

# Franklin Township Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

## Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

### December 1, 2015

#### Location

Franklin Township Municipal Building, 475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair Barbara Lawrence at 7:30 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law of 1975.

#### Attendance

Members: Andrew Burian, Tom Gale, Anthony Ganim, Bob LaCorte, Barbara Lawrence, Barbara ten Broeke

Alternate: Nancy Hohnstine

Staff: Vincent Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer

Historian: Bob Mettler

Council Liaison: Ted Chase

#### Absent

Members: Jean Ambrose, Susan Goldey, Joanne Kaiser

Alternate: Frank Aiello

#### Guests

Bill Bowman, reporter, Franklin Reporter & Advocate

Caleb Byun, Pastor, Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Lynn Dunn, attorney representing Verizon Wireless, 100 Barron Circle, Somerset, NJ, 15-00039

Tae Myung Hong, parishioner, Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Ron Igneri, civil engineer for Verizon Wireless, 100 Barron Circle, Somerset, NJ, 15-00039

Esther Kim, parishioner, Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Richard Kim, staff of Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Kathryn Kopp, Esq. attorney representing Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Young Sik Lim, parishioner, Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Rick Masters, planner for Verizon Wireless, 100 Barron Circle, Somerset, NJ, 15-00039

Cori & Mike Rock, for 24 Olcott St., Middlebush, NJ, 15-00038

David Stern, RF engineer for Verizon Wireless, 100 Barron Circle, Somerset, NJ, 15-00039

John P Tamburini, parishioner, St. Joseph's Church, Hillsborough, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

Mark Yarrington, AIA, Architect, Korean Baptist Church, for 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, 15-00035

## Formal Reviews

1. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by Cori (Kaercher) Rock requesting approval to replace the existing front porch and steps at 24 Olcott Street, Somerset, NJ, Block 79, Lot 1, zoned R-20H and located within the Middlebush Village Local Historic District. File No. 15-00038

The Commission heard testimony from Cori and Mike Rock and reviewed the CoA application with a set of documents that included: a site survey plan prepared by Steven R. Kelly, P. L. S., dated 5/11/11 with a note indicating that the existing porch and stairs are to be demolished and replaced in the existing footprint, two pages of undated printed photographs showing the existing conditions with notes highlighting the problems, two pages of undated printed photographs of an example house with notes to illustrate the renovations being proposed, and five pages of unsigned and undated sketches that include: front and side photos of the porch onto which are inserted elevation sketches with dimensions of the proposed alterations, a section elevation sketch showing stair, footing and porch details, a porch framing plan sketch with dimensions and deck details, and a page with section sketches showing footing details and ledger flashing details. Color copies of the printed photographs of the existing conditions and the example house pages were provided at the meeting.

Mr. Gale provided a copy of the Middlebush Village State and National Register Historic District document that describes the building. From it and the CoA application we learned that the vernacular, two story, two bay residence is 127 years old. We also learned that it is considered a contributing property in the State and National Historic District. The Historic District document describes the L-shaped porch as it currently exists but gives no opinion on what details, if any, are original to the house.

Ms. and Mr. Rock reviewed their proposal to replace the foundation, steps, railings, deck, and posts of the porch but noted that the existing roof would be retained. They said all the components of the porch but the roof were failing. The masonry porch foundation, in particular, had not been designed well which was the cause of some of the problems, they believed. They propose to replace the metal railings with pressure treated wood spindles and bottom rail that are painted white and use a composite top rail that will be stained to match the deck. The existing wood deck can not be salvaged, they said, so it will be replaced with 5/4"x6" pressure treated tongue and groove decking that will get a dark stain. Mr. Ganim advised them to prime all the surfaces of the decking material, especially the tongue and groove, before it is installed. The existing masonry steps will be replaced with pressure treated wood with the treads stained to match the deck and the risers painted white like the railing spindles. The sides of the stairs will be a composite material.

Mr. Gale asked for clarification on the columns. He noted that in the example house photos it's noted that the foundation below the deck will be 16"x16" concrete columns on sonotube footings but in the porch elevation sketches there are no concrete columns with just the painted 6"x6" pressure treated wood columns extending from grade to the roof. The Rocks said that the columns would extend from grade to the roof as shown in the elevation sketches. The space below the deck between the columns will be covered by new wood lattice panel. They suggested that they might be able to add a faux masonry finish to the lower section of the columns below the deck. Mr. Gale also noted that the existing porch appears to have lighter columns with decorative brackets. There was some discussion about whether those details were original to the house with the applicants feeling that the porch as it exists was a more recent design. No one knew of any historic pictures of the house that might help address that question.

No public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made and seconded to **approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to replace the existing front porch and steps as submitted** as, while the property has historic value, the project as proposed should have little negative effect on the property and the local historic district. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness application (FTHPAC recommendation to FTZBA for Use Variance application) submitted by New York SMSA Limited Partnership d/b/a/Verizon Wireless., requesting approval to install 12 cellular antennas on the roof of the existing building at 100 Barron Circle, Somerset, NJ, Block 424.01, Lot 39.07, zoned PRC and located within the D& R Canal Local Historic District. File No. 15-00039

The Commission heard testimony from Ms. Dunn and Mr. Igneri and reviewed the CoA application along with a set of 10 architectural drawings by Ronald J. Igneri, P. E. of Stantec, dated 10/8/15, that include: T01 titled Cover Sheet with site maps and information, T01A titled 200' Property Owners List, Z01 titled Site Plan, Z02 titled Roof Top Layout, Z02A titled Equipment Plan & Elevation, Z03 titled Cable Tray & GPS Mounting Details, Z03A titled Interior Fence & Site Details, Z04 titled Antenna Mount Details, Z05 titled Landscaping Details, Z06 Typical Generator Specifications, and a set of 11 letter sized printed color photographs that include: 1 View of Existing Building Facing Southwest taken 10/1/15, 1A View of Existing Building With Proposed Wireless Communications Facility [same view as 1 with photo simulation of installation], 2 View of Existing Building Facing West taken 10/1/15, 2A View of Existing Building With Proposed Wireless Communications Facility [same view as 2 with photo simulation of installation], 3 View of Existing Building Facing North taken 10/1/15, 3A View of Existing Building With Proposed Wireless Communications Facility [same view as 3 with photo simulation of installation], 4 View of Existing Building From The Delaware And Raritan Canal Towpath 275' Northwest Of The Pedestrian Bridge taken 11/21/15, 4A View of Existing Building With Proposed Wireless Communications Facility [same view as 4 with photo simulation of installation], 5 View of Existing Building From Easton Avenue and Delmott [sic] Lane taken 11/21/15, 5A View of Existing Building With Proposed Wireless Communications Facility [same view as 5A with photo simulation of installation], and an unnumbered page titled View of Existing Building From #1289 Easton Avenue Symen Van Wickle House (no visibility) taken 11/21/15.

Ms. Dunn introduced the project and asked Mr. Igneri to go over the details. Mr. Dominach first explained that the application would be going before the Township Zoning Board of Adjustment for a use variance as no cell towers are allowed in the zone and that tonight the Commission would be making a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Mr. Igneri described the site as 42 acres with many residential units in multiple buildings on the property. The building where they proposing to mount the antennas on is the existing four story building closest to Easton Avenue. He explained that Verizon has identified a gap in coverage in the area and typically attempts to co-locate on existing structures if possible, so they look for tall structures in the coverage gap. He said they believe the proposed location is the most suitable site in the area.

He said Verizon would lease space in the underground parking area of the building for the necessary support equipment and that a generator and landscaping would be installed on the lawn near the underground parking lot entrance. He described the roof of the building as a membrane over wood framing. He said that the antenna ideally would to be mounted on the roof but the fact that they need to be installed over occupied units complicates the installation and limits the options

as they feel that they can not disturb the occupants by working on their ceilings. Therefore, they propose to mount the antenna on metal frame sleds that would simply sit on the roof. They would have a white coating to minimize the visual impact but the antennas themselves can not be painted, he said. Mr. Igneri explained that railings or parapet roofs in front of the antenna would cause problems for the signal so all the other necessary support equipment will be set back on the roof to hide it. He noted that the cabling will not be visible. Mr. Burian asked if the units would produce any noise and Mr. Ingeri indicated that they would be no noise.

Mr. Igneri also discussed the visual impact from the locations shown in the off-site photos. He explained that due to distance and intervening solid evergreen screening, there will be no visual impact from the historic Van Wickle house. The building and installation will potentially be visible from the D&R Canal Towpath in the State Park but distance and multiple rows of deciduous trees will make the units difficult to see. He noted that in the 5A view of the building the antenna were somewhat visible above the deciduous trees but he wasn't aware of any historic site impact. Mr. Gale noted that the historic Smalley Farm Graveyard at the foot of DeMott Lane would have been directly behind the photographer when 5A was taken.

Mr. Gale introduced three sheets of printed black and white photos that he explained were online street views of other roof mounted cellular installations in the area, specifically the high raise residential building on Landing Lane, the Harrison Towers high rise residential building on Easton Avenue and the storage facility on Easton Avenue next to the JFK Avenue ramp. He asked Mr. Igneri to confirm that the storage facility included a stealth Verizon site located inside a roof mounted structure designed to match the storage building appearance and Mr. Igneri confirmed that that was correct. Mr. Gale then asked if it would be possible to employ screening similar to what was used at the storage facility at the proposed location to provide a more stealth installation there. Mr. Igneri said they felt that screening panels would be billboard like and more visually intrusive than the antennas themselves. Members commented that they felt that the height of the building as well as the elevation of the site above Easton Avenue along with the tree line in front of the building all help to mitigate the visual impact of the cellular antenna installation.

No public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made by Mr. LaCorte and seconded by Mr. Burian to **take no exception to the proposal to install 12 cellular antennas on the roof of the existing building at 100 Barron Circle, Somerset, NJ** as it was felt that the property is not historic and the project as proposed should have little negative effect on neighboring historic properties and on the local historic district in general. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness application submitted by the Korean Baptist Church of America requesting approval of exterior renovations to the existing house of worship at 46 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, Block 68, Lot 4, zoned R-10H and located within the East Millstone Local Historic District. File No. 15-00035

As background, the Commission originally reviewed the application at its October 6, 2015 meeting. Several parts of the application were considered and approved individually including the approvals of the proposal to alter the rear entrance to add double doors and a barrier free ramp and the proposal to alter the front entrance to bring the front doors flush with the front tower projection façade and make them inoperable as submitted.

The Commission felt, however, that proposal to replace the stain glass windows with aluminum framed, translucent glass units was not clear enough so deferred consideration of that part of the application until more detail was presented.

At the October HPAC regular meeting, the Commission examined a two sheet set of architectural drawings prepared by Yarrington Architectural Group, dated 9/28/15, that included sheet A-1 with the Livingston Street (front) and right side elevations and sheet A-2 that included the Elm Street (rear) and left side elevations, a set of undated, printed, black and white pictures that appear to be recent views of the left and front façades as well as a historic view of the church taken before the front façade was altered, and relevant pages from the East Millstone State and National Register Historic District listing.

From the State and National Register documents and the pictures, the Commission had observed that the c. 1867 1 bay by 5 bay rectangular church building has a vernacular style with gothic revival influences. It was apparent when comparing the historic picture to the current conditions that the front façade has been heavily altered. Changes include a different steeple, alteration of the second story opening from louvers to a window, the loss of eave brackets, the change from a pair of single doors on either side of the tower projection to a central doorway with a gable end hood supported by ornamental ironwork where a window once was, and the addition of stairs with ornamental ironwork railings leading to the altered front entrance. It was seen that the left side has also been heavily altered with the addition of a canopied exterior stairway to the basement that obscures a portion of the front window and a ramp, stairs, and vestibuled entrance that replaces one of the original windows.

At the November HPAC regular meeting, the Commission reviewed the submittals that included a cover letter from Mark E. Yarrington, AIA dated November 5, 2015, an undated printed color photo of the rear west corner of the building, an unsigned, sketched drawing titled jamb detail dated 10/12/15, and an unsigned, sketched drawing titled sill detail dated 10/12/15. We learned that the plans involved changing nine stained glass windows to the proposed translucent glass units in aluminum frames which would be 3.5'x7' overall with the fixed upper section being 3.5'x5' and the lower awning unit being 3.5'x2'. The Commission was reminded of the arrangement that the applicant made with the original owners of the church, St. Joseph's, now in Hillsborough, to transfer the stain glass windows to St. Joseph who would then put them on display inside their new church.

At the November meeting, the applicant's representatives described the existing exterior materials as replacement vinyl siding with aluminum trim around the existing windows and explained that they intended to amend the proposal in order to keep the existing aluminum trim and allow it to wrap around the new aluminum window frames to hide them. The Commission noted that the amended proposal was different than what was detailed in the drawings dated 10/12/15 which led to a discussion about how the amended proposal would be implemented. That question was not resolved to some members' satisfaction. Other details, such as what decorative exterior trim pieces might be applied to the windows and how they would be installed were not made clear in members' opinions nor was what was proposed for the two existing windows on either side of the building at the front that were to become dummy windows due to interior modifications. The applicant's representatives suggested that they would prefer to go with the design proposed in the 10/12/15 drawings rather than return to another meeting but questions were raised about what was being proposed in the drawings and how it would be implemented. Owing to the concern members had regarding the lack of specifics on the proposed alterations, no action was taken on the application.

For the December meeting, the Commission reviewed new documents that include: a packet of information titled Window and Door Submittals for Calvary Baptist Church, East Millstone, NJ, dated 11/24/16 that contained a single page with four unsigned and undated printed color photographs titled Exterior Photos of Existing Building that show the four elevations of the church; five pages of undated drawing prepared by Gamco Corporation that include a separate page each of elevation, vertical and horizontal section drawings for the proposed double doors, the proposed single doors, and the proposed awning windows, a page titled Typical Awning Pictorial View with front, back and closed views plus a profile section view of the proposed awning window, and a page titled FG450 Frames with section views and descriptions of multiple frames and sills; four pages of product information for Sherwood Williams Bond-Plex Waterbased Acrylic Coating; three pages of unsigned and undated colorized elevations titled Livingston Street Elevation, Right Side Elevation and Elm Street Elevation that detail the proposed changes to the doors, replacement windows, new right side stairs and rear barrier-free ramp and removal and infill of the two side windows at the front; four pages with product information from Big Blue Window Custom Window Grills, a gothic grill isometric drawing, a traditional grill isometric drawing, and production information on 3M VHB Grill Bonding Tape; and a three sheet set of architectural drawings prepared by Yarrington Architectural Group, dated 11/25/15, that included revised sheet A-1 with the Livingston Street (front) and right side elevations and revised sheet A-2 that included the Elm Street (rear) and left side elevations with new window detail elevations showing gothic and traditional grill applications, and a new sheet A-3 three section drawing titled Typical Window Jamb Detail, Typical Window Head Detail and Typical Sill Detail. The Commission also again heard testimony from Katheryn Kopp, Esq., and Mark Yarrington, AIA.

Ms. Kopp and Mr. Yarrington reviewed what had already been approved and what remained, which is primarily how the proposed replacement of the stain glass windows would be addressed. Ms. Kopp asked Mr. Yarrington to discuss the window trim for the proposed translucent glass replacement units in aluminum frames and he provided the Commission with mock ups of the proposed trim details. He reminded the Commission that there would be a taller fixed unit over the operable lower unit. Mr. Burian asked about the joint between the fixed and operable units and Mr. Yarrington explained that there would be a trim piece that was painted white. He also reviewed the product information that had been submitted and the preference for an arched 3" wide gothic profile trim grill piece to be installed on the exterior face of the windows using the 3M tape proposed. Mr. Burian asked about the interior view of the trim grill and Mr. Yarrington said that would be addressed as necessary.

Mr. Yarrington introduced an unsigned and undated architectural drawing titled Right Side Elevation that he explained amends the one submitted with the other meeting materials. The change, he said, was that the new side door replacing one of the windows would have a solid rather than a translucent panel. Ms. Kopp and Mr. Yarrington further explained that the original window opening would have the half translucent glass, half solid panel door below a fixed translucent glass transom with arched gothic trim pieces similar to what is proposed for the other replacement windows. Mr. Burian asked if the other doors would all be the same and Mr. Yarrington explained that all the existing and new doors would be painted the same red color, the existing doors would not otherwise change, the new side door would be as they just detailed, translucent glass over a solid panel and the new rear double door for the Elm street entrance would be full view clear glass. Mr. Yarrington also noted that the locations where the two side windows that are being removed will be sided over with vinyl siding matching the existing material.

A motion was made (Mr. LaCorte) and seconded (Mr. Ganim) to ***approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application requesting approval of exterior renovations to the existing house of worship as submitted if the Gothic profile trim is used as discussed*** as it was felt that the project satisfies the applicant's need for a plain window design without the previous congregation's religious iconology yet retains some of the gothic characteristics of the original windows. The building is historic but has been insensitively altered somewhat over time. The proposed alteration of existing doors and windows and addition of a new door, ramp, stairs and removal of two windows all have been described as necessary for the continued use of the church building so, while the modifications further alter the appearance of the church, Commission members feel the changes proposed are reasonable and will not significantly further alter the historic character of the church. They also feel that the project as proposed should have little negative effect on the local historic district. The motion was passed by majority voice vote with five in favor and two opposed (Burian, ten Broeke).

### **Informal Reviews**

None

### **Correspondence**

None

### **Approval of Minutes of October and November 2015**

Approval of minutes was not considered at the meeting.

### **Reports**

#### 1. Township Open Space Advisory Committee

Mr. LaCorte reported that the Committee discussed the Hageman roof project (also see additional discussion below). He also mentioned the Committee's December meeting will be a holiday gathering open to other Township Committees and Commissions including Agriculture Advisory, Environmental, Historic Preservation Advisory, Recreation Advisory, Shade Tree, Trails Advisory that will be held on Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00pm at Luigi's on Elizabeth Ave. Ms. ten Broeke and Mr. Gale also reported on their visit to discuss possible ways to protect the historic Honeyman House on Canal Road in Griggstown including the feasibility of the Township's acquisition of some of the 4 ac. as open space and the use of a preservation or façade easement (also see additional discussion below).

#### 2. Historic Resource Survey Committee

Nothing new was reported.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### 1. CLG application and demolition Code amendments

Ms. Lawrence asked about the status of the proposed Code amendments related to the CLG application and the demolition section of 112-200 that will be presented to the Planning Board approval and Mr. Dominach stated that it had been a busy month so they had to be deferred another month.

#### 2. Hageman roof

The Open Space report started an extended discussion about Council's November approval of the synthetic slate roof replacement via no-bid contract at the Hageman House on S. Middlebush Road. Some discussion related to the specifics of the roof project and included the history that the Township had applied for and received State Historic Preservation Office project authorization for slate in June but according to the Manager's report to Council, the Township

had not sought bids from slate roof contractors until the week of October 12, 2015 and only received amended project authorization to use synthetic slate on October 27, 2015. It was also noted that while at the November meeting, the Manager reported that the only response from slate contractors the Township had received was from the same contractor that had provided the no-bid contract proposal for the synthetic slate roof replacement, the Commission had become aware of another slate contractor who had been in contact on the date of the Council meeting and arranged an on-site meeting the follow week to discuss the project of using slate at Hageman. Councilman Chase said there was an understanding that the Commission had approved the use of synthetic slate but members explained that while the possibility of using syntactic slate was first mentioned in a report from Township staff in August, no approval was sought or given. Councilman Chase apologized for the misunderstanding.

There was further discussion about the potential use of grants instead of Township funds for the Hageman roof and other Township projects. Members referenced that availability of the annual Somerset County Historic Preservation Grant and other State and National Grants. Ms. ten Broeke noted all the restoration work at Hageman, for example, had been accomplished via hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants. Members mentioned the recent grant that had provided funds for the historic district signs for East Millstone but felt that the Township should be seeking other grants.

Members felt that there had been communication failure with the Hageman and Pleasant Plains Schoolhouse projects but noted that they felt there had been constructive interaction of the Kingston School rehabilitation. Members noted that the Commission had been involved with the development of RFPs, selection of vendors and the submission of grants in the past and was willing and able to help advise the Township with historic preservation issues now and in the future but recently has felt they have been left out of the loop. Ms. Lawrence suggested that she and Mr. Burian work together to draft a letter to Council and copy Manager Vornlocker and Special Projects Manager Delaney offering the Commissions assistance and seeking better communication.

### 3. Historic Honeyman House

Continuing the discussion that started with the Open Space Report, members noted the fact that the property is two separate, approximately two acre lots, one with the structures and the other vacant and wooded. It was pointed out that they are already undersized for the zone and Mr. Mettler explained that when two adjoining undersized lots are owned by the same person, as in this case, they can not be easily sold separately. The least complicated protection in members opinions would be the private owner, either the current owner or the future owner, implementing a preservation easement on the property. Mr. Burian warned that an easement would not prevent demolition. Using the property as a tourism site was also discussed. Some thought a "museum in the street" concept where the house would not have to be open as a museum but that history could be provided via plaques and/or app based audio guides.

## **New Business**

### 1. Excused Absences.

Mr. Gale reported on the discussion with the Township Clerk, Ann Maire McCarthy regarding attendance reporting and excused absences. She said she has been using Commission minutes to prepare attendance reports for Council. She also explained that "an absence is an absence - there are no guidelines regarding 'excused absences'". She added however that if

there is a reason for a member's continued absence (potentially for anything - work related - illness related - but usually it is for an extended time period like 2+ meetings consecutively) it could be considered an excused absence. Mr. Dominach reaffirmed that an absence is an absence but suggested that the By-Laws might be amended to allow the Chair to deem absences as excused. Ms. Lawrence mentioned that Mr. Aiello's, Ms. Ambrose's, Ms. Kaiser's recent extended absences are all examples of what could be considered excused absences.

2. Ms. Lawrence's resignation.

Ms. Lawrence noted that this would be her last official meeting as a Commission member. She said that during her term she learned a good deal, that she felt that the Commission had accomplished quite a bit, and had clearly improved. She said that she will likely continue to work on specific projects.

Councilman Chase suggested that a perhaps a new member could come from the Kingston area to help represent that area. Commission members recalled that past members have come from the Kingston area and felt that it would be good to again have someone from that area on the Commission. Griggstown was also mentioned as an area where a new Commission member might be sought.

**Public Discussion**

None

**Upcoming Meetings**

**Next Meeting Announcement**

January 19, 2016 [Corrected – Meeting Agenda had the incorrect date]

**Adjournment**

At 9:40 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Gale, Secretary

EC:

Robert Vornlocker, Township Manager  
Ann Marie McCarthy, Township Clerk  
Mark Healey, Director of Planning  
Vincent Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer  
FTHPAC members