



HPC - FEBRUARY 17, 2026 AGENDA

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 7:30 PM

Online via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Notice of this meeting has been given to the Hopewell Valley News, Trenton Times and was posted on the bulletin board at Borough Hall at 30 North Main Street and on the Borough website according to the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL - Holtermann; Baum; Chandler; Coats; Davis; Homel; Shivers; Ford; Wallace

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Meeting open to public for comments.

Please raise your hand and when the secretary acknowledges you state your name and address for the record. There will be a total of 15 minutes allotted for public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. *March 17, 2026 Minutes

APPLICATIONS

2. For Discussion Only:
236 S. Main Street, Block 703, Lot 24 - Siding
3. 120 S. Main Street Letters - Unauthorized Removal of Chimney
4. 13 S. Main Street - Block 601, Lot 20 - Wall in Front of Cemetery
5. 32 E. Delaware Avenue, Block 601, Lot 29 - Expansion of Cemetery

OTHER BUSINESS

6. Annual Report
7. Master Plan Update - Land Use Plan Element
8. Certified Local Government
9. Street Trees in the Historic District

10. Newsletter / Communication to Property Owners

[11.](#) Hopewell Valley Historical Society History Awards for Historic Preservation

ADJOURNMENT

4/13/26

Memo: Pennington HPC - re: 236 S Main St, Pennington, John Sowienski

A couple of weeks ago I had a call from David, a contractor with Home Genius Exteriors, noting that the Boro told him to give me a call about replacing siding at 236 S Main. I described Ordinance and requirements for siding other than aluminum or vinyl, he said OK, he would adjust his quote accordingly.

Subsequent call from John Sowienski, home owner, noting additional expense of Hardie-Plank and asking about vinyl. I said I'd meet him in person to talk to him about requirements. I met him at his house on Monday April 6 where he said "Hardie-Plank cost \$30,000 more than vinyl and I can't afford it" he noted several health and construction reasons why it was important to replace siding. On inspection, the existing aluminum siding on the house is poorly installed and I believe him when he says that moisture is getting underneath. But I said \$30K upcharge didn't sound right and I would talk to the contractor again to better understand the proposed construction details.

In a phone conversation with Dave a few days later he said the reason Hardi Plank is more expensive is because in order to meet warrantee requirements (the only way they will install it) you also have to replace window trim. With vinyl, they can leave the old aluminum wrapped trim in place and wrap a vinyl channel around the window to receive the edge of vinyl. Me: Won't moisture still get in thru old rotten window trim? Dave: yes, but it's a way to save money. We discussed limiting Hardie Plank to the front and sides of the original house, allowing vinyl on the rear. Dave said that with that and a better financing plan he thought he could provide a much better price. BTW, Home Genius plan is to strip existing aluminum to expose existing plywood sheathing, install a new layer of 3/8" insulated sheathing over the existing, and then install vinyl or Hardi over that. I asked if vinyl siding, if allowed, would protrude beyond face of existing window trims – Dave said hopefully not.

Another call from John Sowienski on Friday, April 10. Unhappy about revised costs – still too costly and work has to be done for several reasons. I said I could not approve vinyl as a Minor Work approval, but he could make case to the Commission, although I would not be optimistic about approval, with respect for his time. He said he would submit application.

As a courtesy, I will email him to let him know that he should submit application in advance so that Commission members can take a look at his house, and he should also be specific about product and details he would like to have considered.

Eric Holtermann
Pennington Historic Preservation Commission

John Sowienski
236 South Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534
April 13, 2026

Pennington Historic Preservation Commission
Borough of Pennington
30 North Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Commission,

I am writing to request approval to install vinyl siding on my home due to urgent health, safety, and financial concerns affecting my family.

Our current exterior has deteriorated to the point where insects and rodents are entering through gaps in the siding. We have experienced odors inside the home that indicate animals may have died within the walls. This creates a serious health risk, especially given my own medical condition, which makes exposure to contaminants and poor air quality particularly dangerous. Protecting the interior environment of the home is essential for my well-being and for the safety of my family.

We understand that the Commission often recommends James Hardie fiber-cement siding for historic properties. However, HardiePlank presents additional health and safety concerns for us. Cutting or drilling fiber-cement siding produces silica dust, which is hazardous when inhaled. Workers must wear ventilated respirators to avoid exposure, and even with precautions, the dust can spread. This is not a risk we can take given my illness and the need to avoid airborne irritants or toxins around the home.

HardiePlank also requires ongoing maintenance, including periodic painting and extensive caulking over the years to prevent moisture intrusion. These long-term maintenance demands add significant cost that our family cannot absorb. Vinyl siding, by contrast, does not require painting, does not generate toxic dust during installation, and provides a durable, low-maintenance solution that will allow us to address the health and safety issues immediately.

There is also a significant cost difference between fiber-cement siding and vinyl siding. The savings from choosing vinyl would allow us to restore the original front porch that once existed on this home. According to Beverly Mills, the porch was part of the home's historic appearance. Restoring it would actually bring the house closer to its original design, enhancing its historic character rather than detracting from it. This restoration would not be financially possible if we were required to use HardiePlank.

We are not proposing any changes to the architectural character of the house beyond restoring what was originally there. We are not adding dormers, additions, or altering the façade in any way. Our only goal is to seal and protect the home so it is safe, healthy, and structurally sound.

We are committed to selecting a vinyl siding style and profile that is visually consistent with the historic appearance of the neighborhood.

Given the combination of my medical condition, the health risks posed by the current state of the home, the hazards associated with fiber-cement installation, the long-term maintenance burden, the financial hardship, and the opportunity to restore an original historic feature, we respectfully request that the Commission approve the use of vinyl siding as a reasonable and necessary alternative.

Thank you for your time, understanding, and consideration. We appreciate the Commission's role in preserving the character of Pennington, and we hope you will allow us to make these essential improvements to protect our family's well-being and to restore an important historic element of the home.

Sincerely,
Sowienski Family

Sent from my iPad

Borough of Pennington
Historic Preservation Commission
30 North Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534

April 9, 2026

Mr. Rammy Dongel
Ken Group, LLC, General Contractor
3503 Jennifer Court
Voorhees, NJ 08563
rammy@kengroupus.com

Re: 120 S. Main St., Pennington NJ.

Dear Mr. Dongel

Unauthorized work was recently performed at 120 S. Main Street, Pennington, NJ. More specifically, the south chimney at that property was recently removed in violation of the Pennington Borough Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 119 of the Borough of Pennington's Code. This unauthorized work was done in accordance with undated drawings prepared, signed, and sealed by you that were submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission.

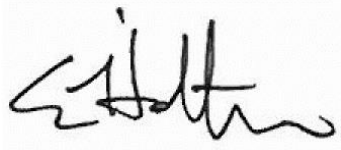
Section 119-5 of the Borough Code requires the Commission to issue a certificate of appropriateness before a permit is issued or work can commence that results in changes "in the exterior appearance that is visible from the street any building, structure, site, object or improvement by addition, reconstruction, alteration, or replacement . . ." Permitted exceptions to this provision included in the Code do not apply in this case. The submitted drawings for 120 S. Main Street identify demolition of an interior chimney, without adequate detail of that demolition or its implication to the exterior of the building. Ultimately, the chimney was demolished in the interior and on the exterior of the building. Removal of the chimney, a change to the building's exterior that is visible from the street, is subject to review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission and would have required a certificate of appropriateness. Therefore, the removal of the chimney at 120 S. Main Street without a certificate of appropriateness violated the Borough Code.

It is the responsibility of hired professionals to verify compliance with local regulations. The building owner appeared before the Historic Preservation Commission after the chimney had been demolished and the decision was made to not require reconstruction of the chimney in this case. However, in the future, reconstruction or financial penalty may be authorized. Additionally, any future unauthorized changes will trigger a stop work order.

If there are questions about regulations or requirements within the Historic District, please contact the Borough Office. Changes to the exterior of a building in the historic district such as 120 S. Main Street or to a designated historic landmark which are visible from the street must be reviewed and approved by

the Historic Preservation Commission, as described above. Thank you for your kind attention in this regard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Holtermann", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Eric Holtermann, AIA
Chair, Pennington Historic Preservation Commission

cc: Robin Tillou, Land Use Administrator, Pennington Borough
Chwen-Ping Wang RA, Ping Architects, LLC, Philadelphia, PA
Joanne Terogin, Owner, 120 S .Main St., Pennington NJ

Borough of Pennington
Historic Preservation Commission
30 North Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534

April 14, 2026

Chwen-Ping Wang RA
Ping Architects, LLC
1235 S. 47th St, Apt 1F
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Re: 120 S. Main St., Pennington NJ.

Dear Chwen-Ping Wang:

Unauthorized work was recently performed at 120 S. Main Street, Pennington, NJ. More specifically, the south chimney at that property was recently removed in violation of the Pennington Borough Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 119 of the Borough of Pennington's Code. This unauthorized work was done in accordance with undated drawings prepared, signed, and sealed by you that were submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission.

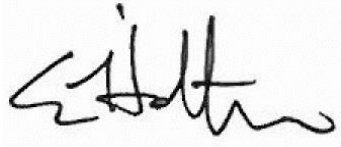
Section 119-5 of the Borough Code requires the Commission to issue a certificate of appropriateness before a permit is issued or work can commence that results in changes "in the exterior appearance that is visible from the street any building, structure, site, object or improvement by addition, reconstruction, alteration, or replacement . . ." Permitted exceptions to this provision included in the Code do not apply in this case. The submitted drawings for 120 S. Main Street identify demolition of an interior chimney, without adequate detail of that demolition or its implication to the exterior of the building. Ultimately, the chimney was demolished in the interior and on the exterior of the building. Removal of the chimney, a change to the building's exterior that is visible from the street, is subject to review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission and would have required a certificate of appropriateness. Therefore, the removal of the chimney at 120 S. Main Street without a certificate of appropriateness violated the Borough Code.

It is the responsibility of hired professionals to verify compliance with local regulations. The building owner appeared before the Historic Preservation Commission after the chimney had been demolished and the decision was made to not require reconstruction of the chimney in this case. However, in the future, reconstruction or financial penalty may be authorized. Additionally, any future unauthorized changes will trigger a stop work order.

If there are questions about regulations or requirements within the Historic District, please contact the Borough Office. Changes to the exterior of a building in the historic district such as 120 S. Main Street or to a designated historic landmark which are visible from the street must be reviewed and approved by

the Historic Preservation Commission, as described above. Thank you for your kind attention in this regard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Holtermann", written in a cursive style.

Eric Holtermann, AIA
Chair, Pennington Historic Preservation Commission

cc: Robin Tillou, Land Use Administrator, Pennington Borough
Rammy Dongel, Ken Group, LLC, General Contractor, Voorhees, NJ
Joanne Terogin, Owner, 120 S .Main St., Pennington NJ

HMRARCHITECTS

April 8, 2026

John Coats
Pennington Presbyterian Church

Re: Suggested repair of cemetery wall at South Main Street

Dear John,

We reviewed existing conditions at the existing low all facing South Main Street and offer the following repair recommendations:

Masonry:

1. Powerwash entire wall
2. Mechanically remove loose and non-adhered masonry/stucco facing
3. Mechanically remove loose and non-adhered paint on stucco, well-adhered paint may remain
4. Mechanically clean face of exposed brick substrate with stiff nylon brush (or powerwash on gentle setting) - brick may be too soft for wire brush (or strong powerwash) which may remove face 'skin' of brick
5. At areas adjacent to stucco patches, tool edges of existing masonry with an undercut to key new stucco under existing.
6. At major stucco cracks requiring infill, channel crack to minimum 1/2" width, tool both edges with undercut to key new stucco under existing. Minor cracks without stucco loss will be coated/protected by final paint finish.
7. Install new mortar/stucco at prepared cracks and areas of missing stucco
 - a. Use a relatively soft mortar/stucco mix applied in 2 coats if necessary to achieve a matching finish texture, mix as listed below or similar
 - b. "Type N or O" mortar mix. Type N typically 1:1:6 mix of Portland cement/lime/sand. Type O is softer (less Portland, more lime).
 - c. Do not use straight Portland cement mix or typical stucco mix such as Quickcrete, or similar. It is harder than brick substrate and will crack, often damaging brick substrate.
 - d. Mesh is not required for adhesion of stucco to brick and can create air pockets for collection of moisture and subsequent separation of stucco from substrate as mesh rusts.
8. After appropriate curing time, paint with vapor-transmissive masonry coating such as either of the options below: Limewash (>75 perms) is more permeable than acrylic paint (10-20 perms), which in turn is more permeable than typical latex. Do not apply any coatings or sealers that would trap moisture in the wall behind the finish.
 - a. Highly breathable limewash coating from a specialty supplier like Limeworks (<https://www.limeworks.us/>).
 - b. Acrylic paint specifically intended for masonry, such as Valspar Masonry, Stucco & Brick Paint + Primer #752600 series (available at Lowes).

Wood cap:

1. Replace existing damaged or missing boards with cedar planks to match thickness and width dimensions of existing. If possible, use planks with closely spaced growth rings (20-40 rings/inch) and vertical graining (not flat-sawn).
2. Clean existing boards with fungicide (TSP or light bleach solution)
3. Treat all boards with preservative treatment such as "Cedarshield Wood Penetrant".
4. Re-attach loose boards with stainless finish fastener (not Phillips head screw)



Application Number: #26-003

Application Date: 4-6-26

Borough of Pennington

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION APPLICATION

Location: Street Address: 13 S. Main St. (wall next to PPC)
Block: 601 Lot: 20 Zone:

Application Type: [] Certificate of Appropriateness
[X] Minor Work Application
[] Development Application

Proposed Work: [] New Construction
[] Addition
[] Alteration
[] Demolition
[] Other: Re-coat stucco wall, paint wood topping

Describe proposed work. Identify materials and product manufacturers. Provide photographs, drawings and catalogs cuts as needed to describe proposed changes. Submit 2 hard copies + 1 electronic copy.

Repair wall along South Main St next to Pennington Presbyterian Church. Project includes:

- 1. Grind off loose mortar
2. Add lath wire to wall
3. Apply new mortar; same color as existing
4. Once cured, seal mortar
5. Replace 6-12 rotten boards
6. Apply primer and stain to all boards

Owner/Applicant: Pennington Presbyterian Church (John Coats)

Phone number/email: Church 609-737-1221 John Coats 609 957-0187

Owner Signature: [Signature] date: 4/6/2026

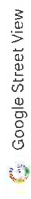
johncoats1@hotmail.com

call

24 S Main St



Princeton, New Jersey



Google Street View

Jun 2023

[See more photos](#)



Image capture: Jun 2023 © 2026 Google

Item 4.



Google Street View
Jun 2023

Image capture: Jun 2023 © 2026 Google

Item 4.

4/15/26

Eric Heltzman,
HPC Chair, stated
this falls under
landscape category &
HPC has no purview
in Landscaping.

Eric advised
John Coats not
under HPC's
purview.



Item 5.

Application Number: #26-002
Application Date: 4-6-26

Borough of Pennington HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION APPLICATION

Location: Street Address: 32 E. Delaware Avenue (empty lot)
Block: 601 Lot: 29 Zone: _____

Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness
 Minor Work Application
 Development Application

Proposed Work: New Construction
 Addition
 Alteration
 Demolition
 Other: _____

Describe proposed work. Identify materials and product manufacturers. Provide photographs, drawings and catalogs cuts as needed to describe proposed changes. Submit 2 hard copies + 1 electronic copy.

This project is to develop the lot for active use by the Pennington Cemetery Association. Project elements include:

1. Removal of 3 trees on Eastern side
2. Addition of 4 trees on Eastern side and one on Western side
3. Continue solid fence alongside next door garage
4. 4' metal fence (similar to existing metal fence) alongside eastern property line
5. Construct masonry wall (similar to S. Main wall or brick) along East Delaware
6. Straighten driveway

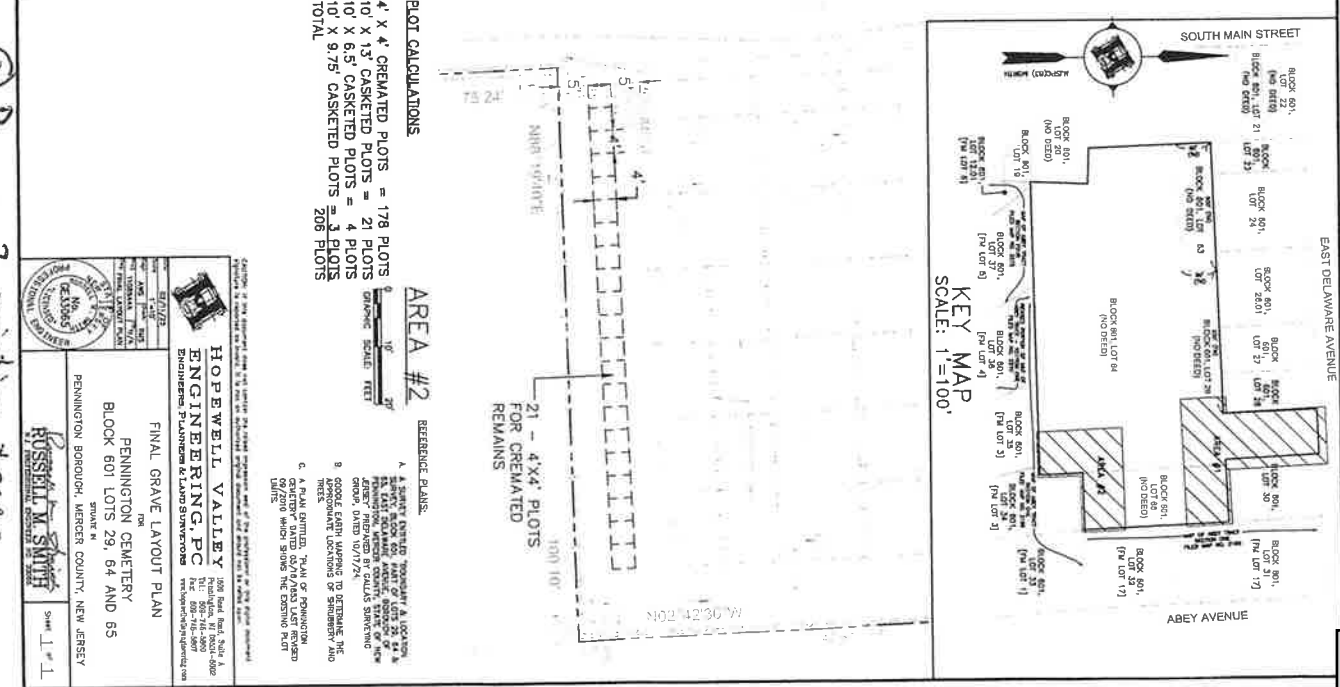
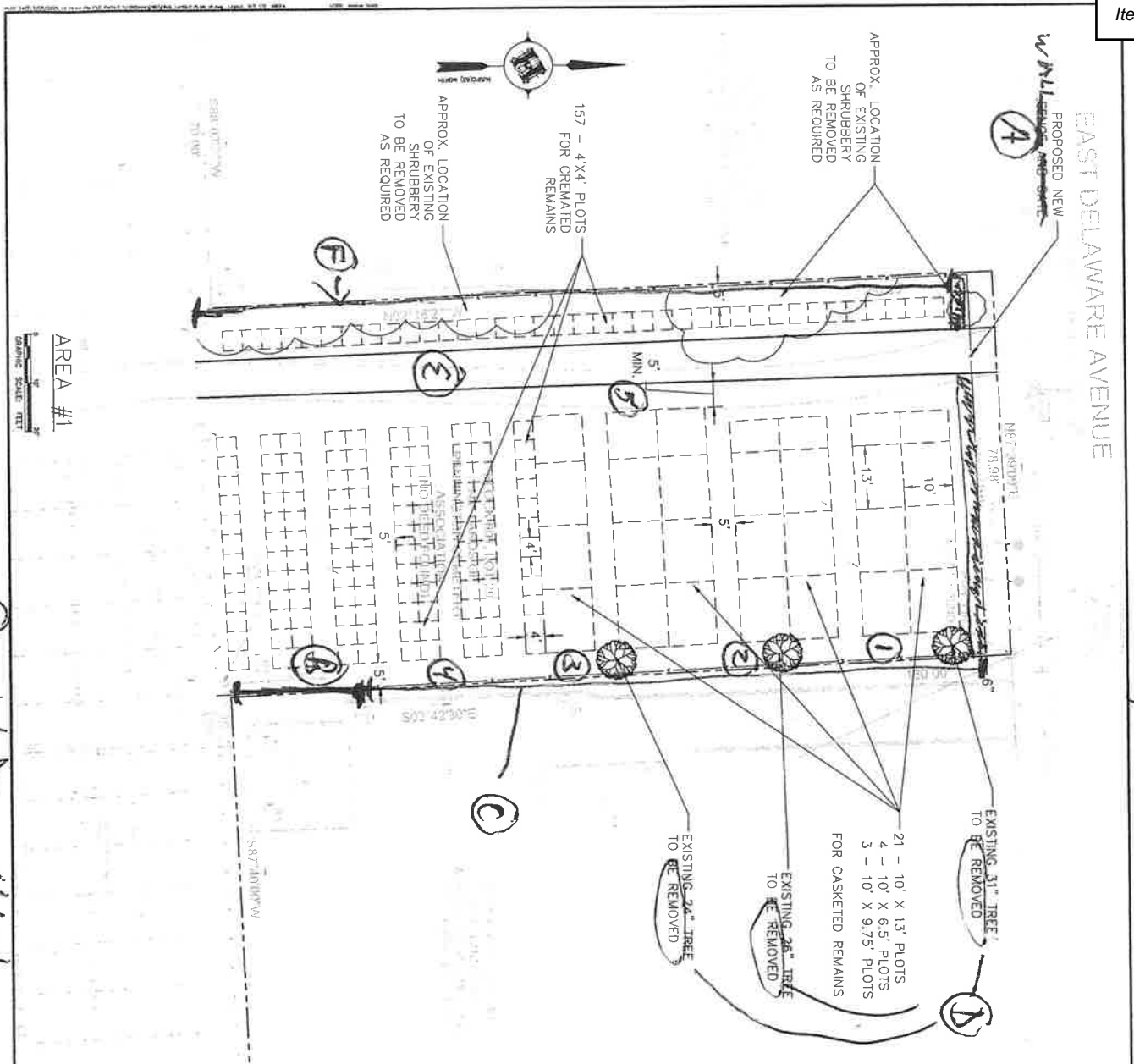
Owner/Applicant: Pennington Cemetery Association (John Coats)

Phone number/email: PIEA @ 609-737-1221 John Coats (609 957-0187)

Owner Signature: [Signature] date: 4/6/2026

johncoats1@hotmail.com

Proposed



AREA #1
 GRAPHIC SCALE: 1" = 100'

AREA #2
 GRAPHIC SCALE: 1" = 20'

PLOT CALCULATIONS
 4' X 4' CREMATED PLOTS = 178 PLOTS
 10' X 13' CASKETS PLOTS = 21 PLOTS
 10' X 6.5' CASKETS PLOTS = 1 PLOTS
 10' X 9.75' CASKETS PLOTS = 1 PLOTS
TOTAL = 201 PLOTS

REFERENCE PLANS:
 A. A SURVEY ENTITLED "TOPOGRAPHY & LOCATION OF EXISTING GRAVE SITES OF LOT 29 & 55 PENNINGTON CEMETERY, MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY" ENGINEERED BY RUSSELL W. SMITH, REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, PLANNING & LAND SURVEYING, DATED 04/17/24.
 B. GOOGLE EARTH IMAGERY TO DETERMINE THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF SHRUBBERY AND EXISTING TREES.
 C. A PLAN ENTITLED "PLAN OF PENNINGTON CEMETERY" DATED 04/17/20 LAST REVISED 09/27/20 WHICH SHOWS THE EXISTING FOOT PRINT

HOPEWELL VALLEY ENGINEERING, P.C.
 ENGINEERS, PLANNERS & LAND SURVEYORS
 1400 First Road, Suite 100
 Flemington, NJ 08822
 TEL: 908-746-3000
 FAX: 908-746-3009
 www.hopewellvalleyeng.com

RUSSELL W. SMITH
 REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
 PENNINGTON CEMETERY, NEW JERSEY
 BLOCK 601 LOTS 29, 54 AND 55
 PENNINGTON BOROUGH, MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

FINAL GRAVE LAYOUT PLAN
 SHEET 1 OF 1

- ④ New trees - 5
- ⑤ Masonry wall @ 3'6" hll
- ⑥ Solid fence - 6' high
- ⑦ Picket fence - 4' high from solid fence to front wall
- ⑧ Remove 3 existing trees
- ⑨ Straighten driveway fence 4' high
- ⑩ Phase # - picket fence 4' high on western side

Hi Eric and Robin,

Do we have a public comment window of a few days regarding the draft that was conditionally adopted April. 8th?

If so, I'm wondering if **we as the HPC** should suggest tightening the "density & design" part of the Neighborhood Character section.

Suggested Insert for Section "Neighborhood Character"

As the Borough considers opportunities to increase residential density and expand housing options, such development should be guided by design principles that ensure compatibility with the scale and character of surrounding neighborhoods. Particular attention should be given to transitions between new development and established areas, including the Pennington Crossroads Historic District.

Regards,
George

PROPOSED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR NOMINATIONS

Historic Preservation Award

- **Historic Preservation Award, recognizing a property owner who has done distinguished work in preserving a historic property, structure, or archaeological resource; or contributed significantly to public awareness and appreciation of historic preservation in the community, as described and defined in the examples provided below. This category includes three parts: (1) Eligibility Criteria for Award Nominees, (2) Definitions of Eligible Properties, Sites, or Markers, and (3) Examples of Eligible Activities.**

Eligibility Criteria for Award Nominees

Nominees for the Historic Preservation Award (HPA) shall meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a. be the legal owner(s) of a private or residential or commercial property within the boundaries of the three local municipalities
- b. be the governing body of a publicly owned property within the boundaries of the three local municipalities
- c. be the governing body of a non-profit organizational owner or lessee of a property within the boundaries of the three local municipalities
- d. be persons, corporations, or other organizations that have been engaged in historic preservation research, advocacy, education, publication, public policy development, or work in preservation architecture, preservation planning, construction, restoration, or fine craftsmanship applied in a historic preservation project within the boundaries of the three local municipalities
- e. be persons, corporations, or other organizations that have researched, designed, and/or created and/or installed historic markers or developed wayfinding programs

Note: There may be no (0) HPA recipient in each annual awards cycle, if no one is considered deserving in that cycle.

Definitions of Eligible Properties, Sites, or Markers

Following are definitions and examples of the kinds of properties, sites, or marking products and programs involving historic preservation that nominees for this category shall have contributed efforts toward:

- a. a place possessing documented historical significance, and/or architectural and/or engineering merit (incorporate or reference National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria and definitions)
- b. a building (solid structure with a roof and walls, such as a house, school, store, office, barn, farm outbuilding, place of worship, community facility, railroad station, workshop, place of business, or factory)
- c. a ruin, i.e., the physical remains of a building or structure that has fallen into a state of decay, neglect, or partial destruction
- d. a site on which a building or structure (as described above) formerly stood

- e. an erected or fabricated structure or system of structures designed to facilitate transportation or commercial enterprise (including, but not limited to, a road, bridge, canal, railroad, dam, sluice, quarry, airport, etc.)
- f. a site on which a significant event occurred (e.g., landing site of the Delaware crossing of the Continental Army, Frog War, Lindbergh child discovery, etc.)
- g. a building and/or parcel of land occupied by a historically significant person, family, organization, or business (e.g., John Hart Homestead, Johnson Ferry House, Hopewell Academy, Pennington School, etc.)
- h. a delineated area on which historic activity or collective occupation occurred (e.g., route of march of the Continental Army; the Honey Hollow cluster of historic farmsteads; Sourland Mountain cluster of historic farmsteads, former native American villages such as Wissamonson and Minnepenasson)
- i. an archaeological site exhibiting material evidence of past human life including artifacts, features, structures, organic and/or environmental remains
- j. a streetscape that preserves the overall, collective visual character and physical environment of a street, encompassing both natural and built elements; or a viewshed that preserves the visual integrity, character, and setting of historic sites, buildings, or scenic, cultural landscapes.
- k. a marker or series of markers, or wayfinding programs commemorating and explaining the significance of places of historical significance and/or architectural and/or engineering merit
- l. a park, garden, cemetery or otherwise designed and/or contained landscape area that could include structures (i.e., a gazebo, bandstand, etc.), monuments, planting beds, walkways and the like; that has been maintained and or restored; and is part of a village, town or significant property.

Examples of Eligible Activities

Following are examples of the types of activities nominees should be expected to have performed to qualify for this award:

- a. Preservation of an eligible property, including physical rehabilitation or restoration of an existing structure that preserves its historic character and structural fabric
- b. Protection of an eligible property from destruction or other activity that would damage or have an adverse impact on its survival and integrity, including relocation of such properties
- c. Maintenance of a historic property over time, applying continuous, non-destructive, and sensitive treatments to sustain a property's existing form, materials, and integrity. It includes routine upkeep to prevent deterioration, and using methods that keep the original character and appearance.
- d. Protection of archaeological sites from disruption or destruction
- e. Research that contributes significantly to defining, preserving and protecting historic properties and archaeological sites (e.g., preparing local, state and national register nominations for individual properties and historic districts, contributing to local and state government historic preservation plans and policies)
- f. Advocacy that advances public awareness of, and support for, preservation and protection of historic properties, districts, archaeologically sensitive sites and other historic resources

- g. Marking of, and developing wayfinding programs for places of historic, architectural, engineering, or cultural significance, for the purpose of advancing public education and awareness, and support for their preservation and protection
- h. Creation, acquisition, restoration, and/or installation and display of historical or history-related works of art in or on a historic property or building dedicated to history (e.g., *Washington Crossing the Delaware* by the American artist George Matthews Harding in the WCSP Visitor Center)