

**MINUTES of the June 20, 2023 MEETING of the Commission
(via Zoom)**

Adopted: July 18, 2023

Members Present: The meeting began at approximately 7:35 p.m. Bob Booher, Marilyn Frey, David Stopak, Mimi Styles, and Rob Gilmore, TC liaison were present. Wendy Harris and Jeff McCrehan were unable to participate. Bill Earl participated in the discussion of his project at 103 Brown Street.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved.

Adoption of Minutes

The Minutes of the May 16 meeting were unanimously approved.

Review of Projects

103 Brown Street – Bill Earl discussed his June 14 letter to the Planning Commission that requested approval of an amendment to his previously submitted plans for 103 Brown Street. He proposes to add an open porch across the entire front of the home that would wrap around the existing flat-roofed one-story additions.

Extending the horizontal plane of the front (Brown Street) elevation of the home by the inclusion of two 6' wraparounds would increase the perceived mass of the home; HPC suggested not wrapping the porch around the two one-story additions but rather suggested a larger porch facing Chestnut Avenue, directly behind (and of a similar depth as) the existing one-story study. A deeper porch should also be more usable to the homeowners.

On the front elevation, slightly pulling back the porches at the two one-story side additions will provide a visual break. Various options for porch rooflines were also discussed, including techniques to give the two additions an appearance of “filled in” porches, commonly seen throughout town.

Bill said he would pass to his professional engineer, who is drawing up the plans, the two marked up plans that Bob had sketched. Final elevation drawings and building permit application should be forwarded to HPC so that its Preliminary Review may be updated or considered final.

WSSC Sewer Replacement - Chestnut Avenue – This work was considered an emergency, so the issuance of a Public Ways & Property permit was expedited and HPC review was waived. Work is now underway. Mayor Compton and Georgette Cole surveyed the area with WSSC reps, discussed tree removal, and stated expectations about returning the walkway to its original condition.

302 Ridge Road Subdivision – Bob reminded us that a revised zoning ordinance now enables the homeowners to subdivide this property, and it is expected that the homeowner will soon submit their application. HPC’s January 12, 2020, document outlining four conditions to ensure

compatibility of new construction was also reviewed. The conditions are similar to those applied when the nearby former WSSC property on Ridge Road was developed.

120 Chestnut Avenue – The former Kenvin property, vacant for many years, was sold last year, and then sold again a few months ago. A contractor has now gutted the home without required permits. All windows, doors and porch flooring have been removed, and plywood has been added over the siding. Montgomery County has issued a stop-work order, and Bob reported that Mayor Compton is considering issuing a Town stop-work order. The removal of at least four mature trees from the front yard (Chestnut Avenue) was also discussed. The new owner submitted a site plan and floor plans to the Town, but no building permit application nor elevation drawings have been filed.

Whetstone Spring Restoration

Joan Mahaffey and Patty Klein have selected the stone for the project and it has been delivered to the maintenance shed area. No site work has been started, but it is planned that restoration will be completed by the 150th anniversary celebration weekend, August 10-13.

150th-Year Celebration

Robinson & Associates NR Presentation – Daria’s presentation on Saturday, June 24 has been scheduled for 2pm. Bob reported he had received her draft presentation just before our meeting and will forward it to members. Dick Cavicchi’s request for Daria’s contact information in order to provide RASEC input was also discussed. The consensus was that Daria’s presentation is planned to focus on the Town’s National Register Nomination process. The “National Register Nomination Related Studies” assembled by HPC in 2019-2020 (often referred to as the “Appendices”) might be a more appropriate place for additional information about the Town’s racial history. This bound document is available in the Town office. In any case, Bob will discuss the RASEC issue with Daria. Hiring Daria to create the “racial history” document could be possible. Bob will have a conversation with Dick.

Displays will be set up in the Hall to include old plats, photographs, and posters. Bob will work with Charlie on the AV aspect, and David has offered to help Bob with set up in the Hall. Mimi will also arrange for refreshments and set up (beverages and sweets). The honorarium for Daria was also discussed.

Fence and Gateway Info Panels – nothing to report.

Missing buildings layout/posters – We have posters of the Auditorium, Tabernacle and Hotel. We’d also like to have posters as well of the train station and the Girl’s Athletic Club. Bob will try to locate photos of these in Town Archives. Bob and David will work together on stakeout (working around David’s August vacation schedule).

Walking Tour handouts – Bob will prepare these, and Jeff volunteered to help. The tour will go up Grove Avenue to the Auditorium site and then on to the Circle. Bob plans that the handout will include old photos of cottages that will be passed on the walk, a map and possibly a timeline. Bob would like to see “old timers” to come and share recollections. Marilyn referred to past round table recollections of folks who had grown up in Town – we’ll try to organize another one during the weekend, perhaps at the Circle where the tour ends.

Masonry restoration – Bob has contacted a mason who will come out to evaluate the various masonry items, including the fireplace, that need restoration. He will prepare a report, \$600, that will give us a price for restoration. If it's under \$5,000, we'll probably just move forward. If it's over \$5,000, we'd ask him to prepare bid documents.

Pat's Memorial Booklet – Bob saw Pat; they didn't discuss the memorial booklet, but they did speak about the table of materials from the archives that she plans to set up. Phil Winters will also have a table, as will Sylvia Appleby for display on Sunday. Bob also spoke about making available a map marking all the houses that had been moved around as well as a map marking all the houses that Major Walker built.

Craig English Poster – Bob reported that a meeting with Craig is scheduled for Thursday to finalize details of the collage poster that includes his silkscreens of various Washington Grove cottages. It is planned that the posters will likely be sold for \$25 each, unframed, as a fundraiser.

Preservation/Demolition Ordinance

David discussed steps to remove the HPC Review process from the building permit application process and presented a document he had drafted. The "Steps to Obtain a Building Permit" from the Town website with his comments was also reviewed. It remains to be decided what the "review document" will be called. The goal is to bring homeowners into the HPC as early in the process as possible to discuss their plans and to sever the HPC Review from the PC building permit application. The benefit of the homeowner personally participating in the review was discussed. It should also be made clear that the advice is directed to the homeowner (and not to the PC). The HPC Review will be provided to the applicant, and then it will be up to the applicant to submit it with their building permit application. A more formal process to ensure that HPC's Review indeed relates to the plans submitted with the building permit application may be necessary.

The process for HPC evaluating a "preservation exception" (for changes to contributing resources outside zoning regulation parameters) was also discussed. The process for the PC to approve an exception proposed by the HPC will also require thought (consistency and justification).

Bob has made some notes on the process. He and David plan to meet separately and will contact Steve Allan, MHT and Fred Stachura, MAHDC for suggestions on procedures and ordinance changes.

Planning Commission Meeting Bob did not attend the June meeting, but he did touch base with PC about their discussions. The ADU issue predominated; they plan to review Washington, DC legislation about ADUs.

Bulletin Material

Mimi reported that the piece based on Robinson's Historic Context Report about Chautauqua Architecture & Planning that had been planned for the June bulletin did not make the deadline; it's in Kathy's hands now and should appear in the July issue.

Correction to Architectural Survey

David reported no further action on this, but he should make progress before our next meeting.

Town Council Meeting Report

Rob Gilmore reported that there was nothing particular interest to the HPC at the last TC meeting.

ADU Draft Ordinance

The document had been circulated to HPC before the meeting. The most important aspect for HPC is the scale of the ADU. Detached structures could be modeled on the modest footprint of original cottages. Additions to the house, obviously would make the house larger, and mass and scale will be a concern.

Open Meeting Act training

The expectation that HPC participate in the self-paced training was reviewed. Completion certificates are to be forwarded to Kathy for Town records.

Other Topics

Bob mentioned other items that Pat had located in the Archives – specifically original large maps with a canvas cover and Paige Millburn’s original Grove Gatherings. Marilynn will contact Chris Reber about making available additional copies of his “reprint” at the 150th celebration. Marilynn also mentioned that she has additional copies of Sylvia Horan’s book and some of Phil Edwards’ books are still available in the Town office.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 18, at 7:30 pm via Zoom.