

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
MAY 20, 2025**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Pennington Borough Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was held on May 20, 2025 at 7:30 pm via Zoom.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Holtermann, Chair; Robert Chandler, Vice-Chair; Mary Baum; Jack Davis; Katrina Homel; Natalie Shivers; George Ford, Alt I

Members Absent: David Coats; Craig Wallace, Alt II

Staff Present: Nadine Stern, Council Liaison; Robin Tillou, HPC Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Holtermann opened the meeting to the public. With no public comment Chair Holtermann closed the public forum.

MINUTES

April 15, 2025

Upon a motion from Ms. Baum and Ms. Homel offering a second the minutes were unanimously approved with amendments by those eligible to vote.

APPLICATIONS

Pennington School Porch Follow Up

Chair Holtermann advised that the construction for the porch of Pennington School seems to be complete. The HPC members agreed that the porch looks good.

OTHER BUSINESS

Hopewell Valley Historical Society's History Awards Criteria for Historic Preservation

Mr. Karl Niederer of the Hopewell Valley Historical Society was present and explained the proposed History Awards that they would like to implement with Hopewell Township, Hopewell Borough and Pennington Borough. Mr. Niederer explained that the awards were launched in 2021 and have six (6) different categories for recognition of the people in Hopewell Valley that have done important service. The categories are explained in the memo that was distributed to the Commission members and Mr. Niederer explained the categories.

Ms. Homel asked who chooses the winning properties for the awards.

Mr. Niederer responded that the Hopewell Valley Historic Society Awards Committee will make the selection and the criteria will be set by the Boroughs or Township.

VOTE FOR PENNINGTON BOROUGH HPC TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND SUPPORT THE HISTORY AWARDS PROGRAM:

AYES: Mr. Holtermann, Ms. Baum, Mr. Chandler, Mr. Davis, Ms. Homel, Ms. Shivers, Mr. Ford

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

VOTE PASSED

Ms. Baum and Mr. Davis volunteered to be the delegates of the Hopewell Valley History Awards for Pennington Borough.

MOTION TO NOMINATE MR. DAVIS AND MS. BAUM TO BE THE DELEGATES FOR PENNINGTON BOROUGH HPC: Ms. Homel

SECONDED: Mr. Ford

AYES: Mr. Holtermann, Ms. Baum, Mr. Chandler, Mr. Davis, Ms. Homel, Ms. Shivers, Mr. Ford

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION PASSED

Historic Preservation Master Plan Element in Relation to Other Elements - Land Use, Housing, Economic Development and Utilities

Ms. Shivers advised that the Utilities element is in draft and is currently being reviewed.

The other elements will be reviewed by the end of this year.

Update to Areas in Need of Redevelopment

Chair Holtermann stated the redevelopments seem to be key to how the affordable housing obligations of the Borough will be provided. It also was discussed at the Redevelopment Committee meeting on April 30, 2025 that the entire site of the Blackwell property may not be eligible for residential construction due to flood hazards but they may be getting a more detailed look at the study.

Ms. Tillou advised the Redevelopment Committee meetings will be the fourth Wednesday of every month except for Thursday, November 20, 2025 and Wednesday, December 17, 2025. The next Redevelopment Committee meeting will be on May 28, 2025.

Certified Local Government (CLG)

Chair Holtermann advised that the next step to CLG status is to form a subcommittee to submit the CLG application next year.

The CLG subcommittee will be Mr. Ford, Ms. Homel, and Chair Holtermann. They will meet in September 2025 to go over the requirements.

Peter Benchley

Mr. Ford submitted a memo that was distributed to the Commission members of details the initiative of erecting a historical marker to commemorate Peter Benchley's writing of "*Jaws*" in

Pennington, NJ. Mr. Ford reported that he met recently with Pennington resident Mark Blackwell who gave a first-hand account of Benchley's time spent in an office room on the Blackwell property. Mr. Blackwell showed Mr. Ford the inside of the room, located in a one-story 19th century structure with a brown door, marked "Pennington Furnace Supply" just to the west of the one-story cinderblock buildings on Brookside Ave. The 1970 deed to the Benchley's house on the corner of Birch and E. Curlis has been located by the Borough.

Chair Holtermann recommended to start a file for Peter Benchley.

Pennington Day Follow Up

Chair Holtermann stated the historic tours in the future will be advertised sooner and wider due to low turnout of the historic tours.

Upcoming Events: NJ History and Historic Conference: June 4 - 5, 2025

Ms. Homel stated she would like to attend on June 4, 2025.

216 Hale Street

The new owner of 216 Hale Street, Jon Reber, had called Town Hall interested in any history in his property as he heard that it was previously an apple orchard and there are concrete buried around. The Commissioners will get back to Ms. Tillou if they find anything with that property.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, Ms. Homel made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Ms. Shivers offering a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the duly selected secretary of the Pennington Borough Historic Preservation Commission, and that this document, consisting of three (3) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting held on May 20, 2025.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name on this day of June 18, 2025.

Robin Tillou, Historic Preservation Commission Secretary