

CHATHAM BOROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
 January 19, 2016 7:30 p.m.
 Reorganization Meeting

Minutes

Chairman Colleen Foley call this Reorganization Meeting of January 19, 2016 to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Upper Level, Chatham Municipal Building. Chrmn. Foley read aloud the following notice:

Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et. seq., adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by including same in the Annual Notice, copies of which were posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board, on the main floor of the Municipal Building, filed in the office of the Borough Clerk, emailed to the Chatham Courier on January 7, 2016.

Names	Present	Absent
Colleen Foley (Chrmn.)	X	
James Greener	X	
Mindy Pitonyak	X	
Bill Tackaberry	X	
Patricia Gavalakis		X
Eleanor Smith	X	
Frank Truilo	X	
Council Member Peter Hoffman	X	
Liz Holler, Rec. Secretary	X	

Public Comment

This was held later in the meeting.

Reorganization Resolutions

All Commissioners present unanimously approved the following resolutions:

Resolution #16-01: Resolution Establishing the Historic Preservation Commission's Annual Meeting Schedule for 2016

Resolution #16-02: Resolution Designating the Official Newspapers for the Public of Legal Notices for the Historic Preservation Commission,

Resolution #16-03: Resolution Appointing the Officers of the Historic Preservation Commission for the Calendar Year 2016:

Colleen Foley	-	Chairperson
James Greener	-	Vice Chairperson
Liz Holler	-	Recording Secretary

The following Commissioners were sworn in by the Recording Secretary, who is also a Notary Public:

Eleanor Smith	-	First Alternate Member
Bill Tackaberry	-	Regular Member
Frank Truilo	-	Second Alternate Member

HPC Flag Award

Ms. Foley noted that the Commission decided to present the award to Parrott Mill (47 Main Street) and Sitar Realty. However, the Commission still has to decide on which Council Meeting to give the award. Also, a volunteer is needed to write a history on the Parrott Mill building. Ms. Holler volunteered to do this research. Council Member Hoffman will relay the HPC's request for a Council Meeting date slot to present the award. Mr. Tackaberry and Ms. Foley will present the award together, representing the HPC.

Cellular Facilities at 97 Main Street

Chrmn. Foley noted that the Commission had wanted to see the actual plans from the applicant. The plans are still not ready as of today.

Stanley Church Property

Chrmn. Foley recalled that just before Christmas, she had sent a letter to the developer inviting him to come to an HPC meeting and discuss his plans. She distributed copies of the letter to Commissioners and members of the audience. No response, as of today, has been received from the developer.

Chrmn. Foley noted that Commissioners have received a copy of a letter dated Dec. 21st 2015 from Preserve Fairmount addressed to the Reverend Jocelyn Emerson of Stanley Congregational Church.

Chrmn. Foley suggested that Commissioner Mindy Pitonyak recuse herself from any discussion or vote on this matter, since she is a member of the Preserve Fairmount group and lives close to the subject property. Commissioner Pitonyak agreed and has recused herself from all HPC discussions regarding the Stanley property.

Chrmn. Foley asked Commissioners whether the Commission should send a letter to the Planning Bd. and Zoning Bd., asking them to refer any plans for this property to the Commission. After reviewing the plans, the Commission could then give an advisory opinion on these plans to the Boards.

Mr. Tackaberry believed that would be a worthwhile action.

Council Member Hoffman pointed out that as a former Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, comments from the HPC on applications are always helpful to the Zoning Board. Although he asked Ms. Foley if the HPC actually had jurisdiction over this particular parcel of land in question.

Chrmn. Foley answered that the HPC's jurisdiction, in terms of structures, is limited to the Historic District, which is essentially Main Street. The HPC also has to weigh in on preservation issues that affect the community in general terms. Ms. Foley noted that Fairmount Avenue has an intact streetscape. The HPC had recently given a written opinion on the Callahan application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

After further discussion, Chrmn. Foley said she will go ahead and draft this letter to the Zoning Board and Planning Board. Commissioners will have a chance to review the letter and give suggestions before it is officially sent.

Chrmn. Foley asked the audience if they wished to give comments at this point.

Michael Dean, 181 North Passaic Ave., urged Commissioners to take a serious look at this proposal for the Stanley Church property. He suggested in the future, any letters that the Commission sends out on this matter, Stanley Church should be copied in. Chrmn. Foley felt that would be an excellent idea.

Graeme Dewar, 95 Fairmount Ave., reported that the group, Preserve Fairmount, has written Stanley Congregational Church, inviting them to a meeting to discuss this issue. Stanley Church has refused this invitation. Preserve Fairmount wants to ensure that the whole community knows what is going on with this Stanley property. A website has been created by Preserve Fairmount. Legal representation has also been hired by Preserve Fairmount. Mr. Dewar wanted to make sure the municipal bodies know that there will be strong opposition to these proposed plans.

Mr. Dewar noted that he had written to Mayor Harris asking him to meet with Preserve Fairmount on this matter. Mayor Harris had declined.

Council Member Hoffman said he can't speak on behalf of Mayor Harris; however, he feels that Mayor Harris is allowing the correct municipal process to play itself out. If/when an application is actually submitted, it will be reviewed by the Borough Board of the appropriate jurisdiction. The Board will determine what variances would be needed. There will be time for a public hearing, when the audience is invited to question the applicant's witnesses and offer their own testimony. It is wise, at this point in time, for the Mayor and Borough Council to stay out of this matter.

Council Member Hoffman noted that the variances will probably be significant ones. Council Member Hoffman assured the audience that the Zoning Board will take this application extremely seriously.

A member of the audience asked whether the Mayor had met with the developer.

Chrmn. Foley and Council Member Hoffman answered that they didn't know. However, Council Member Hoffman felt that Mayor Harris was very aware of what was happening.

Mr. Dewar thanked the Commission for their time and interest on this matter.

249 Main Street: Application for Exterior Alterations

The following came forward:

Geoffrey Gogan, the architect for the applicant
Baldo Dattolo, the landlord for 249 Main Street

Mr. Gogan distributed photos of the site, 249 Main Street.

Mr. Greener noted that this property appeared before the HPC last year for an antenna installation by Verizon. The Commission is familiar with the site.

Mr. Gogan stated that the applicant will be seeking a Change of Permitted Use variance. They have appeared before the Borough Sign Committee for the proposed signage. Mr. Gogan stated that the furniture/interior design operation will be leaving. A brick oven pizza business will be going in. Some seating will be installed. The business will partially occupy the basement. The basement, which is currently unfinished, will be made into a light storage/prep area. Mr. Gogan described the plans for the ground floor.

Regarding the exterior, Mr. Gogan stated that the existing wood paneling will be removed. He believed that the original brickwork, shown above the storefront, continues behind this wood paneling. In the signage area, the brick will be restored. Almond colored lettering will then be applied right onto the brick. The existing goose-neck lighting will be removed and replaced with similar goose-neck type fixtures over the proposed lettering. The lettering will be three-dimensional and applied to the brick. There will be no illumination from the back.

Mr. Gogan stated that if, by chance, the original brick, in the sign area, is not in good condition, there is brick available on the market, very similar to the original brick. The applicant can find a mason to make the frontage look as original as possible. As for now, Mr. Gogan said he will leave the doors and windows as they are. He wasn't sure of the original arrangement. He offered to drop the storefront's window sill to match the Crescent Jeweler's sill.

Mr. Greener felt lowering the sill would be advantageous and inexpensive. He and Mr. Truilo recognized what they felt was the original sill line.

Mr. Gogan asked that the Commission give some flexibility to accommodate existing conditions. Mr. Gogan said he wasn't sure what will be found under the fake brick currently in place. He felt, however, that the sills could be lowered if the Commission so desired.

Chrmn. Foley said she'd like to see the bricks restored, if possible.

Mr. Gogan indicated that a lot depends on what is revealed when/if the openings are made regarding the windows. Mr. Greener suggested probes could be helpful to see the placement of the original sills. Mr. Greener took a guess that the sills were originally lower down. Mr. Gogan stated that these probes could be done,

and the findings could be reported to the Commission and Planning Board. Mr. Greener questioned if there were any photos of this building in its original form. The building was constructed in the 1920s. (Later in the week, a 1920s photo was found of the building).

Mr. Greener asked if a new sign was being proposed for Crescent Jewelers. Mr. Gogan answered yes; however, it's possible the Crescent Jewelers side of the building will be focused on a little later on.

Mr. Greener asked Mr. Gogan if his client would consider cleaning the exterior bricks before undertaking a masonry matching. He felt a good cleaning would uncover the building's true colors.

Mr. Gogan stated that he and his client would be glad to do such a cleaning. Mr. Gogan felt that the mortar, so far, seemed in good condition.

Ms. Foley approved of the idea of removing the existing paneling. She would be curious to see the condition of the brick under the paneling. Ms. Foley agreed with Mr. Greener's suggestion of cleaning the building. She agreed with the proposed goose-neck lighting. She asked for comments from the other Commissioners.

Mr. Greener believed that the existing window proportions are probably not the original arrangement. There's an opportunity for the client to achieve an attractive pedestrian level for the windows.

Mr. Truilo pointed out that large windows are good from a streetscape perspective. Also, more natural light would be allowed into the store.

Ms. Foley asked if all the Commissioners tonight were in favor of removing the existing wood paneling on the storefront. Also, either a restoration could be done for the storefront or an alternate material be used for the brick. All Commissioners voted in favor of these suggestions. Commissioners also approved of the probing process to determine changes to the windowsills.

To Mr. Gogan and Mr. Dattolo, Mr. Greener stated that if such a probe was undertaken, the Commission would be happy to look over the results and give their feedback before their next meeting (Feb. 16th). Mr. Gogan agreed, saying this could all be done by e-mail. Mr. Greener pointed out that some of the

Commissioners who work and or live nearby 249 Main Street could stop by and take a look at what the probe reveals.

Mr. Gogan agreed to notify Commissioners of the findings of the probe. He will also let the Commission know what he and his client will then propose with these findings.

The Commissioners voted in favor of all the agreed upon actions.

Resolution #16-04

The Meeting minutes of December 15, 2015 were approved as amended.

Before adjourning, Commissioners thanked their Council Liaison Peter Hoffman for attending and participating in tonight's meeting. They sincerely looked forward to working with him.

At 8:30 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 16, 2016, 7:30 p.m., Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary