

MINUTES of the July 16, 2024, MEETING of the Commission  
(via Zoom)

Adopted August 20, 2024

**Members Present:** The meeting began at approximately 7:30 p.m. Bob Booher, Bill Earl, David Stopak, Mimi Styles and Sam Suzich (alternate) were present. Wendy Harris was unable to attend. Georgette Cole, PC Chair attended, as did Barbara Raimondo, TC liaison. Tim Carle of Caruso Homes participated in the review session for 328 Ridge Road.

**Approval of Agenda**

Minor modifications to the proposed agenda were made and it was unanimously approved.

**Adoption of Minutes**

Minor modifications to the draft Minutes of the June meeting were made and unanimously approved.

**Review Session – 204 Ridge Road**

HPC received the final drawings that accompanied the building permit application dated July 9 for the Hines/Johnson residence at 204 Ridge Road. The new drawings indeed reflected the homeowners’ agreement to accept the Preliminary Review recommendation to lower the roofline of the new entrance vestibule. Other changes are limited to window and door details, which remain compatible with the existing home and with the historic district. The Planning Commission and the homeowners will be advised that the preliminary review may be considered final; additional review by HPC is unnecessary.

**Review Session – 328 Ridge Road**

Mel Golden’s representative, Tim Carle of Caruso Homes, joined the meeting for review of revised plans for proposed construction at 328 Ridge Road. Bob invited Tim to address how the suggestions outlined during HPC’s June meeting (and forwarded to him by email on June 20) had been incorporated or evaluated. Mimi will write up the review.

**Coordination with PC Permitting Review**

HPC had started work towards coordination with the PC in the permit review process in the past, but it was set aside; these efforts should be resumed.

**Design Guideline Update**

In the past, Wendy, Mimi and archivist Pat Patula had accumulated and reviewed design guidelines for various historic districts. However, Washington Grove differs from other historic districts in that ours comprises relatively few houses, many styles, and an abundance of eclecticism. Bob confirmed that it is unlikely that Pat will be able to participate in future efforts. Enlisting the assistance of Robinson & Associates could be considered. Bob, Bill, and Mimi plan to get together to resurrect the effort to update our design guidelines to reflect the current NR status of our historic district. Including photographs or sketches of “original examples” and

“successful projects” could be helpful. Also, the design guidelines may want to recognize the various “neighborhoods” as they have been briefly identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Correction to Architectural Survey**

David reviewed the status of the project. At our last meeting, he had suggested that he would ask Christine about the number of visits the “House Histories” pages receive. The questions were raised – who is interested and what benefit will an updated House Histories yield. The potential inclusion of current and historical photographs was again discussed. Bill offered to speak with Christine about the space constraints for photographs that David mentioned. Would migration to a Google drive allow more flexibility? A wiki that is not limited to a single gatekeeper might also be an option.

### **Bulletin Material**

Mimi has been in touch with Marilynn Frey about her “Fireplace Memories” piece – Marilynn is soliciting memories from others who grew up in Town, and she has received a contribution from Phil Edwards. We should be on track for an insertion in the August Bulletin.

### **Planning Commission Meeting**

Bill reported that most discussion related to the Commercial Corner and options for ordinance revision that would expand its potential uses, for example “mixed use” including residential. Restoration of the Odd Fellows Hall as part of the redevelopment remains a goal. Especially if redevelopment includes a second floor for the single-story buildings in the Commercial Corner, HPC weigh-in on compatibility issues will be important during the design process.

### **Town Council Meeting Report**

Barbara reported that the TC is currently reviewing stormwater management proposals and contractors. Bob mentioned that HPC involvement would come into play when Public Ways & Property Permits are submitted.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion proposals from RASEC and the TC will be reviewed at the next TC meeting. Barbara also reported that the Town attorney, with whom the TC met in closed session regarding the uninhabited house issue, walked them through some ideas to address concerns.

### **Uninhabited House Subcommittee**

A small subcommittee, headed by Mary Warfield, has been established and Bob reported that he is part of the group. Mary has been given the information that David and a previous task force put together a few years ago. Bob said he would summarize tools that preservation entities have used successfully in other places to protect vacant houses and get them back into “normal usage.”

### **Election of the Chair**

Bob Booher was unanimously reelected Chair.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40pm. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 20, at 7:30 pm via Zoom.