

MINUTES of the October 15, 2019 MEETING of the Commission

**October 15, 2019
Adopted: 3/17/2020**

Members Present: Bob Booher, Gail Littlefield, Mimi Styles, Wendy Harris, David Stopak, Darrell Anderson, and Kirk Greenway.

Attendees: Robert Johnson
Kirk Greenway took minutes.

Approval of Agenda and Adoption of Minutes

The proposed agenda was adopted unanimously. Minutes were discussed and following edits adopted. Attachments were to be incorporated as part of formatted minutes.

Project Review

A 12x20 foot shed proposed for 342 Ridge Road was reviewed. It would have asphalt shingles, vertical Duratemp siding (resembles cedar) and located at the back of the lot.

Old Business:

Lower Field Proposed Road

A kick off meeting as part of a broader Crabbs Branch Road development effort had been recently conducted by the County DOT. HPC members were in attendance. Bob Booher mentioned historical impacts, and Wendy Harris will gather concerns about the project. A major archaeological site is located in the forested buffer area between WG and the lower field. Visual viewsheds in the upper field (Conservation Meadow) were shown (attachment) which is incorporated into the district. Darrell Anderson shared that the bikeway/roadway studies had been discussed for at least six years. Wendy Harris stated that she heard the County had consultants funded for one year to gather input, and she expressed concern that once the planning stage is over, there might not be the possibility of effectively influence the project. While the bike path proposed is a welcome addition, the road is not. It goes through two wetlands, and has been on the County Masterplan since 1971. The bike pathway is mentioned in the WG master plan. The road would connect Amity and Crabbs Branch. David Stopak asked why the road was being built, the original 1981 study. Gail Littlefield stated that none of the reasons may be still in effect. There may have been a push from emergency services for the road as an egress, and it may have taken traffic off of Railroad Street, Darrell Anderson noted. He also noted that he thought all of the discussion so far had concerned the bike path, not the road. Wendy Harris added that it is important this group knows that the town does not want this road, but it likes the bike path. It was suggested to incorporate the bike path into the Master Plan. The next meeting of the master plan study group will probably be in January 2020.

National Register Nomination Progress:

Peter Kurtz of the Maryland Historic Trust presented the Nomination to the Governor's Council on Historic Preservation. He reported the Council's recommendations that the nomination be forwarded with some modifications. The properties to the South were either already part of the

B&O Railroad metropolitan branch historical district or they had insufficient historical integrity and so could not be included (for example, Hershey's Restaurant). While the commercial corner could be included, the three silos and the railroad siding along with the humpback bridge were not recommended by the Council for inclusion. The conservation meadow, lower Ridge Road, and the East and West woods or of the other homes of more recent American vernaculars were accepted; Kurtz stated that there was no question of extending the period of significance to 1969. 501 Brown Street which is near Railroad Street and property line was not recommended for inclusion but there is a strong case to include it. Bob and Wendy would communicate this point to Daria, the consultant, for a finished work. Maryland Historic Trust would not forward the documents to National Park Service until Robinson Associates revised the Nomination documents. It had also not yet been presented to either Gaithersburg or Montgomery County. Gail Littlefield requested that a bound reference volume be created from the finished, accepted nomination materials. It would be needed for reviews.

Comprehensive Plan update:

The Comprehensive Plan Working Group completed Section 6. They intend now to move into Section 7 Water Resources Element. Section 8 Commercial Corner has input written by Gail Littlefield. Bob Booher suggested that the plan needs a vision piece on what the Commercial Corner might become. In addition, the border committee might envision what could be done with each section of the town's border including Railroad Park. Railroad Park is in WG. With section 7 going through revision still, there is a possibility of more thoughts being put in regarding places, views, viewsheds, and streetscapes.

Joint meeting with the PC and MAHDC

A tentative response was given from the administration of the Maryland Historic Commission. Two items were thought to be of interest: demolition and the definition of a dormer (as compared to a half story). A half story definition exists, however not finalized. A dormer definition does not currently exist in a workable form. Clearly, neighborhood compatibility is an important consideration with the design of a dormer. To find out what would be normal as a dormer, 225 roof tops could be mapped. The MAHDC is not ready to commit to a meeting regarding the demolition question. The possibility of writing a demolition ordinance was discussed briefly.

Archive Report:

No discussion.

Design Guidelines

No discussion.

Bulletin Material

No items ready.

University of Maryland Historic Preservation report

Gail Littlefield shared that she was the first graduate from their program. She received an award recently and gave a five minute talk when she did. She shared pictures of the street sign project. The UMD Associate Dean came to visit WG to see its historic and cultural landscape. The dean also looked at electronic resources. Four students will come to WG to do see if they want to do research on WG later in the week.

PC Meeting Report

412 4th Avenue was discussed. The addition for the house materials did not include a boundary survey. Stairs coming off the side of the house violated the alley set back rules.

There will be a public hearing about an amendment that ordinary construction or maintenance of a driveway would not require a permit. At some point, it is thought that standards on driveways will need to be developed.

Council Report

Darrell provided a written summary of the October Town Council Meeting. The alley behind 8 the Circle was discussed. An ordinance for small wireless communication (5G) was passed which will ensure the town is ready when in 2-3 years the new transmitters will be deployed on town property. Individual residences will not be affected by the ordinance. A new article 18 was added to the town charter.

New Business

Gail Littlefield will submit an application for an award for the street sign project. including pictures of volunteers working. A lot of work was done at Susan's house and the award can be tailored to the project. Gail will work to complete the application by October 30, 2019.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm. The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 19, at 7:30pm in the McCathran Hall meeting room.

Signed:

Kirk Greenway