

PENNINGTON BOROUGH
30 North Main Street, Pennington, NJ 08534
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
September 17, 2024

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mary Baum, David Coats, Jack Davis, George Ford, Eric Holtermann, Katrina Homel, Natalie Shivers, Nadine Stern, Kaitlyn Macellaro

Absent: Robert Chandler, Yasmine Zein

I. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC ADDRESS (15 MINUTES)

Mr. Holtermann asked if there was any member of the public who had joined the meeting and had comments on items not on the agenda. There being no member of the public wanting to comment, the open period for public comment period was closed.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Ms. Baum made a motion to approve the June 18, 2024 minutes and were seconded by Ms. Homel. All were in favor via voice vote.

III. APPLICATIONS

Schematic Design Presentation: Clarke Caton Hintz- New Porch at Old Main- The Pennington School

John Hatch and Michael Nelson, from Clarke Caton Hintz, were both present for their presentation. Michael Nelson introduced himself as the architect and associate partnered with Clarke Caton Hintz. Mr. Holtermann reminded everyone that this is part of a development application, so the Commission's role is to review the work and write an advisory letter to the Planning Board. Mr. Nelson shared the plans for adding a new porch at Old Main at the Pennington School. He described that Old Main is the oldest building on campus and the north face of the building faces West Delaware Ave, where they are proposing to put the new porch. He explained that the intention of this porch is to serve as a stage for graduation, but also, for a space for students and faculty members to engage and bring additional activity to the front porch of the building. He talked about the elevation of the porch and how it is centered with the existing building. He proposed a covered porch with a metal standing seam roof, a gable at the front and flanking stairs comprised of masonry piers up to the deck level and then wood columns up until the roof structure. He described that they wanted to have a light decorative painted steel guardrail and a wood screen for underneath the porch. He brought up the idea for including the campus logo at the center element as well as at the top. He explained how the covered portion of the porch projects out a little more than fourteen feet and the additional projection for the stairs is another ten feet or so off the porch. He showed the different options for the colors of the roof of the porch from graphite to gray to bronze. He showed two simple ways to go about the columns

with the only difference being the recessed brick panel and the waistline at the top of the guardrail. He showed Exhibit A-202 which pictures some possible materials for the wood structure with wood decking, ceiling and columns. He showed the reflected ceiling plan with the proposed wood ceiling, lighting and ceiling fans.

Ms. Shivers asked if the historic porches had a projecting gable roof as a central element and Mr. Nelson agreed. Mr. Hatch confirmed that it was covered for carriage purposes and it serves as a function for graduation. Mr. Holtermann noted that the beam below the fascia edge as shown in the historic photo shows more depth than current drawing. Ms. Homel asked if the proposed porch design protrudes further than the historic porch design. Mr. Nelson explained that the proposed porch design shows a fourteen foot depth while the historic photo showed an eight foot depth.

Mr. Ford stated that where the proposed stairs are there is a sidewalk that goes from Burd Street along the front. He asked if the semi-circle in the drawing is there now and Mr. Nelson noted that it is not there now and it would be put in. Mr. Ford asked if the walkways from West Delaware will still be intact and Mr. Nelson said they would.

Mr. Holtermann asked what material was being used for the panels where the logo is going on the front façade of the porch. Mr. Nelson said that the intention is wood. Mr. Ford asked if the stairs would remain cement. Mr. Nelson said those would be wood as well.

Ms. Homel asked how they made the decision on how long to make the porch. She mentioned that in the historic photo, the porch stretched to the entirety of the building. Mr. Nelson explained that this was part of the Master Plan of the building and they just built on the previous version of this. Mr. Hatch pointed out that is difficult to add another porch on the right side because there are quite a few windows on the lower level and most of those spaces are occupied. Mr. Nelson clarified that it is mostly just mechanical storage underneath the porch.

Mr. Holtermann asked if there were any discussion about the roof. Ms. Shivers asked why the silver gray opposed to the charcoal gray. Mr. Hatch described that the graphite looks black and a lighter color will make it not so hot under the porch. Ms. Shivers asked if the original railings were wood. Mr. Hatch stated that the railings look really thin for them to be wood and said that they look like they are made out of metal. He clarified that they wanted something relatively thin that wasn't going to block the view made out of something sturdy like steel.

Mr. Holtermann complimented the columns with the recessed masonry panel and the band above the rail.

Mr. Holtermann asked what their process and schedule is for moving ahead to the Planning Board. Mr. Nelson said that the objective is for the porch to be complete for the 2025 graduation. He announced that the schedule has them finishing construction documents by the end of this year, working with the contractor to solicit bids by January 2025 and then construction beginning late February of 2025 to be complete by May of 2025.

Mr. Hatch asked if the Historic Preservation would send these plans along with a letter to the Planning Board. They would like to present this at the next Planning Board meeting. Ms. Stern stated that the next Planning Board meeting is October 9, 2024. Ms. Stern suggested to keep in touch with Ms. Macellaro about scheduling to get on the agenda for the upcoming meetings.

Minor Work Application: 15-17 North Main Street, including Styleworthy; Applicants Carl Fucello and Philip Dillon

Mr. Holtermann noted that the applicant believed aluminum or vinyl would be a really good idea on that building. Mr. Holtermann and Mr. Chandler denied that request again. Mr. Holtermann shared some photos of 15 North Main Street when the asbestos came off. The Commission members agreed that it is in good condition. Mr. Holtermann explained that it is repairable and repaintable and will save them money in the end. Mr. Holtermann stated that they agreed to keep the wood siding on the front of the house and the front bump outs that can be seen from the street, but they can use other types of siding on the back of the house. Mr. Davis asked if they will be replacing the windows in the front. Mr. Holtermann stated that Mr. Fucello ordered windows with simulated divided lights. Mr. Holtermann stated that he will continue to monitor the work progress, but it seems to be in good shape at the moment. He thanked Ms. Stern for forwarding their emails to the rest of Council to keep everyone informed. Mr. Coats asked what is happening with the building in the front. Mr. Holtermann explained that there are a couple of boards at the bottom that are very close to the ground that are rotted. He said that the lower two courses of clamber will be replaced with fiber cement or something like that. He stated that they are going to restore and paint the rest of the building. Mr. Davis asked if they will keep the shingle siding at the gable end and Mr. Holtermann said they would. Mr. Ford asked if 15 North Main Street will have vinyl or aluminum windows as stated in the previous meeting minutes. Mr. Holtermann explained that the Commission's standard is to not force people to restore old windows if they are willing to replace it with a decent quality new window with simulated divided lites, which are generally higher quality and not vinyl or aluminum. Mr. Holtermann stated that they will be replacing all the windows in the front and will be keeping the front door.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. George Ford- Appointed to Fill Open Commission Position

Mr. Holtermann announced that George Ford has been appointed to fill in the open Commission position. Mr. Ford explained that he is originally from this area and has spent a lot of time in New York and Asia. He said that he serves as president on the Railroad Place Condominiums Board. He stated that he is now back in Pennington and he thinks it is a great town, which is why he wants to serve on the Commission. Mr. Holtermann stated that when a question arises about the Railroad Station, Mr. Ford will be a great resource.

B. Ordinance Revision Update-

Mr. Holtermann shared proposed ordinance revisions that were sent out to the Planning Board and Council attorneys. He thanked Ms. Stern for generously mentioning the changes at a Council meeting and he heard the next day from the Council attorney. He offered to come to a Council meeting and talk about the changes and why he thinks they

should be made to the ordinance. Mr. Holtermann asked Ms. Stern what she recommends on doing next. Ms. Stern recommended that Mr. Holtermann reach out to Mr. Bliss and asks if there is any other information that needs to be provided to get them on the October Council meeting. Ms. Macellaro also suggested that he reaches out to Ms. Sterling since she is the one that puts the agenda together. Ms. Stern stated that they have a work session on September 30th, so we should be prepared for that meeting.

C. Borough Master Plan: Historic Preservation Element-

Mr. Holtermann shared an outline that he put together of what the element should include.

He stated that David Blackwell wrote a good history about Pennington Borough in 2010 and asked if Mr. Davis go through it and update it as needed. Ms. Stern asked if there is already a brief history written about Pennington Borough in the Master Plan without having to include it in this element. Mr. Holtermann stated that he would reach out to Mr. Andy Jackson and ask him if there is a brief history of Pennington in the introduction of the Master Plan. Mr. Davis pointed out that we would want that introduction to cover as much as we wanted it to.

Mr. Holtermann stated that he has to ask Andy about the public policy review element as well.

Mr. Holtermann asked for some help writing about the interface with other Master Plan Elements. He described that there are twelve Master Plan elements and he only thought that five of those would have impact with Historic Preservation: Land Use, Housing, Community Facilities and Services Plan, Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan and the Economic Development Plan. Ms. Shivers thinks the mobility plan does intersect with the Historic Preservation because the Historic District coincides with the streets through Pennington that have the most traffic. Mr. Holtermann stated that open space is often linked with Historic Preservation, but he wasn't sure what to include. Mr. Davis said that open space creates an environment around our Historic District and interacts with it in a way. Mr. Holtermann brought up a few different cases of open space, such as, in front of Old Main and in front of the Railroad Station. Mr. Davis asked if we are going to talk about the Blackwell property and Mr. Holtermann said that we need to. Mr. Coats asked if the Blackwell property is in the District and Mr. Holtermann confirmed that it was just beyond it. Ms. Stern announced that a Redevelopment Committee has just been set up to look at all of the proposals and plans for the various properties that have been designated for areas of redevelopment. She explained that the Blackwell property is one of those areas and whenever the Redevelopment Committee reviews it, then it will be directed to the appropriate Boards and Commissions, giving

them a chance to comment.

Mr. Holtermann asked for volunteers to write the different sections. He said he will reach out to Mr. Jackson and get the plans that have been written so far and circulate them to the Commission members. He said to let him know what sections anyone can help on. Ms. Shivers thanked Mr. Holtermann for putting together this outline.

D. Borough Webpage: HPC Introductory info, further discussion

Mr. Holtermann asked if there were any comments about the web page. Ms. Shivers asked if the link to meeting agendas can say meeting agendas and minutes. Ms. Macellaro stated that she can work on getting that done. Ms. Shivers brought up an idea of having a new map made that was a better overlay of the Historic District on the zoning map.

E. Preservation NJ Events:

- **Titus Farmstead Hotel, Hopewell: Discussion w/developer; 7pm Oct 8, via Zoom**

Mr. Holtermann stated that this is a discussion organized by Preservation New Jersey about the proposed hotel in Hopewell. He said that this has been controversial locally in terms of preservation, but it is actually a positive thing. He stated that if you are interested, you can sign up on the Preservation New Jersey website.

- **HPC Roundtable: Demolition & Adaptive Re-Use Strategies; 10am Oct 26, location TBD**

Mr. Holtermann described that Preservation New Jersey came up with a series of historic preservation roundtables where they deal with specific things that historic preservation commissions have to deal with throughout the state of New Jersey.

Adjournment 8:52 PM