

Franklin Township Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

July 5, 2016

Location

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

Call to Order

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

Attendance

Members: Andrew Burian, Thomas Gale, Anthony Ganim, Jean Gierlich, Joanne Kaiser, Robert LaCorte

Historian: Robert Mettler

Council Liaison: Dr. Theodore Chase

Absent

Members: Jean Ambrose, Susan Goldey, Barbara ten Broeke

Alternate: Nancy Hohnstine

Staff: Vincent Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer or Mark Healey, Director of Planning

After taking roll, Mr. Gale noted that there was a quorum.

Guests

Joe Catanese, for 47 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, 16-00010

John Knapp, for 47 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, 16-00010

Ed Potosnak, for 1008 Canal Road, Griggstown, NJ, 16-00011

Velma Williams-Gates, guest

Formal Reviews

1. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by John Knapp requesting approval to rehab the existing building, install replacement siding and windows, and construct a rear addition at 47 Livingston Avenue, East Millstone, NJ, Block 69, Lot 8, zoned R-10H and located within the East Millstone Local Historic District. File 16-00010

The Commission heard testimony from Mr. Knapp and Joe Catanese as well as reviewed the information from a CoA application form and documents that included: a fax from Thomas Ernst Assoc., dated 6/8/16, of a site survey with the proposed rear addition represented; a set of four sheets of printed black and white photographs of each elevation showing existing conditions, dated 6/27/16; and a set of undated drawings signed by Mr. Knapp that include: Sheet 1 showing the existing foundation, first, and second floor plans, Sheet 2 showing the existing right side and rear elevations, Sheet 3 showing the existing front and left side elevations, Sheet 4 showing the proposed foundation, first, and second floor plans, Sheet 5 showing the proposed right side and rear elevations, Sheet 6 showing the proposed front and left side elevations, and Sheet 7 with general notes and a typical wall section drawing for the proposed addition. At the meeting, Mr.

Gale also provided copies of pages from the East Millstone Historic Structures Survey Form prepared in 1980 for both this property and the neighboring property at 43 Livingston, Block 69 Lot 9.

From the documents, the Commission learned that the property includes the existing 19th century vernacular, two story, side gabled, three bay wide by two bay deep house with a single story, one bay wide, low slope hipped roofed front porch and a two bay wide by one bay deep shed roofed appendage on the rear elevation as well as a detached garage at the rear corner of the property.

Mr. Knapp reported that the house had sat vacant for about 5 years before he acquired it this year as an investment property. He said the property had become very overgrown so he has spent some time cleaning it up. He explained they plan to extensively renovate the interior including installing new insulation, sheetrock, and trim and refinishing the wood floors.

Mr. Knapp said the house is currently very small, under 900 sq. ft., so they are proposing a 20' x 22', two story, rear addition to replace the one story rear appendage. He said the roof had been replaced recently so did not plan to replace the existing roof but would match the Timberline-like dimensional asphalt shingles he proposed to use on the addition to the existing roof shingles. All the gutters and leaders would be replaced using 5" seamless aluminum style, he noted.

They propose to replace all the existing windows and install matching new windows in the addition using Anderson 6 over 6 lite double hung replacement windows. There was a question regarding what style of windows are currently in use in the house and it was determined that the majority were 6 over 6 but that there were also some 2 over 2 windows. Members did not appear to object to changing all the windows to a universal 6 over 6 style.

Mr. Knapp was asked about the front porch replacement. He said the existing porch would be replaced with a pressure treated lumber frame that would support a mahogany deck and 4" x 4" square corner posts. The stairs at the front would be boxed steps with closed treads. No railings were shown. There was a discussion about the apparent height reduction of the center second front window. Mr. Knapp explained that he hoped to increase the slope of the front porch roof for better drainage but Commission members favored keeping the center window and porch roof in their current configuration. Members also asked about the front door. Mr. Knapp stated that it was currently an undersized, simple, lauan replacement door. He proposed a standard sized paneled door as a replacement.

There was a discussion about how the addition connected to the existing house. One concern was the height of the addition's roof. As proposed, the addition roof would be higher than the existing roof ridge so would join the existing via a transition hip visible from the front. Members felt that if the addition roof was lowered to match the existing roof there would be no visible transition needed. Also, as proposed, the side walls of the addition were flush and continuous with the existing house. Members felt that it would be better if there was a visual distinction between the existing building and the addition. Mr. Gale noted that the neighboring property at 43 Livingston looked very similar in design to this house and suggested that the rear addition at 43 Livingston, which has a slight setback where the addition meets the existing house, might be used as an example for this property.

Mr. Knapp was asked about the existing left sidewall interior chimney. He said that there are two fireplaces that will be non-functional but there was no existing furnace. They propose to install a high efficiency furnace that will not require use of the chimney.

The proposed siding was also discussed. Mr. Knapp stated that they were considering a grained vinyl siding for the existing house and the addition. Members suggested that a smooth vinyl or Hardy Plank brand siding would be more appropriate.

Mr. Knapp pointed out that there would be a window in the rear for the second story bedroom that was not shown in the rear elevation. The details of the rear first floor doors were questioned.

Mr. Knapp wanted to discuss rehabilitation of the existing garage but Mr. Burian pointed out that the Commission had no information on the existing conditions or proposed alteration of the garage so the Commission would not be able to consider that part of the project. He explained that a separate application would have to be submitted for review at a future meeting.

As it became apparent that the Commission could at best make a conditional approval, Mr. Knapp expressed concern that while he was willing to agree to all the recommendations discussed, it would be a hardship to have to wait another month for a formal hearing to receive approval. Mr. Gale asked if he might not be able to start on some of the interior work that didn't require Commission approval but it was suggested that the Code Office was not likely to approve only some of the work. As a result of the discussion, Mr. Burian proposed that once the applicant had submitted a revised set of drawings to the Township, the Commission, prior to the next regular meeting, would form a special subcommittee to review the amended application and all agreed.

The meeting was opened to the public and Ms. Williams-Gates commented to the benefits of Hardy Plank siding over vinyl siding. The public portion was then closed.

A motion was made (Mr. Burian) and seconded (Mr. LaCorte) to ***approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to rehab the existing building, install replacement siding and windows, and construct a rear addition with the following conditions:***

- 1) ***The width of the proposed addition will be narrowed to free the corners of the existing house.***
- 2) ***The ridgeline height of the proposed addition roof will be lowered so that it does not extend above the existing house ridgeline.***
- 3) ***The size and location of all windows and openings on the front elevation will remain unchanged.***
- 4) ***The applicant will revise and resubmit the drawings for review and approval by a Commission review subcommittee to show:***
 - ***the reduction of the addition's ridge height and building width,***
 - ***the proposed second story window on the rear of the addition,***
 - ***the proposed French style doors at the rear porch,***
 - ***all gutters and downspouts, and***
 - ***details for the alterations to the front porch.***
- 5) ***The applicant will review siding options, including Hardy Plank or brushed finish vinyl siding, and present a final proposal for Commission subcommittee review.***

6) The proposed garage work will be submitted as a new application for full Commission review at a future date.

The Commission felt that the property has historic significance as a part of the village of East Millstone but that the additions and alterations to the house as conditionally approved would have little negative impact on the historic property, the neighboring historic properties or the local historic district. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by Ed Potosnak requesting approval to rehab the existing barn and add a deck at 1008 Canal Road, Griggstown, NJ, Block 19 Lots 22/23, zoned CP and located within the D&R Canal Local Historic District. File 16-00011

The Commission heard testimony from Mr. Potosnak as well as reviewed the information from a CoA application form and documents that included: a set of drawings, prepared by Mr. Potosnak and Jeremy Pyke, dated 6/21/16, with four sheets: A-1 showing the proposed first and second story floor plans with black and white renderings of the proposed front and rear elevations and second story interior, A-2 showing the proposed first story floor plan, A-3 showing the proposed second story floor plan, and A-4 that included a site survey prepared by Main Street Surveying, dated 4/15/16 with a tax map location insert; and a packet of 16 pages of unsigned and undated printed color presentation slides that include: 1. A title page titled John Honeyman Home Restoration of Barn; a page titled 2. Barn View From Street with a single printed color photo; a page titled 3. General Conditions with two printed color photos of the barn's front and right side elevations; a page titled 4. General Conditions – Close Up with two printed color photos of the barn's front elevation and first floor interior; two pages titled General Conditions South Side View with two printed color photos of the barn's left side elevation; a page titled 7. General Conditions with three printed color photos of the barn's rear elevation; a page titled 8. Proposed Restoration – Front View with a color rendering of the proposed front elevation; a page titled 9. Proposed Restoration – Side View with a color rendering of the proposed left side elevation; a page titled 10. Proposed Restoration – Back View with a color rendering of the proposed rear elevation and full width deck; a title page titled 11. Restoration Elements – Roof, Siding, Windows, Gutter, Barn Doors; a page titled 12. Roofing with a printed color photo of an example roof and notes on existing conditions and proposed roof materials; a page titled 13. Siding with two printed color photos of example siding and notes on the proposed siding materials; a page titled 14. Windows with three color renderings and one printed color photo of example windows and notes on the proposed replacement windows; a page titled 15. Gutters with a printed color photo of an example gutter and leader and a note on the proposed gutter; and a page titled 16. Barn Doors with a printed color photo of an example door and a note on the proposed replacement doors. At the meeting, Mr. Gale also provided a copy of the Griggstown Historic Structures Survey Form prepared in 1980 for this property.

From the documents the Commission learned that the two story, side gable, 36' x18.5' vernacular barn with irregular bays is set midway back on a treed lot over 450' deep that backs up to the D&R Canal. The Historic Structures Survey Form mentions that one of the outbuildings was used as a weaving shop by the notable owner, John Honeyman, but the form does not identify which outbuilding nor does it specifically describe or date the barn. The house is dated c. 1750 on the form.

Mr. Potosnak explained that they were the new owners of the property and that they wanted to first rehab the barn so that they could live there while they work on restoring the Honeyman House. He walked the Commission through the current conditions including the metal roof that was failing and missing sections. He also described the existing siding as simple board siding.

The Commission tried to understand the age of the barn to determine its historic significance. Following a discussion with Mr. Potosnak, members felt that there was some potential that it was an early barn but that could not be confirmed. It was acknowledged that it could just as easily be a replacement. From Mr. Potosnak's description of the roof framing, members felt that the roof is likely not as old as the rest of the barn. Mr. Potosnak also noted that they discovered the remains of a foundation near the garden that might be the location of a Honeyman era building.

To replace the roof, CertainTeed Carriage House brand asphalt shingle with clipped corners in Colonial Slate were proposed. Mr. Burian noted that the original roof was more likely wood shingle or metal. Members felt that metal would be a more appropriate material. It was also noted that solar units can be used on a metal roof if the owners wishes to install solar.

The application proposed a vertical board and bat Hardy Plank brand product for the lower floor and a horizontal lap siding Hardy Plank brand product for the second story. Members felt the use of continuous vertical board and batten siding material on both stories would be more appropriate.

Mr. Potosnak explained that the proposed 6 over 6, double hung Anderson wood replacement windows with vinyl clad exteriors were the same kind as proposed in the previous application that night. Members felt that no windows are particularly more appropriate in this situation than any others but felt that the style proposed was acceptable.

The proposed gutters also seemed acceptable, while likely not original, but it was suggested that Mr. Potosnak might want to consider seamless in the same half round profile for maintenance reasons.

The proposed custom wood garage doors drew no objections. There were also no comments on the rear deck but there was some discussion on the exterior stairs. Mr. Burian suggested that they would likely have to be box treads that may need steel pans with electric warming to melt ice in winter or be otherwise weather protected. It was also suggested that the deck and stair additions may need D&R Canal Commission approval but members advised applicants should verify if other approval is needed.

No public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made and seconded to **approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to rehab the existing barn and add a deck with the following conditions:**

- 1) The replacement siding will exclusively be vertical board and batten siding.**
- 2) The replacement roof will be a standing seam metal roof.**

The Commission felt that the property has historic significance but that the additions and alterations to the barn as conditionally approved would have little negative impact on the historic property, the neighboring historic properties or the local historic district. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Informal Reviews

Following the discussion of the barn, Mr. Potosnak informally discussed future plans for the Historic John Honeyman house on the same property, 1008 Canal Road, Griggstown, NJ. He first went through a set of unsigned and undated presentation slides that included: A title page titled John Honeyman House Concepts for House Restoration; a page titled Current with a printed color photo of the front façade of the house; a page titled Concept – Front View with a color rendering of the front façade representing proposed additions and alterations; a page titled Concept View with a color rendering of the right side representing proposed additions and alterations, and a untitled page with a color rendering of the rear representing proposed additions and alterations.

From the documents, the Commission learned that the house is a c. 1750, one and a half story, side gabled, 18th Century Vernacular, 5 bay wide by 2 bay deep structure with more recent left side and rear additions set back less than 30' from Canal Road at the intersect with Bunker Hill Road. The house is associated with John Honeyman, purportedly a spy for General George Washington who may have provided important information that aided Washington in the successful Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War.

Mr. Potosnak noted that the chimneys will need to be repaired and discussed a structural issue with the front right corner. He explained that they propose to relocate the existing driveway from the left (south) side of the house to the right (north) side. He suggested that they want to raise the second story but Commission members general advised against it as they believed it would be both difficult structurally and inappropriate historically. For the same reason, the roof dormers on the sides and rear were not favored. Members suggested that it would be best to leave the building unaltered, especially the front façade, or possibly return it to a more historically accurate design using historic documentation, and use new, separate additions that complement the original structure to add space and features lacking in the original. The proposed barnlike addition might be an example of an appropriate addition as long as it didn't compete with or overwhelm the historic house. Members suggested that Mr. Potosnak visit other adaptive uses of historic properties including the recent project at the corner of Elm and Market in East Millstone to get a sense of what would work here.

Correspondence

None

Approval of Minutes of June 2016 meeting

A motion to **approve the HPAC regular monthly meeting minutes of June 7, 2016 as submitted** was made, seconded and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Reports

1. Township Open Space Advisory Committee
Mr. LaCorte reported that the June OSAC meeting was cancelled.
2. Historic Resource Survey Committee
Mr. Burian mentioned that the committee needs reorganization.

Unfinished Business

1. CLG

Mr. Burian reported that the revised CLG application has been resubmitted to the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office.

2. Historic Preservation Plan Element of the Franklin Township Master Plan

Mr. Burian reported that Mr. Healey was unable to attend tonight's meeting as previously planned so the revision discussion would continue at the next meeting (August 2).

New Business

1. Resignations and open positions

Mr. Burian reported that regular member Jean Ambrose had submitted her resignation from the Commission. He said he thanked her for her years of service on the Commission and also noted that with her resignation there are now two vacancies, her regular member position [term expiring on 12/31/19] and also the alternate #2 position [term expiring on 12/31/18]. It was suggested that it would be nice if new members could be found from the Kingston and Griggstown areas.

Public Discussion

None

Next Meeting Announcement

Regular meeting 8/2/16

Sub-Committee meetings: TBD

Adjournment

At 10:00 p.m. a motion to adjourn the meeting 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