PRINCETON
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes – Regular Meeting
Monday, March 21st, 2022 – 4:00 PM
Virtual Zoom Meeting

The meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 4:05 PM on Monday, March 21st, 2022, by Chair Capozzoli on Zoom.

1. **STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting’s date, time, location and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Municipal bulletin board and filed with the Municipal Clerk as required by law.

**ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Present: Julie Capozzoli
Elric Endersby (arrived at 5:00 PM)
Freda Howard
Thomas Pyle
Shirley Satterfield
David Schure
Roger Shatzkin

Also present: Elizabeth Kim, Historic Preservation Officer; Edwin Schmierer, Esq.; Leighton Newlin, Council Liaison; Justin Lesko, Recording Secretary.

2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Kim announced that the Morning Star Church in Christ’s original church and prayer house at 49 Birch Avenue was condemned by the Municipality’s Building and Fire Inspection officials. Member Satterfield stated that Elder Bynes of the Church talked to his Bishop and advisers about potentially selling the property to the Witherspoon-Jackson Historic Society to be used as a community museum. She stated none of the parties want to see the building torn down. Councilman Newlin stated that the mission is to save the historic site and the building lends itself to restoration after many years of being in the same, deteriorated condition. He said other churches in the neighborhood have received more attention as they have more congregants, especially ones that live in-town. He stated the building needs to be secured, then be inspected structurally, followed by hopes to repair it to the original condition with partners. He said the decision to sell or renovate is ultimately up to the Church. Member Satterfield said the Pastor is in favor of the plan to sell to the Witherspoon-Jackson Historic Society but needs to talk to his congregants and Bishop.

Mr. Schmierer joined the meeting at 4:12 PM.

Member Shatzkin asked if the Commission’s Affordable Housing Subcommittee will present their findings to the Commission. Chair Capozzoli stated yes.
3. **MINUTES**

a) February 7, 2022 – Motion was made by Member Schure to approve the minutes of February 7, 2022; Member Shatzkin seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor of those eligible to vote. Motion carried.

4. **RESOLUTIONS**

a) Application of Beury, Kimberly and Markey, Edward
   29 Leigh Avenue
   Roof and Chimney Demolition to Expand Attic Space
   Witherspoon-Jackson Historic District
   Block 6905, Lot 31; Zone R-9
   File No. Z21-106; Project No. 63HP-2021

Motion was made by Member Shatzkin to approve the resolution; Member Howard seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Chair Capozzoli asked if the application for a variance passed at the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). Ms. Kim responded yes.

5. **APPLICATIONS**

a) Application of Hayeri, Yeganeh and Reza
   22 Parkside Drive
   New House Construction
   Drumthwacket Outbuildings Historic District
   NJ/NRHP Princeton Battlefield/Stony Brook Village Historic District
   Block 9901, Lot 6; Zone R-3
   65HP-2021

Chair Capozzoli recused herself for this application; Vice Chair Schure assumed the role of Chair.

Ms. Kim read her Historic Preservation Officer’s report on the application. She stated this property is in a Type 1 district, has come before the Commission for two concept reviews, and is under the jurisdiction of the ZBA as it requires variance approval.

Ryan Kennedy, attorney for the applicant, introduced the application and stated the applicant has the property under contract after the two concept reviews. He said the project is slightly smaller than it was at the concept reviews after discussing it with the neighbors.

Eric Holtermann, architect for the applicant, presented slides on the existing site and surrounding properties, extent of the property line, existing site photos (including the historic garage and well buildings on the site), proposed paving materials, proposed site plan – noting a slide change in the building footprint and siting from the concept reviews, elevations of the proposed structure,
aerial renderings of the proposed structure alongside existing buildings, and proposed material details, including window, door and light fixture examples.

The applicants, Yeganah and Reza Hayeri, introduced themselves.

Vice Chair Schure noted that he is a broker associate with Callaway Hencerson and has no financial interests in the property. He stated this property reminded him of Sheldon Farms in Vermont, one of his favorite properties.

Member Pyle asked for the fence materials. Mr. Holtermann responded it is square stock aluminum and one can see through it. Member Pyle asked for the color. Mr. Holtermann stated that dark bronze was proposed but the recommendation for light brown is okay. Member Howard asked if the brown can match the exterior wood elements. Mr. Holtermann responded yes. Member Satterfield stated the gray railing and light fixtures are in a light color but would blend in better in brown. Mr. Holtermann said they could get everything in dark brown.

Vice Chair Schure asked if the green roof will need trimming. Mr. Holtermann responded that it will get an annual trimming but will not grow higher than 8 inches.

Member Endersby joined the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Mr. Holtermann stated the applicant would like to use the existing well system.

Member Endersby stated the application is remarkably improved from the first concept.

Mrs. Hayeri said she appreciated the level of collaboration and cooperation with the Municipality and her neighbors.

Public comment was opened. There were no public comments.

Councilman Newlin applauded the architectural design.

Motion was made by Member Pyle to endorse the application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment; the motion was seconded by Member Shatzkin. The vote was 5-0-1 in favor. Motion carried.

FOR: Howard, Pyle, Satterfield, Schure, Shatzkin
AGAINST: No one
ABSTAIN: Endersby

b) Application of Hammond III, Dosier and Sloan, Jane
   87 Leigh Avenue
   Rear Porch Demolition and Existing House Modifications
   Witherspoon-Jackson Historic District
   Block 6903, Lots 14 & 15; Zone R-9
   72HP-2021
Chair Capozzoli returned to preside over the meeting.

The applicants, Dosier Hammond III and Jane Sloan, and their architect, John DaCruz, were sworn in.

Ms. Kim read her Historic Preservation Officer’s report for the application. She stated the Commission has jurisdiction over the application and the applicable demolition requirements have been met.

Mr. Hammond stated they need a new deck and the existing gate is falling apart.

Mr. DaCruz stated the application is for repair and replacement of elements in disrepair. He addressed the questions from the Historic Preservation Officer’s report. He said the color of the entry steps will match the existing steps. For the fence on Race Street, he said there will be a revised side yard entry gate and the intention is to keep the existing exterior concrete and add a triangle of concrete towards the gate, and the fence will be added to hide the existing trash cans with a gate of primarily transparent steel in a random grid pattern. Ms. Kim asked if the gate would open out towards the street or in toward the property. Mr. Hammond responded in.

Mr. DaCruz presented an image of the existing gate. Ms. Kim asked if the new triangle of concrete will be located behind the hedge. Mr. DaCruz stated the hedge will be pulled back.

Chair Capozzoli stated that this application would have normally been considered ordinary maintenance and subject to administrative approval, though it came to the Commission today as any demolition is required to.

Member Satterfield stated that she is glad that longtime Witherspoon-Jackson residents are staying in their home and commented that this project creates a nice meditative and relaxing space.

Public comment was opened. There was no public comment.

Motion was made by Member Satterfield to approve the application; the motion was seconded by Member Schure. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

FOR: Capozzoli, Howard, Pyle, Satterfield, Schure, Shatzkin
AGAINST: No one
ABSTAIN: No one
(Note: Member Endersby lost connection and was not available to vote.)

c) Application of Simplify Living, Inc.
39 Linden Lane
Minor Site Plan with Variances
Demolish Single-Family House and Construct Multi-Unit Dwelling
Suggested Tree Streets Historic District, Historic Preservation Elements, Princeton
Community Master Plan
Block 33.03, Lot 69; Zone R4
Chair Capozzoli said this application is under Planning Board jurisdiction and the Commission will send a memo to the Planning Board with recommendations.

Ms. Kim stated the house on the property has been demolished. She read her Historic Preservation Officer’s report on the application.

Member Endersby rejoined the meeting at 5:29 PM.

Ryan Kennedy, attorney for the applicant, introduced the application and stated the design was driven by the property’s zoning requirements. He said the design is for three units connected in one building with common space and the zoning code puts restraints on a design for a duplex with an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), multiple dwelling units or traditional townhomes.

Akash Ghuylani, representative for the applicant, stated that all three of the units will be electric powered with no gas, and presented other green features of the design.

Mr. Kennedy presented the subject property and prevailing use pattern of adjacent properties.

Dan Fortunato, architect for the applicant, presented proposed elevations and materials for the project, including hardy siding with black windows, a brick or stone façade base, black asphalt shingles, deck columns that could be steel or with a concrete pedestal. He also presented floor plans for each unit.

Mr. Kennedy addressed comments made by the Site Plan Review Advisory Board (SPRAB) on the application, including potentially adding a front porch along Linden Lane and adding a vehicle turnaround area in the rear, increasing impervious coverage but causing a safer situation when turning on Linden Lane.

James Chmielak, engineer for the applicant, presented the stormwater plan and landscape plan.

Mr. Kennedy stated that a sidewalk and entrance to the middle unit was added to the project. He said they cannot build two units in the front of the lot and one in the back before the Planning Board without requiring a use variance or subdivision approval.

Ms. Kim noted that an attached structure can mean a physical attachment, like a breezeway, not necessarily living space. She said the applicant is asking for many variances and could otherwise go to the ZBA. She asked if the structure will be for rent or made into condominiums. Mr. Kennedy responded they are 99% sure the property will be for rent and the application does not include condominiums or a subdivision. Mr. Fortunato stated the building could not be put in the rear of the lot due to the siting of parking.

Member Schure said the mass of the structure is gigantic compared to the existing structure and other properties in the area. He said the only relation of the structure is to maximizing the lot.
Member Pyle stated there is an eclectic group of buildings on Linden Lane and in the neighborhood and he appreciates adding new housing to Princeton. He asked what changes could be made to address visual compatibility. Mr. Fortunato said they could change the aesthetic siding and materials in the design. Mr. Kennedy stated there is no zoning path forward, other than use variance, to build structures similar to the adjacent ones.

Member Endersby said this is a Frankenstein building driven by greed with the maximum amount of building on a small lot, awkward aesthetics, three porches facing the neighbor’s property, no clear vision and an amalgam of poor solutions.

Member Satterfield expressed concern over developers entering the community just for profit.

Member Howard said she lived on Linden Lane and the proposal does not fit. She said she is concerned of developments only including rental units and of the three units and porches overlooking the neighbor’s house.

Member Schure expressed concern over the scale of the building, which he called heterogeneous. He said lowering the driveway from the existing exacerbates scale issues.

Member Pyle said the Commission needs to be open minded to more housing options. The building is a Frankenstein, he said, but the Commission must not discourage or be insensitive to the reality of builders. Member Shatzkin stated the Secretary of the Interior Standards preclude considering financial interests.

Chair Capozzoli stated her main objection is to the three decks facing the neighbor’s house.

Member Pyle said the scale of the building is an issue as well as the driveway, so breaking the project into two buildings is not the only solution. Member Shatzkin said there is local precedent for two buildings. Chair Capozzoli said the building could be more like a duplex with front porches. Member Schure said triple deckers can fit in cities though the question is of fitting structures into places appropriately. He said the aesthetic and scale of this design is so far distant to improve. Ms. Kim said a building with a carriage house is more compatible with the neighborhood and to keep the streetscape.

Mr. Kennedy stated the applicant cannot use an access easement with the adjacent property’s driveway and there are topography problems affecting the design. He said this application has been through a long process, including SPRAB, and hard to incorporate feedback. Ms. Kim stated the Commission can also issue a memo for ZBA cases and allows for concept reviews.

Public comment was opened. There was no public comment.

Chair Capozzoli recommended separate buildings. Member Schure said three rented units might not work on small lots and there are other approaches on highly desirable streets.

Mr. Schmierer asked the applicant to advise if they would like to go forward with the application before he writes the Commission’s memo. He said the Commission could also recommend a D4 variance to the ZBA.
Mr. Schmierer left the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Member Endersby stated the mirror image porches is the design were lazy. He said each can be distinct.

Chair Capozzoli said no one was thrilled by the design.

Mr. Kennedy said they will reconnect on the memo or alternatively a new vision for the property. He said he was unsure of which properties are in suggested districts to ask for a concept review.

6. **ADJOURN**

Chair Capozzoli stated the Commission has a special meeting tomorrow (March 22) to discuss municipal projects.

Motion was made by Member Satterfield to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Shatzkin. The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Justin Lesko
Recording Secretary