PRINCETON  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Minutes – Regular Meeting  
Monday, April 18th, 2022 – 4:00 PM  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

The meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 4:07 PM on Monday, April 18th, 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  
Freda Howard  
Thomas Pyle  
Shirley Satterfield  
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 annual New Jersey History and Historic Preservation Conference will be held Friday, June 3 at the Trenton War Memorial.

Ms. Kim also announced that Planning Director Michael La Place is leaving for a new job and his last day with the Municipality will be May 6th. She also said the Planning Department/Office of Historic Preservation Secretary recently left for a new job and that position is posted on the municipal website, while she is also searching for temporary support staff.

3. MINUTES

a) March 21, 2022 – Motion was made by Member Satterfield to approve the minutes of March 21, 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 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

Motion was made by Member Howard to approve the resolution; Member Shatzkin seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

5. APPLICATIONS

Chair Capozzoli noted that the two applications to be discussed tonight are for properties located in Suggested Historic Districts from the Historic Preservation Element of the Princeton Community Master Plan and asked Ms. Kim to discuss what that means. Ms. Kim stated the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) and municipal ordinance allow for Commission review and recommendations on properties in suggested historic districts of the master plan. She said groups or citizens can ask the Commission to elevate suggested historic districts to designated historic districts under the process laid out in the municipal ordinance, as is currently being done with the Prospect Avenue Historic District. She said the Commission traditionally does not nominate suggested districts to be designated as historic districts, but does review nominations.

a) Application of Frank, Robert and Mindy
11 Madison Street
Demolish Existing House and Construct New Single-Family House with Variances
Suggested Central Residential Historic District,
Historic Preservation Element, Princeton Community Master Plan
NJ/NRHP Princeton Historic District
Block 28.03, Lot 30; Zone R4
Z21-161; 95HP-2021

Ms. Kim read her Historic Preservation Officer’s report on the application. She stated this property is in a suggested historic district, thus subject to Commission review and a memo to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), prior to a hearing at the ZBA.

Ryan Kennedy, attorney for the applicant, introduced the application and said he agreed with most of Ms. Kim’s report, but corrected that the existing building will not be demolished and the application is for aesthetic changes and an addition. He said the applicant intends to keep as much of the building as possible and introduced the applicants, Robert and Mindy Frank.

Mr. Frank said he appreciated the input of the Commission, has lived in Princeton for 30 years and will live in the home full time. He said he and his wife find design and landscaping to be very important, and this design is for a transitional and temperate-modern structure.

James Holliday, architect for the applicant, presented elevations of the proposed structure, including materials. He said 90% of the existing foundation and parts of the existing walls, except for the rear one, will be reused, and the proposed height of the building will be 2’ lower than the existing highest point. He presented the proposed site plan.

Mr. Frank said they are repurposing interior materials as much as possible and described the proposed enclosed outdoor space in the rear of the building.
Mr. Kennedy presented photos of the existing streetscape and adjacent properties. He stated the proposal is influenced by the building at 12 Madison Street.

Mr. Holliday presented photos of newly built houses in the municipality, including some in the suggested Central Residential Historic District.

Mr. Kennedy stated the Suggested Districts section of the Historic Element of the Master Plan allows for different architectural styles and building elements in suggested districts.

Member Pyle thanked the property owners for their design and asked for more discussion of the front design of the proposal, including the use of square elements while, he said, the cadence of the street is angular. He asked for the thinking behind the differing design from the vernacular of the street. Mr. Frank said the architecture is a combination of Japanese and Scandinavian, called Japandi, and it is a modern but not jarring design. He said elements will be softened with landscaping. Mrs. Frank said the proposal will bring light into the house.

Ms. Kim thanked the applicant for clarifying that the application is not for demolition of the existing structure, but noted that the exterior will be greatly altered. She said the framing of the house will be retained but visually the building will be altered and the architecture of the buildings on the street is mostly still original.

Mr. Kennedy presented the rendering of the proposed structure overlaid on the Streetview image of the existing building and adjacent properties and a rendering to show the scale of the proposal.

Chair Capozzoli stated that proposal does not meet the historic ordinance criteria.

Public comment was opened.

Bruno Walmsley stated he is a resident of Willow Street and asked for the legality of using Willow Street, a private street, for access to the proposal’s garage and to stage construction vehicles. Member Shatzkin asked if the townhouses that own Willow Street would allow for an easement to the property. Mr. Kennedy stated this lot has been in the existing configuration with a driveway in the rear since in early 1900s. Mr. Frank said he did his due diligence while acquiring the property and also contacted the Willow Street Homeowner’s Association president and will contribute to the maintenance of Willow Street. He said there will be no construction vehicles on Willow Street.

Member Shatzkin stated the historic preservation ordinance says that contemporary architecture is not discouraged but must be compatible with the district the proposal is located in and this proposal does not meet that criteria. He said he does not love the design in this spot and the examples of more modern homes in historic contexts shown were in scale with the neighborhoods where they were located. He said the Park Place example shown returned to the Commission after a first meeting with changes. He said this proposal changes the streetscape more than the contemporaneous home at 10 Madison Street does.
Ms. Kim stated there is a difference in criteria for new construction and altered designs, and this alteration makes the building unrecognizable. Member Satterfield stated she agreed with Member Shatzkin and this design is very modern compared to other houses. Mr. Frank said there is beauty in diversity, the house across is modern and flat roofed, and light only enters the building from the front and rear. Member Shatzkin says his house is on a 40-foot lot on Chestnut Street and his approach to receive more light was to add a rear addition.

Mr. Kennedy asked if there are standards to design by for a building in a suggested historic district. Chair Capozzoli stated the Commission does not vote to approve the application but sends a memo to the ZBA, where the decision is made. Mr. Kennedy clarified he did not mean procedurally and said designated districts have individual buildings listed that can be designed from. He asked what design criteria suggested districts should be based on. Ms. Kim said applications in suggested districts are reviewed the same way that ones in designated districts are. She said suggested districts of the master plan could be thought of as in the queue waiting to be designated. She said this district was described in the 1981 Princeton Architectural Survey. Absent a district report, Mr. Kennedy asked, what can an applicant look at for their design or to address comments. Ms. Kim recommended asking the Commission for a concept review on properties in a suggested district.

Member Howard stated she loved the design but does not see it on this street. Mr. Frank asked how the other examples shown gained approval. Member Howard stated the examples have similar sizes, colors and/or elements to nearby buildings. For this proposal, she said, the black windows draw attention to the structure and there was no attempt to fit it to the street. Ms. Kim said the Park Place example was built on a vacant lot, the examples on Moore Street are not in a suggested or designated district, and some properties in suggested districts were not referred to the Commission or may have been approved prior to municipal consolidation. Mrs. Frank said the Charlton Street example was recent. Ms. Kim said only a few properties on Charlton Street are located in a suggested district and those ones are nearer to Nassau Street than the example.

Rebecca Cox stated she is the co-owner of 9 Madison Street and her house in identical to the subject one, except for the front porch. She said interesting architectural details may be found under the existing siding and the five adjacent homes on the street were built together with matching frontages. She said modernist additions on the street are usually built in the rear of the building.

Public comment was closed.

Chair Capozzoli asked Mr. Schmierer if he had enough information for a memo to the ZBA. Mr. Schmierer said yes and asked when the application is scheduled to appear before the ZBA. Mr. Kennedy said April 27th. Ms. Kim noted that the applicant could return to the Commission with changes in their design for a more positive report.

b) Application of Stock, Andrea and Warren
39 Pine Street
New Attic Dormers w/Variances
Suggested Tree Streets Historic District,
Historic Preservation Element, Princeton Community Master Plan
Block 33.01, Lot 86; Zone R4
Z22-184; 39HP-2022

Chair Capozzoli stated this property is in a suggested historic district thus subject to Commission review and a memo to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), prior to a hearing at the ZBA.

Ms. Kim read her Historic Preservation Officer’s report on the application.

Chair Capozzoli said the application is great as it uses existing materials and respects the building’s architecture, the proposed bigger windows are not out of place, and it is an improvement over the existing structure.

Member Shatzkin stated only two houses on the street have front-facing dormers and the proposal is a nice addition to a heterogeneous street. Member Satterfield agreed that dormers are a great addition to the home.

Member Howard said the proposal is a great addition to the street and house.

Public comment was opened. There were no public comments.

Andrea Stock, the applicant, said she has lived on the street for thirteen years, has lived in this house for eight years and her family needs more space or they would have to move from the house.

Member Shatzkin asked if the applicant put the new porch on the house. Ms. Stock responded yes, in 2015.

6. DISCUSSION

a) Paul Robeson Monument at Arts Council of Princeton
102 Witherspoon Street
Witherspoon-Jackson Historic District

Member Satterfield said there was a two-day ceremony for Paul Robeson’s birthday (April 9th) with a wreath-laying at the monument to him in front of the Arts Council of Princeton’s building, though there has been no conversation with the Arts Council about the monument. She said she would speak with the Arts Council about it. Chair Capozzoli noted that statue is private property and on private property. Member Shatzkin said any changes would need to be done in cooperation with the Arts Council.

Member Satterfield stated there has been concern over the writing on the plaque and the size of Mr. Robeson’s head on the monument. She said she can start a dialogue with the Arts Director of the Arts Council, Maria Evans. Member Pyle stated he can join in that effort and the monument is inadequate to the subject and a grander monument is more appropriate, particularly in advance of the 125th anniversary of Mr. Robeson’s birth in 2023.
Councilman Newlin stated funding is incoming for several efforts on Witherspoon Street and in the Witherspoon-Jackson Neighborhood, including the Witherspoon Street Redesign Phase II and Washington-Rochambeau Trail. He said there should be multi-leveled outreach with multiple partners for fundraising for this monument. He said he will discuss the monument with Adam Welch, the Executive Director of the Arts Council of Princeton. He stated signage for the Witherspoon-Jackson Historic District should also be created as a gateway.

Chair Capozzoli said the Commission could support the process as it begins.

b) Prayer House, Morning Star Church  
29 Birch Avenue  
Witherspoon-Jackson Historic District

Ms. Kim stated that she met with Member Endersby and a carpenter from his firm, and Elder Bynes to inspect the Morning Star Church’s Prayer House. She said the carpenter determined the floors and roof are in poor shape and Member Endersby said the best course of action would be to get measurements of the building and rebuild it with salvaged original materials. She stated there has been interest in using the building as a neighborhood museum by the Witherspoon-Jackson Neighborhood Association.

Member Pyle asked for Elder Bynes’ perspective. Ms. Kim said he is aware of the building’s conditions but has not signaled the Church’s intent. Member Pyle asked for the costs of rehabilitation. Councilman Newlin stated there are many moving parts to reuse this structure. He said only one member of the Church lives in-town and its congregation overall is dwindling. He said the Elder is working on how to leave the community and a question surrounding the Church’s properties is whether the Municipality wants to be involved in real estate and development. He noted that the community may lose the opportunity to save the building though it is the Elder’s decision on how to proceed.

Ms. Kim stated that Member Endersby is willing to do a complete measurement of the structure. She noted that it is on the Witherspoon-Jackson Historical and Cultural Society’s Heritage Tour of the Witherspoon-Jackson neighborhood, with a plaque in front.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

8. **STAFF REPORT**

Ms. Kim announced the Commission will hear an application on an Accessory Dwelling Unit in the Jugtown Historic District at their May 16th meeting and other applications are pending.

9. **ADJOURN**

Motion was made by Member Pyle to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Shatzkin. The vote was 5-0 in favor of adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Justin Lesko
Recording Secretary