

HPC Review

HPC2015-04-21-01

for a “Little Free Library” at the Corner of Ridge Road and Brown Street

An application for a Public Ways and Property Permit dated April 16 was submitted by Shelley Winkler on behalf of the Washington Grove Little Free Library Committee. It was reviewed by the HPC at its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 21. Shelley Winkler represented the committee at the review.

General Description: The proposed project consists of the installation of a “Little Free Library” kiosk on Town property, at the northeast corner of Ridge Road and Brown Street. Shelley explained the concept of the “Little Free Library” -- it’s a “take a book, return a book” place where neighbors share favorite books. Anyone may stop by and select a book and is encouraged to bring another book to share. No time limits or recordkeeping are involved.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted: The documents submitted were sufficient for the HPC’s review of the project. They included a copy of the permit application and a representative color photograph of a similar existing library kiosk.

General Scope of Project: A modestly scaled “Little Free Library” is proposed to be installed on Town property a few feet back from the northeast intersection of Ridge Road and Brown Street, adjacent to the Winkler/Stopak property at 501 Brown Street. The applicant explained that the “library” will be her gift to the Town.

Exact dimensions of the structure were not provided, but from the included photograph, the unit is estimated to be approximately 2’ wide, 2’ deep, and 4-5’ high. The unit will include three shelves and a clear Plexiglas door. A simple, peaked shingled roof is also part of the design. As depicted in the photograph, the kiosk will stand on a pair of attached 4” x 4” legs which can be inserted into metal brackets sunken into the ground. This would be similar to the installation method used for Town walkway signs. Should it be desired to move the kiosk at some time in the future, this non-permanent method of installation would facilitate the change.

Shelley explained that the library kiosk will come in an unpainted condition. She plans to enlist the skills of a Town artist/artists to enhance the structure in a meaningful way for our community.

Visibility from public ways: The proposed library kiosk would be visible Ridge Road and Brown Street.

Nearby Contributing structures: Contributing structures in closest proximity to the proposed installation are 3, 102, 108, 110 and 112 Ridge Road; and 414, 410, 409, 405 and 401 Brown Street

Compatibility with the historic district: The proposed installation is compatible with the historic district. The Little Free Library will serve to strengthen sense of community and enhance ‘sense of place’ while promoting an appreciation of reading (as does the existing children’s Acorn Library on Maple Road).

HPC Recommendations: HPC endorses and encourages the plan.


Emilia A. Styles

4-23-2015
Date: April 23, 2015

for the Historic Preservation Commission

- cc: HPC Binder Planning Commission Members
- HPC members Mayor Joli McCathran
- Web site, Bill Saar Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman

Please note that the Historic Preservation Commission acts only in an advisory capacity to both applicants and the Planning Commission. The reviews undertaken are designed to assist homeowners in their projects, to provide input to deliberations of the Planning Commission and, more generally, to contribute to historic preservation in Washington Grove.

Further information regarding the scope, powers, duties, and structure of the Historic Preservation Commission may be found in Article XV of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Washington Grove. Section 5 (a) of Article XV describes the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission in the building permit process. This section reads as follows:

The Commission shall review all applications for building permits filed with the Town Planning Commission which would involve any change to a structure or site visible from any public way for historical accuracy, integrity, or compatibility with the neighborhood and improvements therein. The Commission may recommend to an applicant alternative historical designs, materials and sources for the same which may be more historically compatible. The Commission shall forward its recommendations regarding the same, if any, in an advisory capacity, to the Planning Commission for consideration by the Planning Commission within thirty (30) days from the Commission’s receipt of the application from the Planning Commission.

