

# Franklin Township Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

## Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

### September 6, 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 7:35 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law of 1975.

#### Attendance

Members: Andrew Burian, Thomas Gale, Anthony Ganim, Susan Goldey, Robert LaCorte, Barbara ten Broeke

Alternate: Nancy Hohnstine

Staff: Vincent Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer

Historian: Robert Mettler

Council Liaison: Dr. Theodore Chase

#### Absent

Members: Joanne Kaiser

After taking roll, Mr. Gale noted that there was a quorum and the alternate, Ms. Hohnstine, would be voting.

#### Guests

Bill Bowman, reporter, Franklin Reporter & Advocate

Bill Doran, architect, for 3059 RT 27, 16-00014

Daniel Fortunato, architect, for 10 Laurel Avenue, 16-00013

Kathryn Kopp, Esq. attorney representing Glen & Andrea McParland, for 10 Laurel Avenue, 16-00013

Gerald Jurrens, for 55 Laurel Avenue, 16-00012

David & Sofia Lopez, 26 South Middlebush, 16-00015

Glen & Andrea McParland, for 10 Laurel Avenue, 16-00013

#### Formal Reviews

On the recommendation of Mr. Dominach, a motion was made (Mr. Burian) and seconded (Ms. ten Broeke) to amend the order of reviews on the agenda to move 16-00015 from 4<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> and it was passed by unanimous voice vote.

1. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by David & Irene Lopez requesting emergency repair approval for the replacement of the existing roof at 26 South Middlebush, Somerset, NJ, Block 82, Lot 8, zoned R-20H, and located within the Middlebush Local Historic District. File 16-00015

The Commission heard testimony from the applicants, David & Irene Lopez, as well as reviewed the information from the CoA application form. At the meeting, the applicants provided four undated, printed color photographs that were described as (1) a front view of the old roof, (2) a view of ceiling damage due to a leak, (3) a front view of the new roof, (4) a different front view of the new roof.

Mr. Dominach explained that the roof had already been installed so the applicants were seeking approval of the installed roof. He said that the applicants had hired a contractor who had applied for a permit as required but had proceeded to install the roof before the permit had been issued. Mr. Dominach also noted that at the time the roof was being installed the applicants were not aware that the permit had not been issued.

The Lopezes explained that they had recently purchased the house believing the roof was in good condition but they became aware that it was leaking when a portion of their ceiling collapsed after a rain. They hired a contractor, as Mr. Dominach described, to replace the roof with in-kind materials, architectural/dimensional asphalt shingles, with just a slight change in the color. The Commission learned that the single story ranch with low pitched, hipped roofs on the main roof and wings was about 60 years old and considered non-contributing in the local historic district.

No public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made (Mr. LaCorte) and seconded (Ms. Goldey) to **approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for emergency repair approval to replace the existing asphalt shingle roof in-kind**. The Commission felt that the property did not have historic significance as a part of the local historic district and that the project as completed would have little negative impact on the neighboring historic properties or the Middlebush local historic district. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by Gerald Jurrens requesting approval to replace the exterior steps to the front porch with new steps including an upper platform/deck/stoop, lower pad, and railings at 55 Laurel Avenue, Kingston, NJ, Block 5, Lot 156.04, zoned R-10H and located within the Kingston Local Historic District. File 16-00012.

The Commission heard testimony from the applicant, Mr. Jurrens, as well as reviewed the information from a CoA application form and documents that included more detailed description, architectural drawings by Mr. Jurrens, dated 7/26/16, that include a sheet with the proposed south or side elevation and the west or front elevation and a sheet titled Section showing details of the proposed alterations, and an undated, printed color photo of the front and right (south) side of the house presenting the current conditions.

Mr. Jurrens explained the proposed changes are being driven primarily by his homeowners insurance company that requires handrails to be installed on the steps. Mr. Jurrens noted the current concrete steps are deteriorating, lack handrails, and end with a stepdown directly into the narrow driveway. The proposal calls for a 3'x8' platform a step down from the porch door, two treads from the platform to the bottom landing which is proposed to be a 3'x3' bluestone pad, lattice skirting, and railings with vertical 1.5"x1.5" balusters. The project will change the orientation of the steps from the side of the house towards the front of the house.

Mr. Jurrens expressed his desire for the alterations to be as maintenance-free as possible so proposed pressure treated wood for the framing, synthetic deck material for the platform deck and stair treads, and vinyl or pressure treaded balusters and handrails and PVC lattice. Mr. Burian expressed a preference to wood over vinyl and PVC but felt the synthetic deck material would be acceptable. He also suggested that the alterations be painted to match the house. Mr. Ganim advised that the pressure treated items should be allowed to weather a year before being painted.

The house is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century 1.5 story, gable front building with prominent exterior brick chimney slightly off-center on the front façade. The enclosed, single story porch projects from the front right corner and is also front gabled. Mr. Jurrens described the siding as steel.

No public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made (Mr. Burian) and seconded (Mr. LaCorte) to **approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to replace the exterior steps to the front porch with a new steps including an upper platform/deck/stoop, lower pad, and railings with the condition that wood rather than vinyl and PVC be used for the railings and skirting.** The Commission felt that the property has slight historic significance as a part of the village of Kingston and that the additions and alterations to the house as conditionally approved would have little negative impact on the property, the neighboring historic properties or the local historic district. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by Broadway Somerset LLC requesting approval to construct a hotel assisted living center and quick check with gas pumps at 1850 Easton Avenue, Somerset, NJ Block 468.01, Lot 26, zoned CB and located within the D&R Canal Local Historic District. File 16-00016

No one was present to present the application. Before leaving, Mr. Dominach was able to determine from a representative that they would be coming for review in October.

### Informal Reviews

Note: these two applications were scheduled as formal reviews on the meeting agenda but evolved into informal reviews at the meeting.

1. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by Glen & Andrea McParland requesting approval to add carport, change siding, rebuild porch, remove 2 windows, add fencing and extend stone wall, add gate at front of driveway at 10 Laurel Avenue, Block 3, Lots 12/13, zoned R-10H and located within the Kingston Local Historic District. File 16-00013.

The Commission heard testimony from Daniel Fortunato, Kathryn Kopp, and the applicants, Glen & Andrea McParland, as well as reviewed the information from a CoA application form and documents that included four pages of undated printed color photos of the property with seven various elevation views, a view of the front wall and sidewalk, photos of four example carport designs, and two photo simulations of the proposed front fence and a set of architectural drawings prepared by Daniel Fortunato Architect, P. A., dated 8/29/16, that include a sheet with first and second floor plans and a sheet with front, rear, left and right side elevations.

From the applicants, Glen and Andrea McParland, the Commission learned that the building dates from c. 1845 and has been reported to have been used as a doctor's office and by an undertaker at various times. We also learned that they are new owners having purchased the property in June. Ms. Kopp introduced the carport project noting that it will have a deck above. Mr. Fortunato explained that due to low 6' height in the basement and the deteriorated condition of the rubble stone foundation they proposed to support the house to excavate down another three feet and build a new foundation on new footings. There was discussion about the materials proposed for the foundation and it was noted that there were no plans submitted for the foundation. Mr. Fortunato suggested that the new foundation will be CMU with a stucco exterior finish. He also suggested that the house would sit close to its current finished floor height which would leave about 18" of foundation exposed. He and the applicants discussed the weaknesses of the house including the fact that the kitchen is located in what used to be a garage and is unstable. Mr. Fortunato noted that the rear porch would have to be demolished to accommodate the car port. On further discussion it was learned that the basement was to extend under the carport and that the driveway over the basement would be supported by steel or pre-stressed concrete panels. The Commission reiterated a concern that these proposed details were not shown on any drawing. Commission members also expressed concern that the elevations included break lines in the carport so that it was hard to get a true sense of the scale of the carport relative to the building.

Other aspects of the project, including building out the walls to insulate them was discussed. There seemed to be uncertainty about whether the space would be added to the exterior or be gained on the interior. When asked about the replacement siding and windows, Ms. Kopp said they had samples but Mr. Burian noted that they are not noted on the drawings as they should be. By this point it had become clear that the Commission did not have enough information to make a formal recommendation on the application so it was suggested that the formal application be withdrawn until more information can be provided.

When asked if a metal roof might be accepted the Commission noted that metal roofs have been approved on other buildings in local historic districts. As guidance it was mentioned that in-kind material replacements are preferred on historic buildings but appropriate alternative materials have also been considered.

No public chose to comment on this application.

2. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by 54 Properties requesting approval to new 15,000sf shopping center at 3059 RT 27, Franklin Park, NJ, Block 34.01, Lots 32.01/33.01, zoned NBH and located within the Franklin Park Local Historic District. File 16-00014.

The Commission heard testimony from Mr. Doran as well as reviewed the information from a CoA application form and documents that included a proposed site plan, numbered 16001, prepared by William Doran and Sons, dated 5/10/16 and a set of architectural drawings prepared by 3D Architecture, dated 6/24/16 that include a sheet labeled A-1 showing a first floor plan and south elevation and a sheet labeled A-2 showing West, East, and North Elevations.

Mr. Doran explained that the proposal was for the construction of a new shopping center on the vacant lot where Chauncey's Restaurant used to be before it was improperly demolished without Commission approval and on the neighboring lot that has an existing house that had had a proposal to construct a new commercial building to be used as an electronics store a number of years ago but that was never built. Mr. Gale questioned why the Commission wasn't first addressing the demolition of the existing house and Mr. Dominach indicated that he believed the demolition had been previously approved as part of the new construction proposal but suggested that it could be researched in the Township files.

Mr. Doran explained that the building would be set towards the very front of the property with parking at the rear and driveway access on one side. He said the layout essentially creates three front facades: the street side, the parking lot side and the driveway side which drives the design details of public access and signage on multiple facades but that the primary public access would be from the parking lot side. He said the façade design details are similar to those proposed for the unbuilt electronics store. Commission members expressed concerns about the amount of signage but Mr. Doran and Mr. Dominach explained that a certain amount was favored on both the front and the back in these situations for the convenience of the public.

When asked about storm water issues, Mr. Doran said there would be an underground detention system installed. Mr. Burian asked about deliveries and "back of house" issues. Mr. Doran said deliveries would be made from the rear of the building. Lighting issues were discussed and it was noted that the property's side yard abuts the rear yards of historic residential buildings that front on Pleasant Plains Road.

It was decided that more information was required for a formal review so no formal recommendation would be made at this meeting.

No public chose to comment on this application.

## **Correspondence**

None

## **Approval of Minutes of July 2016 meeting**

To allow members more time to review the draft minutes, Mr. Burian suggested that ***approval of the HPAC regular monthly meeting minutes of July 5, 2016 be postponed until the next meeting.***

## **Reports**

1. Township Open Space Advisory Committee  
Mr. LaCorte reported that the August OSAC meeting was cancelled. He gave no report on the July OSAC meeting.
2. Historic Resource Survey Committee  
No report.

3. Report of sub-committee on 7/28 to review the resubmitted documents for application #16-00010 John Knapp – 47 Livingston Avenue, Block 69, Lot 8 , R-10 zone – Remodel existing home and construct an addition including new siding and windows.

Mr. Burian asked Mr. Gale to give the sub-committee report so that he could step out of the meeting to have a discussion with Mr. Dominach before he left. Mr. Gale reported that he had met with Mr. Burian and Mr. LaCorte in the Township Library on 7/28/16 to review the revised plans that had been submitted per the previous review of the proposed remodeling project at 47 Livingston Avenue. He noted that, in general, the requests for alterations in the roof elevation and addition setback had been met. The changes to the front porch and rear windows had also been met. The only issue the sub-committee had with the revised plans was the status of the second floor center window. From the plans it appeared that the window was being moved off-center, a change that was not presented and approved at the regular meeting review. The subcommittee felt that if the applicant could verify that the existing window location is not being changed then the resubmitted documents could be approved. Mr. Dominach later confirmed that the window would not be moving.

Mr. Gale also noted that drawings for a detached garage were submitted with the reviewed drawing but that the subcommittee did not review them as they were new and not part of the original Commission review and conditional approval. As no approval was given for the garage plans, they will have to be submitted as a separate application for full Commission review.

### **Unfinished Business**

1. Historic Preservation Plan Element of the Franklin Township Master Plan  
To be continued at a future meeting. Mr. Gale asked if paper copies of the most recent revision could be made available.
2. Franklin Inn  
Ms. Goldey reported that she had a display on the Franklin Inn at the recent New Jersey History Fair which produced a discussion with a land use attorney, Dennis Galvin, about the DEP deadlock that is stalling the subdivision of the property from going forward. Subdivision from the Onka property is needed before anything further can be done on the Franklin Inn by the Friends non-profit. She reported that Mr Galvin was in the process of arranging a meeting with one of the principals of Maser and Maser, the Licensed Site Remediation Professionals that is handling the Onka case. Andrew Burian said he would like to attend the meeting if possible. She also reported that she had contacted Tom D'Amico, Somerset County Planner and Historic Sites Coordinator and the County Engineer to ascertain if there were plans to realign Amwell Road that would affect the Inn and learned that there currently aren't any realignment plans.

### **New Business**

1. Resignations and open positions  
Mr. Burian reported that regular member Jean Gierlich had submitted her resignation from the Commission due to a required job relocation. He noted that with her resignation, there are now three vacancies, this new regular member position [term expiring on 12/31/18], the existing vacant regular member position [term expiring on 12/31/19], and also the existing vacant alternate #2 position [term expiring on 12/31/18]. It was reiterated that it would be helpful if new members could be found from the Kingston and Griggstown areas.

**Public Discussion**

None

**Next Meeting Announcement**

Regular meeting 10/4/16

Sub-Committee meetings: TBD

**Adjournment**

At 9:30 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