

**Franklin Township Historic Preservation Advisory Commission  
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting  
March 5, 2014**

**Location**

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

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Burian at 7:30 p.m. in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law of 1975.

**Attendance**

Members – Jean Ambrose, Andrew Burian, Tom Gale, Anthony Ganim, Bob LaCorte, Joanne Kaiser, Barbara ten Broeke

Alternate – Nancy Hohnstine

Staff – Vincent Dominach

Council Member – Ted Chase

**Absent**

Members – Susan Goldey, Barbara Lawrence

Historian – Bob Mettler

**Guests**

Brad Clifton and Scott Hodge representing the Kingston Presbyterian Church (formal review)

Robert Bertrand and Adrian Villafan, 17 So. Middlebush Road, Middlebush (formal review)

Joachim Messing and Rogello Villarreal for building a new house on Neuville Drive, Somerset (informal review)

Steve Androsko, Griggstown, for raising and moving a house in a flood area (informal review)

Bill Bauman from the Franklin Reporter and Advocate

**Formal Reviews.**

1. Review the application for Certificate of Appropriateness by Kingston Presbyterian Church, 4565 State Highway Rt. 27, Kingston, NJ 08528. Block 4, Lot 4, Zoned R-10-H, to replace the spire and bell vault of the church with an exact replication made of low maintenance materials. Application #14-001.

Mr. Scott Hodge, Chairman of buildings and Grounds and Mr. Brad Clifton, member of the congregation returned after the Commission deferred a decision from the February 4, 2014 meeting asking the applicants to return with further documentation validating their reasons to replace old materials and methods to

preserve the spire and bell vault with modern materials. They were required to bring to this meeting:

1. Photos of the interior and exterior of the steeple
2. As-built drawings
3. A life-cycle analysis including costs.
4. The most recent engineering report, explaining why replacement in kind is not feasible.

At the continuing review and on behalf of the Church, Mr. Hodge presented a power point summarizing the restoration of the steeple to its original appearance using modern materials with many cost comparisons of the significant restoration and renovation using wood and paint, projected twenty years ahead.

It was decided that this new presentation was more precise than the initial application in February. The new steeple (tower, bell vault, spire) will be an exact replica of the existing one created from molded steel and aluminum. A polymer coating is going on the tower portion and impediment. The finial, bell, graffiti on the interior timbers will be saved. It was suggested that the 1855 structure be photographed and as many materials as possible be saved in a time capsule.

The 1855 Kingston Presbyterian Church is historically very significant, but the proposal should not have an adverse impact on the property or district.

Bob LaCorte made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Tom Gale. The motion was approved with one abstention.

2. Review of the application for Certificate of Appropriateness by Robert Bertrand, 17 So. Middlebush Road, Somerset, Block 79 Lot 9.01, Zone R-20H. To rebuild three chimneys identically and paint white to match a fourth chimney.

Mr. Bertrand recently moved to Middlebush and his insurance company required him to repair the leaning chimneys on his house. One chimney on the north side is in good condition and the remaining three are not. Three of them do not have caps, dampers or liners – only the chimney on the north side.

Approval is being sought to rebuild all three chimneys to prevent leaning and paint them white so all match. Materials were discussed including the modern bricks to be used (which since they will be painted should not be noticeable. The materials to be replaced will go down to below the roof level. The reason original materials are not being used is that repointing was not seen as a viable option.

Although this home is a historically significant building, the proposal will not adversely impact the property or district.

Bob LaCorte made a motion to go forward with the project as recommended and Tom Gale seconded. The Commission unanimously approved.

### **Informal Reviews**

1. 14 Neuville, Drive, Somerset, Block 259 Lot 52 Zone R-20. Owners, Mr. and Mrs. Joachin W. Messing.

Mr. Messing and Mr. Rogello Villarreal, Architect, appeared to discuss building a new, modern style house on their property. We were reminded that the Commission had recently approved their application to demolish a garage on said property (see 10/1/13 minutes). There will be no subdivisions. The Messings own another house nearby on a separate lot.

The new house will have a new septic system, two stories, three bedrooms and a two car attached garage. A third floor attic space will contain the house mechanics since there is no basement. The windows will be storefront style, well insulated, energy efficient. All ductwork will be in the perimeter of the attic. Square footage of the house is 1400 on the first floor including the garage and 1200 on the second floor. There will be no visibility from the Canal.

It was recommended when the property owners make formal application and return before the FTHPAC they bring:

- Floor plans, section drawings, elevations
- Full size, material samples
- Cut sheet for windows
- Blow up of site plan from Easton Avenue to the Canal

2. Steve Androsko, corner property Canal Road and Griggstown Causeway, Block 19 Lot 4 Zone 7.

Mr. Androsko owns a two-family home and Canoe/Kayak rental on this corner property. Because of flooding he is thinking of elevating his home 8' from the ground up to the first floor. Flooding has been recorded up to 12'. He would try to put in windows and garage doors to make the renovation appear as it has always existed. Mr. Androsko realizes he needs DEP and Canal Commission permits. There will be a hardship condition because plans will not use the same footprint – instead of enclosing the bottom of the structure, it will be left open to allow flood water to pass through. Steve will go from 40' to 48' above sea level.

Marathon Engineering will do the work and help with the application process.

Mr. Androsko would also like to move away from the corner of the property because of safety issues – the house has been hit by trucks making the left turn off the Causeway on to Canal Road. The move will bring him closer to the Griggstown Bidgetenders House, in a National and State Historic District and is the Visitor Center for the Millstone Valley National Scenic Byway.

**Correspondence** – none

**Approval of Minutes** – tabled

## **Reports**

**Open Space** - \$304,000 has been set aside for historic capital improvements. The money is dedicated for upkeep on existing historic property that the township owns. Doesn't mean it has to be spent. Ted Chase will bring this up at the next budget meeting. Only Council can spend this money. We are going to issue a letter, similar to Stoodhof/Gunther, to begin spending money on our historic properties in need of repair.

Historic signage has been revised and are now pleasing. Each sign will be \$2059. There is a one-time logo charge of \$300.

Historic Windshield Survey and Mapping – We'll begin in Kingston when weather is better. Small groups – two will begin. Andrew Burian, Tom Gale and Barbara Lawrence will coordinate all activity. They will prepare a protocol for surveying properties.

## **Unfinished Business**

Rutgers Prep – Two weeks ago Vincent Dominach, Tom Gale and Andrew Burian met on site with people from Rutgers Prep. In prior FTHPAC meetings Rutgers Prep asked for relief from some conditions including replacing the front vinyl replacement windows with proper sized true divided light wood window which they did not comply. They are now expected to comply with all 17 of the original conditions they proposed and were approved by FTHPAC including the installation of the proper windows. A summons for improper work has been issued.

Handbook – Jean Ambrose is creating a handbook for new Commissioners including topics that need to be referred to frequently. Art work is still needed, i.e., a Franklin logo. Jean would like to know if there is secretarial support in Franklin to make copies for all Commissioners. It was suggested one or two hardcopies are enough and a PDF could be made for all of us.

Jean would like to finish it off and see it updated yearly.

Window Workshop – Barbara ten Broeke presented a flyer to be reviewed by everyone. Some changes were made. Updated copies will be sent out for approval and then released to the Library for their calendar.

Franklin Inn - Barbara ten Broeke reported that at a meeting with Susan Goldey, Jan ten Broeke and Mark Else discussions were that money had been found to purchase the Inn property, and the Onka family will subdivide the Inn from the original property. Contamination of the area is, according to a cleanup specialist, of little concern at this time. Mark Else will help write the County grant to stabilize the building.

Upcoming Meeting – April 1, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn: Anthony Ganim, seconded – Jean Ambrose.

Respectfully Submitted: Barbara ten Broeke, Alternate Secretary

Ec: Robert Vornlocker, Township Manager  
Ann Marie McCarhy, Township Clerk  
Mark Healey, Director of Planning  
Vince Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer