

Franklin Township Historic Preservation Advisory Commission
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
July 7, 2015

Location

Large Conference Room, Franklin Township Municipal Building, 475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Barbara Lawrence at 7:33 pm in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law of 1975.

Attendance

Present

Members: Thomas Gale (7:40), Anthony Ganim, Susan Goldey, Robert LaCorte, Barbara Lawrence, Barbara ten Broeke

Alternates:

Staff: Vincent Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer

Council Liaison: Councilman Chase

Historian: Bob Mettler

Absent

Members: Frank Aiello, Jean Ambrose, Andrew Burian, Nancy Hohnstine, Joanne Kaiser

Guests

Denise Halil, guest accompanying Turhan Halil

Turhan Halil, Contractor, for 40 Franklin Street, East Millstone, NJ

Kathryn Kopp, Esq., Attorney representing Monmouth Real Estate Investment Corporation for 1135 Easton Avenue, Somerset, NJ

Nicholas Stewart, General Contractor representing Monmouth Real Estate Investment Corporation for 1135 Easton Avenue, Somerset, NJ

Laura Strong, homeowner for 1101 Canal Road, Griggstown, NJ

Formal Reviews

1. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) application submitted by Monmouth Real Estate Investment Corporation, 3499 Route 9 North, Suite 3C, Freehold, NJ, requesting approval to replace two existing rooftop AC units with three new units and modify plans for the previously approved new entrance doorway with awning to conform with ADA requirements via a proposed handicapped accessible ramp with an enlarged awning and new parking space at 1135 Easton Ave, Somerset, NJ, Block 259, Lot 79.02, Zoned GB, located within the D&R Canal Local Historic District. File No. 15-000025.

The Commission heard testimony from Katheryn Kopp, Esq. and Nicholas Stewart and reviewed the CoA application; the 6/18/2015 version of a set of architectural drawings prepared by The Montoro Architectural Group, 150 West Saddle River Road, Saddle River, NJ, that include sheets T-1 with location maps, general information, and notes, A-1 with a door and ramp floor plan and an awning/door header framing plan, A-1a with sections and elevations with notes, A-2 with section details, and A-2a with section and plan details door elevation with notes; a set of architectural drawings prepared by Consulting Engineers Collaborative, Inc., 730 Boulevard, Kenilworth, NJ,

dated 4/17/15, that include sheets S-1 that shows proposed modifications to the existing roof framing plan and S-2 that shows the proposed header framing plan; a set of site plan drawings prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates, 32 Brower lane, Hillsborough, NJ, dated 6/18/15, that include sheets 1 that indicates the location of the proposed entrance pad and stairs, H. C. ramp and H. C. parking space and 2 which details the entrance pad and stairs, H. C. ramp and parking space; and four pages of product information for the proposed Trane AC units.

In May, the Commission approved an application to construct a new entrance doorway and install an awning over the new doorway in the same location as currently being proposed in this application at the mid-20th century single story L-shaped strip mall that fronts on Easton Avenue and backs up to the D&R Canal. At the May meeting, we learned the new doorway would allow access to a new dialysis office that was proposed for the vacant space located at the intersection of the two wings of the strip mall. The proposed doorway was to be a secondary access used only occasionally by mainly special needs patients and was to be located in a nook created by the offset intersection of the front wing with of the rear section of the strip mall about halfway along the long sidewall that parallels the southeast property line that is shared with the neighboring commercial complex with several standalone businesses and a linear strip. The doorway was to be at grade with the parking lot though it was suggested that the paving at the new doorway might need to be modified to create a gentle slope to the door.

The approved application proposed a pair of new 6'x7' aluminum and glass doors, one an ADA compliant automatic door, the other manual, that match other doors in the complex. The original awning proposed was a simple shed design with covered sides. It was to be 20' wide, 6.5' tall, project 8' from the building and have an internal metal truss system supported by two 4"x4" metal posts at the outer corners. A solid black material was proposed for the awning cover. Additionally there were to be new emergency light and horn units installed beside the new doorway which match existing units.

Mr. Stewart explained that the need to modify the approved design for the doorway relates to the fact that the interior floor is higher than expected and will require the doorway to be elevated about 2.25' feet above the parking lot. He explained that to continue to accommodate the special needs patients as planned, they will need to build a 27' long ADA compliant ramp with a 10'x10' entrance pad at the doorway. The entrance pad will require approximately three steps and the previously approved awning canopy will need to be enlarged to cover the new entrance pad, the new stairs, and the new ADA ramp. The enlarged awning will be 43' 4" wide, 6' 6" tall, and project 13' 10" from the building. Structurally, the enlarged awning will be similar to the previously approved design but will require three more support posts and will have an internal vinyl soffit. The new ramp, entrance pad and stairs will require guardrails that, as proposed, will be painted metal and the enlarged awning will receive four soffit mounted lighting fixtures. A new handicap compliant parking space will be installed next to the ramp with associated wheel stop, safety bollards, striping, signage, and parking lot grading to access the ramp.

The Commission learned that the proposed roof mounted AC units will be installed over and serve the dialysis office. The proposal calls for two 7.5 ton and one 20 ton units to replace the two existing roof mounted units. The Commission wanted to know the height of the new units but neither the product information sheets nor Ms. Kopp and Ms. Stewart could provide that information.

No one from the public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made (Ms. ten Broeke) and seconded (Mr. LaCorte) to **approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to modify plans for the previously approved new entrance doorway and awning to conform with ADA requirements via a new handicapped accessible ramp with an enlarged awning and parking space as submitted** and was approved by unanimous voice vote with one abstention (Mr. Gale who was not present for the whole hearing). A motion was made (Mr. LaCorte) and seconded (Ms. Goldey) to **conditionally approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to replace two existing rooftop AC units with three new units as submitted as long as the installed height of the new units is no more than the current units** and was approved by unanimous voice vote with one abstention (Mr. Gale who was not present for the whole hearing). The property itself is a non-contributing property as are the properties to either side. It was felt that the proposals as approved would have limited negative impact on the historic D&R Canal and State Park at the rear and on the local historic district as a whole.

2. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness application submitted by Jayna Sisbarro requesting approval to install a new deck behind her house at 40 Franklin Street, East Millstone, NJ, Block 66, Lot 10, Zoned R-10, located within the East Millstone Local Historic District. File No. 15-00026

The Commission heard testimony from Mr. Halil and reviewed the CoA application; a set of undated and unsigned architectural drawings with three sheets showing the front, right and left elevations of the proposed deck with construction details; a set of four undated printed color photographs showing the four elevations of the house; and the c.1980 Individual Historic Structures Survey Form from the East Millstone Historic District State and National Register Nomination.

Mr. Halil explained that the proposed 25'x15' deck would be located behind the house, between the existing back steps from the kitchen on the left, which will be rebuilt as part of this application, and the Bilco door to the basement on the right. He said it would be constructed of pressure treated lumber and be about 30" above grade. There will be 36" high wood perimeter railing with 1.5"x1.5" vertical wood spindles installed 4" on center. The Commission noted that since the deck was centered in back of the house and did not extend all the way to either side of the house, it should not be visible from the front. Ms. Lawrence reviewed the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation for decks noting that it was recommended they be removable features located at the rear of the building that did not harm defining features. It was felt that the project as proposed met those guidelines.

The Commission reviewed the significance and age of the house. While the survey form lists the house as a 2.5 story, 5 bay wide by 1 bay deep, center hall, vernacular with Italianate influences, with notable architectural significance, built c. 1873, Mr. Mettler said he believes the house is older, possibly c. 1850. Mr. Gale asked about the wing on the right that looked like an office and Mr. Mettler said he believed it was once a millenary shop.

No one from the public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made (Ms. Goldey) and seconded (Mr. LaCorte) to **recommend approval of the application as submitted** as it was determined that the proposal should have little adverse effect

on the historic value of the property or on the East Millstone Local Historic District and nearby historic properties. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness application submitted by Laura Strong and Eric Dutaud requesting approval to install three new skylights in the roof at 1101 Canal Road, Princeton, NJ, Block 11.01, Lot 78, Zoned CP, located within the D&R Canal Local Historic District. File No. 15-00027

The Commission heard testimony from Ms. Strong and reviewed the CoA application; four pages of product information for the Velux skylights; a set of four undated printed color photographs showing the four elevations of the house; and the c.1980 Individual Historic Structures Survey Form from the Griggstown Historic District State and National Register Nomination.

Ms. Strong explained that they want to install three 22 1/2"x46 7/8" skylights in the second story roof of the slightly lower wing section on the right as viewed from the rear. She said the skylights were sized to fit between the existing roof framing. The Commission observed that there were already skylights installed on the second story roof of the slightly higher section on the left as viewed from the rear as well as on the one story addition attached to the rear of the wing section on the right as viewed from the rear.

The history of the building was then discussed. From the National Register nomination page, the Commission learned that the house is a c. early 19th century, 2 story, side hall, 3 bays wide by 2 bays deep, with a c. 1781 3 bay wide wing, having a vernacular style with federal influence. The nomination page also notes the building's architectural significance is outstanding and its historical significance relates to the period when the basement housed the Black Horse Tavern, run by Benjamin Skillman during the Revolutionary War. The survey notes the tavern's license was revoked in 1809 due to a petition filed by local citizens complaining of public drunkenness and rowdiness caused by the tavern. Ms. Strong suggested that the building may be older, possibly c. 1751, but the older wing has no fireplaces so believes it may have been rebuilt after a fire. Indeed, the nomination page indicates that the building was rebuilt after a fire in 1973.

Ms. Lawrence reviewed that Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation for roofs that reads, in part, "changing the configuration of a roof by adding new features such as dormer windows, vents, or skylights so that the historic character is diminished" is not recommended. When new uses are proposed, the Standards recommends "[d]esigning additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features". It was noted that there were already skylights in the rear and Mr. Dominach said that in his experience, the Newton HPC generally approved applications when the alterations were in back of the building and not visible by the public.

No public chose to comment on this application.

A motion was made (Mr. LaCorte) and seconded (Mr. Ganim) to **approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application to install three new skylights in the roof as submitted**. The motion passed by majority voice vote (Yes - Gale, Ganim, LaCorte, Lawrence; No – Goldey, ten Broeke,) as the majority felt that the proposal should have little new adverse effect on the historic value of the property or on the D&R Canal Local Historic District and nearby historic properties.

Informal Review

There were no informal reviews.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence to report.

Public Discussion

There was no one from the public that wished to speak.

Approval of minutes

Approval of the June 2015 meeting minutes

The minutes had not been distributed so approval was postponed.

Reports

1. Township Owned Historic Properties

Ms. Lawrence reported that we received no report from project manager Tiffany Delaney and that Township Manager Vornlocker had not responded but it was understood that he had taken some time off recently.

2. Township Open Space Advisory Committee

Mr. LaCorte reported that there was no OPAC meeting in June.

3. Historic Resource Survey Committee

Ms. Lawrence reported that she would join Mr. Gale to make a test run in Kingston using the RuskinArc app once personal vacations were over.

Unfinished Business

1. Revision of the Code regarding requirements for documentation if demolition is approved.

There was no progress to report other than that Mr. Dominach would be working on it.

New Business

1. Membership in the National Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions

Ms. Lawrence reported that for an annual fee of \$150 all members would receive membership benefits that include digital copies of newsletters and other publications. A motion was made (Mr. Gale) and seconded (Mr. LaCorte) to use funds from the Commission's budget to seek membership and passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Honeyman House

Councilman Chase reported that the Honeyman House on Canal Road at the foot of Bunker Hill Road was for sale. Members suggested that it would be nice if an organization could take ownership to use the lower portion of the house to protect and promote the buildings significance.

3. Higgins House

Councilman Chase reported that the spa business that had been in the building since it was restored was closing. He wanted to be sure that the preservation easement the Township held on the property would continue to be recognized.

4. Application checklist

There was a pre-meeting discussion on the completeness of applications. Ms. Lawrence will draft a checklist.

Upcoming meetings

Next meeting – August 4, 2015

Adjournment

At 8:25 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

Action Items:

1. Mr. Gale, Ms. Lawrence and ??? will try RuskinArc in Kingston, without pre-populating data. We can have the register nomination with us on tablet or print. Date – Mr. Gale to set up when he returns from vacation.
2. Ms. Lawrence will draft outline of applicant check list. Any volunteers to help?
3. Mr. Dominach will incorporate historic register nomination pages for future applications.
4. Ms. Lawrence will contact Manager Vornlocker re attending our next meeting to report on the status of work on Township owned historic sites.