Open Public Meeting Act Statement: Chairman Pratt read the Open Public Meeting Act Statement.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown:	Present
Commissioner Buriak:	Present
Commissioner Cox:	Present
Commissioner Ely:	Present
Commissioner Keith:	Present
Commissioner Mariboe:	Absent
Commissioner Patten:	Present
Commissioner Pratt:	Present
Commissioner Smith:	Present
Council Liaison Musing:	Present

Minutes: The minutes from the previous meeting were distributed by email prior to the meeting, with a few copies distributed at the meeting. The minutes were approved.

Public Comment: None

OLD BUSINESS

Monthly Newspaper Article: No report

Downtown Hightstown Website: Commissioner Pratt reported that Amanda Porter, DTHT, and Gary Stevens, Borough Webmaster, will be meeting to work on incorporating the HPC bullet points into an announcement on the website to promote the HPC. **Post Meeting: DTHT has been trying to only be event based. The bullets are not an event.**

Historic Element Revision: Commissioner Pratt reported this subcommittee still has not met. He stated that he hopes to get started on it this month. He is checking for the deadline to revise the Master Plan for the Borough.

John Bull Sleepers: Commissioner Patten reported that she and Christian Kirkpatrick continue to meet to revise their report.

Demolition Ordinance: Commissioner Pratt reported that the Demolition Ordinance will be voted upon at the June 7th Borough Council meeting.

Pattern Book: Commissioner Pratt reported that pictures have been sent to Mark Hewitt, an architectural history preservationist and author, to identify pictures. Commissioner Pratt is still working on transformations.

Stockton Street Streetscape Improvements: Commissioner Buriak reported that the Borough Council has received bids for the project. They will be opened on June 10 and awarded. He estimates that the project should begin in late July or early August. It was suggested that the Historical Society add information on the project to its booklet describing the House Tour in October.

Circa Plaques, whistle stop sign, district signage:

Commissioner Keith shared prototypes of the plaques designed by Sewah Studios. He developed masonite board signs for house plaques, street plaques, and two different sizes of oval shaped signs, one 5x7 and the other 8x10. Discussion was held regarding what to include on the signs. It was decided that there would need to be 55 house plaques, two district entrance signs with a logo to be determined, and signs for the key contributing resources which are defined as stand alone resources that would qualify them for registry designation by themselves.

HPC information for Building department: Commissioner Brown reported that she had sent the information to Commissioner Pratt.

Budget Commissioner Buriak has signed up with the Pfizer Foundation, part of Pfizer – his employer, to donate \$1,000 as a matching gift for his community work in Hightstown. The check has not yet been received by the Borough but should be cut at the end of June and mailed.

Peddie Lake Dam Committee: Commissioners Keith and Buriak reported that two committees have been formed, an engineering committee and a finance committee. Commissioner Keith reported on a bridge in Bucksport Maine and discussed costs. It is estimated that the bridge that may be chosen is approximately \$40,000 and will require \$20,000 to install. Fundraising efforts are being considered as well as grants in order to fund it.

New Resident Welcome Letter: Commissioner Smith read the letter she had composed to welcome the Shue/Robach family who purchased the Samuel Sloan house on South Main Street. The home is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. All approved the letter. Commissioner Pratt will add the HPC letterhead images and Commissioner Smith will send it out.

NEW BUSINESS

Old Hights Overlook: Commissioner Pratt reported that he had met, as a member of the Architectural Review Committee of the Planning Board, to review plans for the Old

Hights Overlook townhouses. He stated that they had approved the project. He showed the HPC the plans and there were no additional comments.

NJ Historical Conference: Commissioner Pratt reported that he had signed up to attend this conference on June 2. He invited anyone else who is interested to attend. The cost is \$80 which the HPC has no budget to send anyone, and includes seminars, tours and dinner. No additional commissioners opted to attend.

Historic District Ordinance Maintenance: Commissioner Buriak reported that there is a lack of property maintenance regarding properties in the Historic District and in general, in town. He stated that he has made numerous requests for remedies to be implemented and they have not been done. He also cited the following as examples of neighborhood blight:

1. Grass overgrown at the Mill Property
2. Supplemental Trenton Times fliers distributed around town
3. An overgrown hedge at 153 Stockton St
4. A truck in the driveway at 166 Stockton St
5. Items to be discarded in yard at 211 Stockton St
6. Items to be discarded in yard at 225 Stockton St
7. Brush pile on North Academy St

In discussion, Commissioner Buriak stated that pick-ups of trash had been arranged for #'s 4, 5 and 6. Commissioner Patten explained that the borough clerk had been addressing the Trenton Times issue for some time and that it was being challenged by them as a First Amendment right to Free Speech. **Post Meeting: There is now a field on the Borough website for residents to fill in their address to opt out of the flier deliveries.**

Discussion followed as possible remedies for the situation. A Community Watch Stockton Street Advisory Action Committee to help with the specific Stockton Street concerns was suggested as an outgrowth of earlier suggestions for a Stockton Street Advisory Committee to address issues related to the Historic District.

Adjournment:

The motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ely and seconded by Commissioner Cox. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Next Meeting: June 17, 2010; 7:30pm.