

Morris Township Historic Preservation Commission Minutes, February 28, 2017 at 7:30pm

Carol Barkin called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Attendance: Craig Goss, Jean Rich, Carol Barkin, Judith Sacks-Bliss and Sue Young.
Minutes from the last meeting were tabled until next meeting.

Old Business:

88 Martin Luther King Street: – an old bar that is in located in 2 jurisdictions – $\frac{3}{4}$ in Morristown and $\frac{1}{4}$ on Morris Township. The lot is vacant and Carol has requested a copy of the plans. There has been an application for 8 units for Homeless Solutions.

122 Mt. Kemble Avenue: The question: why is this 150-year-old house not listed in the Pruddentown Historic District? Sarah will be reviewing the document to see if there was a possibility. We would like to encourage the builder of the new building to somehow incorporate the old bricks into the new design, façade, brick sidewalk or patio with a plaque that references the history.

Morris Museum: SHPO-NJ turned down the Morris Museum as a separate listing on on the State Register. There was an opinion that the property could be considered as a contributing building to any extension of the Normandy Historic District. The fact that it is not now currently on the register has not blocked it from receiving some funds from preservation groups.

Whitehead Road Bridge: The Historic Sites Council in Trenton met on February 15th, 2017. They will allow the bridge to be rebuilt as planned by the Morris County engineers. Stones from the current foundation will be incorporated into the new foundation. The old fencing, which is not structurally sound (and in pieces) will be replaced with modern fencing that mimics the old fencing. A new foundation will be rebuilt, the bridge widened so the bridge meets ASHTO standards. The direction of the road across the bridge will not be changed, it will remain a “broke back” road. The DEP will be reviewing the application for stream encroachment. See copy of Jennifer Leynes’ letter from SHPO.

Old Convent Station Post Office: The Township owns the old Convent Station Post Office. Judith mentioned that it should be preserved and hopefully we will find a secondary use – perhaps a small office, a small coffee shop that would be open when the train station is open. In the 1900-year book at St. E’s, there was a picture and Judith obtained a post card with a post mark – Convent Station with a late 1800’s date.

We would need to get an estimate from Tim Quinn as to the cost to repair. Sue spoke to Ray Chang and he thought that we could pursue Morris County Preservation funding. We would need a COE from SHPO. And then apply for a Preservation Plan and then apply for funding.

The Abbey: In a discussion with the owner of the Abbey, Carol was told that he had no idea that the building was a historic site on the national register. He paid \$6+M for the building. The neighbors are fighting changes and demolition of this building. The owner was given the national register nomination and suggested that he was no longer interested in demolition and would welcome a meeting to discuss future development of the property after the Mansion in May.

Pony Villa: 219 Sussex Avenue is for sale and might close mid-March. Hopefully the new owners will restore the house. The secondary lot is still for sale. Sue took pictures of the interior and outside for documentation.

Washington Valley Historic District: Sue attended the Mendham Twp. HPC meeting and is working with their team to restore the Tingley Rd./Mendham Rd. Washington Valley Historic District sign that was mowed down during a snow storm.

Historic Site Spreadsheet: Judith is continuing her work on the Historic Site spreadsheet, showing us samples of her work. We will complete the document and provide it to the township staff, as an addition to the Master Plan, and possibly as a digital version on the township website.

New Business:

Master Plan review is taking place at the Planning board meetings during the last Monday of every month. The HPC would like to add that we be informed of any demolition plans prior to the issuance of a demolition permit, especially if the building is 50 years and especially if the building is in an Historic District. We are also considering a B&B ordinance for their review.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 28, 2017 at 7:30pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Young
Recording Secretary