



THPC Minutes of May 7, 2015

Vice-Chairman Mario Turchi called the meeting to order at 8:05 P.M. and read the Open Public Meetings Act.

Open Public Meetings Act

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, the notice requirements have been satisfied.

Meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting, and posted on the public bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Center and published in the Press Journal and The Record within the first 10 days of the New Year.

Copies of all revised or additional meeting notices are sent via fax to the Press Journal, The Record, Suburbanite and Northern Valley News and are posted on the public bulletin board in the lobby of the Municipal Center.

Roll Call:

Present:

Vice-Chairman Mario Turchi
Michael Barone
Richard Bennett
Reno Danese
Karen Neus,

Excused:

Chairman David Wall
Rita Heller

Also Present:

Mayor's Liaison Paul Stefanowicz
Student Liaison Nick Stefanowicz
Planning Board Liaison Kevin Tremble

Members of the Public:

Jerry O'Brien
Dr. Mark Docktor
Dr. Baghal
Steve Sinisi, ESQ., Counsel for Dr. Baghal

Open Public Portion of Meeting

Motion to open meeting to public made by Karen Neus; seconded by Reno Danese. So approved.

VALLEY HOTEL – 87 County Road

Steve Sinisi, Esq., 2 Cedars Drive, Paramus, N.J. introduced himself and represents Dr. Baghal regarding 87 County Road formerly Charlie Brown's Restaurant. Mr. Sinisi said there is an application pending to convert and develop site for a child care center, which is a permitted use under Statutes of State of New Jersey. Under Land Use Law, that's considered a beneficial use. Mr. Sinisi's appearance relates to mail and discussion regarding 87 County Road, generated by Senator Weinberg. She thought it would be good if there was discussion amongst parties to discuss how to pay homage to historical significance and facts relating to said site, recognizing at the same time that Dr. Baghal is intent on developing it for child care center. Mr. Sinisi spoke with Chairman Wall this afternoon, and congratulates him on his award. Dr. Baghal has lived in Tenafly 29 years and would like to move forward with this venture. They will go before the Tenafly Planning Board on May 13th. Vice-Chairman Turchi said Ms. Cady-Stanton tried to vote there at hotel, which represents a large part of history for Tenafly and the HPC. Mr. Sinisi said he's here to listen to anything constructive to pay appropriate recognition and respect to historical significance of this location without derailing what we have in mind, which has been designed and is ready to go subject to Planning Board's review and approval of the project.

Mr. Sinisi's one suggestion is placement of an appropriate plaque recognizing the significance of the site and contributions others have made to make it significant. Dr. Baghal is willing to make that recognition and recognize it with an appropriate plaque. V.C. Turchi asked if they were open to suggestions THPC had for the site. Mr. Sinisi said they have designs, renderings and pictures to show and commitments to others on leases subject to approvals under jurisdiction of the Planning Board. Charlie Brown's will be demolished and will be replaced with a child care facility. Mr. Bennett asked if Dr. Baghal would be the operator of the school. Mr. Sinisi said no, Learning Experience, a national child care center, would run it. Mr. Stefanowicz asked about a traffic study, noting how traffic on County Road south backs up to Cresskill during certain hours. Mr. Sinisi said a study has been performed and submitted to Planning Board, which will be discussed when hearings begin next week. Mrs. Neus asked if they were open to utilizing the building in some way, revamping the interior to meet child care needs. Mr. Sinisi said no, but perhaps they could have a display in the vestibule or entranceway appropriate to the event – perhaps a voting booth look – to signify who came here, with a plaque, to commemorate the event so that parents, children and guests would note this site was special to Tenafly. V.C. Turchi said THPC would weigh in, as they are "appointed" to look after the history of Tenafly, and are concerned that the legacy that's still there be preserved as much as possible. The original façade is no longer there, but a part of the building could be there, which would be more powerful than just a plaque. V.C. Turchi said if you took away vinyl siding, you would uncover the original hotel in there somewhere. As this is the first time THPC is seeing this, they're trying to form an opinion as to what they recommend or would like to see on the site. Mr. Sinisi said Chairman Wall made it very clear THPC is only advisory. V.C. Turchi asked if by emphasizing and highlighting some of that history that would add in the value of the site. There would be more foot traffic or generate interest. Dr. Baghal said he wished there was something as nice as the Learning Experience in Tenafly when his children were growing up. He would have liked to preserve the building and went inside with architect and engineer trying to see if they could keep everything from the outside, and just do work on the outside. For the safety of the children, it was impossible to do because the building is so old, it's impossible to

remodel. Dr. Baghal said there were many things to consider for the safety of the children. Mr. Sinisi added sometimes a structure has seen its best days and outlived its usefulness as a structure. Mr. Bennett asked what grades the school would cover. Dr. Baghal said six months to six years. Mrs. Neus asked if Dr. Baghal was owner of the property. He said no, the contract purchaser. Mr. Sinisi said they've entered into a contract; it will be purchased subject to approval. Corporate name right now is Dr. Baghal. After the closing, it would be transferred into an LLC in which he would be a majority member. Mrs. Neus asked if other uses were considered or was it always hoped to have some type of child care; having lived here for 29 years, you thought it was something Tenafly needed. Mrs. Neus said another child care facility went into a historic building and is successful. The Jewish School also covers this age of children. Louie Akil, who works closely with Learning Experience, said it's a preschool teaching reading, math, foreign languages plus yoga and other activities. Mr. Danese asked Dr. Baghal if he has a contract with Learning Experience to run the school. He said yes. Mrs. Neus inquired had Dr. Baghal looked at other towns: Cresskill, Bergenfield, and Tenafly. Mr. Sinisi said yes, they do due diligence. Mr. Bennett asked if they brought a site plan. Mrs. Neus said she didn't think it's been officially transmitted to THPC from Planning Board Secretary. Mr. Sinisi said this conversation was generated by letter from Planning Board Secretary indicating that Senator Weinberg wrote to Mayor & Council and Planning Board and were told there was a meeting, and hence they are here. Mr. Barone asked where the building will be placed on the lot in retrospect to Charlie Brown's. Dr. Baghal said it's almost the same footprint of Charlie Brown's. Mr. Sinisi said what they are viewing is a rendering – a TLE. Mr. Barone said the rendering doesn't look like it would fit on the piece of property. Mr. Sinisi said it shows material, facades, exterior signage appearance.

(8: 25 P.M. - At this point in the evening, Mr. Sinisi, Dr. Baghal and Louis Akil left the room.)

Jerry O'Brien, sworn by V.C. Turchi. Jerry presented to Secretary Karen Neus affidavit from The Record. Jerry presented the new site plan in which #11 was deleted.

(Exhibit A-19 – **Revised Site Plan, 4/27/15** – received and marked A-19.)

Jerry requested help from THPC as he was fined \$1,000 by Borough of Tenafly DPW, Tree Ordinance Supervisor Bob Culvert, for removing trees, because he does not own the property, and now told he has to remediate again some trees, which were trees that THPC asked him to remove. He'd like a letter from the Chairman stating that THPC asked Jerry to take them down. Mario asked why Jerry didn't know about a permit; Jerry thought to get them out of the way now seemed like a logical thing. He requested letter say for the view of the house, that's why it was set back 52 feet and thus the trees were removed. Reno asked if they told Jerry to remediate the trees. He said yes, remediate the old trees, and THPC has to approve his landscape plan also. Mario said you could put the trees elsewhere. Dr. Docktor would like spruces on one side to give them their backyard, starting where the back of Jerry's house starts. (Jerry discussed where trees would go, pointing to spots on site plan.) Jerry wants to keep a Japanese red maple and weeping Atlas.

Mario asked about putting a curvature in driveway to add a little softness to entire driveway (doing a drawing on the site plan.) Jerry will look at it when he's there, and try. Docktor's is now a separate lot now. Jerry will have to get a permit to put in driveway. Kevin said if it gets approved now it would be easier, than if he has an open item later, in which Jerry might run into a separate C/A. Jerry said he would have to get a curb cut. Richard wondered if Mike Hupschman was concerned about grades. Jerry said zoning (Bob Burns) passed on the house last week. If engineering says driveway is okay, Jerry will do it that way. Discussion amongst

many regarding curb cut and where it would be located. Richard wondered why it was in the corner. Jerry said he went with the minimum. More discussion about grade, if another retaining wall might be needed and curvature of driveway.) Mario asked Doctor about his opinion. He said he'd like it as attractive as possible. Jerry said he's at mercy of engineers regarding moving driveway from three to five feet, and if he'd have to build a retaining wall.

Jerry showed new plans. Only first two pages are changed, rest are the same. New elevation shown. Mario has list of items from last meeting.

(Exhibit A-20 – Revised Elevation – received and marked for identification.)

Mario looking at list and revised site plan:

1. Eliminate panels above garage doors – now done.
2. Santiago doors with square windows – “will consider” alternate color to white. Jerry said “will consider”.
3. Kevin suggested keeping front door & garage doors same tones. Jerry said he loves white and doing double doors on front with oil-rubbed bronze hinges. Other items are also going to be oil-rubbed bronze – lanterns, etc. Jerry indicated he really likes white, and can sell it much easier if it's white. This white door is \$4,000 top of the line. He will “look” at another color for Santiago door. Karen asked if they were now discussing the “diagonals” as no where else on the house are there any angles like that. On the clean version, there are rectangle shapes, but Karen said the cross bucks look out of place. Jerry said the windows will be square, rectangle, rectangle, etc.
4. Kevin said white emphasizes the garage. Jerry added when you add boxwoods or a colored tree, more texture and the stone, it softens the look.
5. Mario said: rectangular Eldorado cultured stone with narrow joint – Jerry said yes. Jerry said he's using Canetti (ph.)
6. Eldorado stair riser – Jerry agreed. No shutters – agreed.
7. Square shakes on the gable – agreed.
8. Oval gable windows or square shakes – Jerry said Fibon (ph.) vents, which are not real vents. Discussion ensued about the gables and roofing vents. Everyone said it would be mixture of styles – oval gable vents eliminated.
9. Mario continued: 3' high Eldorado apron around building. Originally, was one side facing Docktors, but Jerry said he'll do it all the way around.
10. Mario said: Eldorado chimney with flared top. Jerry asked if they had a design in mind. He'll flare it and add a piece of blue stone and cap on chimney. Mario had asked about brick chimney. He said a house from around turn of century like this would have had brick. Jerry thinks stone will look better and match older home, which has no brick. Mario will send pictures of what he has in mind regarding stone cap on chimney.
11. Curved driveway – already discussed.

Kevin brought up curbing stone. Jerry said yes: red, pink or brown, which is \$1.00 more. Kevin suggested giving Belgium blocks a cant when installed. Jerry agreed that he lays them down. Mario asked about driveway plan, will that be on landscaping plan. Jerry said driveway will be asphalt; apron at bottom will probably be of same stone. Karen asked if Docktors would also have same apron. Jerry hadn't thought about it, but

he can do it, yes. Jerry said zoning is done. He will file deed with letter of Appropriateness. Elliot Urdang has to send letter to State, Bergen County and then everything is done, which takes a few weeks.

New two pages will go with other plan, and disregard first two pages. Mike said Eldorado stone around house has to be added to plan also. Jerry said he added it to his plan and Karen can do the same on HPC plan. Jerry asked, if he should get a buyer while building the house and the buyer wants pavers, is HPC against pavers. Mario said it depended on the color.

Karen asked if there were any other conditions written at last meeting besides the landscape plan. Jerry said motion was made at last meeting that as long as he came in with these conditions, HPC already voted. Jerry is still requesting letter regarding trees.

No one has appeared in opposition at the last meeting or this meeting to speak regarding this application. Mario said approval given on these conditions at last meeting, according to revisions made at this meeting.

MOTION MADE BY RENO DANESE, SECONDED BY KAREN NEUS TO APPROVE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITION THAT MEETING IS CONTINUED TO MAY 7, 2015 AT WHICH TIME THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS MAY BE REVIEWED, CONDITIONED OR REVOKED. ALL CHANGES REVIEWED AND ARE PRESENT. ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS MADE ABOUT DRIVEWAY ON ORIGINAL LOT. MR. O'BRIEN HAS REITERATED THAT THE DRIVEWAY IS GOING TO BE ASPHALT AND INTENDS TO PUT BELGIUM BLOCK APRON AT FOOT OF TWO DRIVEWAYS. HE WILL REVIEW SUGGESTED PLANS FOR A FLARED CHIMNEY TOP AND ALL OTHER CHANGES HAVE BEEN REFLECTED IN THE PLANS, WHICH ARE LISTED AS EXHIBIT A-19 OF REVISED SITE PLAN AND A-20, REVISED SET OF ELEVATIONS.

SECRETARY KAREN NEUS MOVED THAT CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS BE APPROVED CONDITIONALLY UPON RECEIPT OF LANDSCAPE PLAN; SECONDED BY RENO DANESE. So approved.

(Richard Bennett recused himself.) VOTE: AYES – 4 ABSTAIN – 1

At this point in the meeting, Mr. O'Brien thanked HPC for their help and left the meeting.)

87 County Road – Valley Hotel

Mario said one question is if a professional advisor should be hired regarding Valley Hotel, and have them report on it to the Planning Board. Rita Heller informed Mario that T. Robins Brown is available. Kevin added he has someone who could also work in an advisory capacity. Paul said something came out this afternoon to do a historic report on Valley Hotel. Mario added Planning Board meeting coming soon, so report must

take place soon. Kevin said what is Commission to report on this project. Kevin thought David should have received site and buildings plans by now. Kevin has seen the plans and it was discussed they were to be distributed. Kevin said it is a different process than 195 Jefferson, which is a historic landmark, as Charlie Brown's is in the Master Plan as an identified site. The inventory in the Master Plan in the historic preservation element are things that can be recommended for designation, especially ones that say "especially significant". Kevin does not know when 45-day clock starts – is either determination of completeness or scheduling of hearing for Planning Board. This is not a separate C/A, there's no separate 45-day clock. Mario said Dave did drop something off today. He barely read it before the meeting, which are report and recommendation to Planning Board regarding 87 County Road. The last part basically reads, and he gives reasons why this is his recommendation, but HPC members have not discussed it amongst themselves.

Last paragraph says, "The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that so much of the application as asks to seek to demolish the back portion of the building be granted conditionally and that so much as seeks to demolish the front be denied. The conditions would include that the applicant work with the Borough in permitting examination by independent architects and/or engineers of the building, cooperating with regard to finding and the erecting of signs educating the public of the historic nature of the site."

Kevin didn't think it a positive thing to say "we think some of it should be taken down". Everyone knows what historic significance of what's believed to be original. The historian has photographs, which were provided. T. Robins Brown is available Tuesday, Mario said. HPC wants to ask her if she's willing to testify. Kevin said she did not do 53 Knickerbocker presentation to Mayor & Council; it was done by Mary Krugman, because T. Robins Brown said she couldn't testify because she didn't have liability insurance. If she were employed by the Borough, Kevin thought she'd be covered by Borough's liability insurance. Kevin appeared before Zoning Board regarding Cotswold; Zoning Board would not accept expert testimony from Kevin as Chairman of HPC, and Commissioners should be considered experts. Head said no, Kevin you are the expert, because expert testimony generally has weight on a Board's decision. Mario said you can have an all or nothing approach, where you might end up with nothing, or is it better to go in situations like this, where things are stacked against you and you take an approach – okay, we'll let the back of the building go, because it will be easier at least to get some kind of approval. Kevin said Federal Investment Tax Credit and what is determined architecturally, it doesn't appear to have significance; perhaps associative significance under criteria of National Register. National Park Service might not accept Federal Investment Tax Credit because part was demolished. Borough of Tenafly changed zoning to allow the addition on 91 Clinton. National Park Service had to review that addition and make determination that it was acceptable. There was an investment of over \$1 million by new owner. Borough purchased it for \$250,000 at the time; auctioned it off with restrictions it had to be rehabbed. Borough lost \$50,000 at the time. Now a \$1.6 million ratable and brings in \$37,000 in taxes and no children sent to our school system.

Federal Investment Tax Credit only applies to income-producing property, and 91

Clinton has been a tremendous value to the Borough in terms of revenue. The story should be toted by all members. Kevin discussed extensively reports, Borough policies, and Master Plan.

Richard Bennett said he'd go with T. Robins Brown and perhaps Building Inspector from Tenafly to go into the Valley Hotel. He said building is combustible and not conducive to a place having children under three years old; on different levels which will have access problems; not handicap accessible. He thinks it's a mismatch for educational purposes. Discussion followed about having front of new structure look like Valley Hotel instead of proposed design. Charlie Brown's owner was told it would cost about \$250,000 to renovate building, but they chose not to. Mike said public would not be allowed into the school to see plaque paying tribute to E.C. Stanton because of security for children.

MOTION MADE BY KAREN NEUS; SECONDED BY RICHARD BENNETT TO HIRE T. ROBINS BROWN TO EXPLORE AND ADVISE HPC OF DISPOSITION OF 87 COUNTY ROAD AND 53 KNICKERBOCKER ROAD WITH AN EXPENDITURE UP TO \$1,000. So approved.

Kevin sent the name of International Consultants, Inc. from Philadelphia, PA to Dave. This firm specializes in structure and cost estimates. Dave said he'd give them a call.

53 KNICKERBOCKER ROAD

Mario said there is hearsay about funds being available to purchase said property. T.R. Brown will be advising on this property also. He's not sure what HPC's options are or what HPC should be recommending at this point. Is funding realistic or wild goose chase. Karen asked what is the task as there is nothing to rule on. Mario said on May 28th there is Open Space Committee meeting. Mike was at their last meeting and did a great job in summarizing what was discussed. Idea was proposed to get Tenafly Nature Center to manage park settings on west side of Tenafly. Discussion was to purchase and manage said 6.5 acre property, but owned by Tenafly. They were worried about parking surface – gravel would be fine. Mark brought subject up of purchasing of property at Council meeting, but it was shot down. If Tenafly comes up with funds to purchase, that will be only way to save property from being sub-divided. Mike thinks Open Space taxes were suspended for two years, and will restart soon. It will go to referendum in 2017. Mike asked if HPC has ability to speak to TNC regarding utilizing funds possibly allocated from anonymous donor. Paul said it would be a major fundraising, the bottom line. Discussion about why HPC should speak with TNC and Council has already passed on designating this property. Whoever wants to save property, should be group in charge of fundraising. Karen said TNC runs entirely on volunteers and does not have manpower to manage another property without additional funding from Borough. Discussion was there is a lot of public outcry when this type of property falls; should \$7 million of public money be put in; lost revenues over \$100,000/year; maintenance ongoing. Using Don Merino's mathematics regarding children and schools, Stillman would need another classroom, because of new homes and students added to population. Town looking at tax revenue, not the rest of the

picture. Kevin spoke about railroad station being purchased by Borough in 1966; HPC being formed and that was their first project; rent for that property since 1966 without adding children to school system. Borough is way under in meeting Round 1 and 2 obligations for affordable housing; Round 3 an unknown. Kevin said there were lots of different options: condos like Cotswold; townhouses added at edges. No one willing to explore those. Mike asked if anyone had ideas for fundraising to save this property. Karen said music school at JCC is cramped for space, and Director has mentioned how nice it would be to have her own building, but impossible to think about funding. Paul said recreational people and environmental people in town are protective of Open Space Funds. It would be in their interest to bond or raise money to save property and not empty kitty of Open Space Fund. Richard said Englewood purchased schools and repackaged them. If Borough had a real purpose in mind, it wouldn't be unreasonable to bond the project, do an RFP; sell it to a purpose that you want. Karen said that is how Nature Center property was acquired; town has to say our highest goal is to preserve this as Open Space. We will all invest ourselves in maintaining this property as Open Space., so raise funds through public bond issue to buy the property. Discussion followed: do you want half acre lots, no designation was wanted, is there a middle road, as there are enough interests from other groups to co-align that we want to maintain this property. Owner gets his money out, property stays in hands of Borough, what is HPC position. What is HPC doing now, the next step? Karen, Richard and Mario will meet with T.R. Brown on Tuesday at 9:00 AM at 87County Road.

Other Agenda Items

1. List most significant properties which though not landmarked, should be, to give to Mayor & Council. TABLE
2. May is Historic Preservation Month –exhibit in the library – already on display. Alice, Dave, Paul and Nick put it together.
3. Best place for erecting Stanton/Anthony statues – Huyler, Davis Johnson, Highwood and County Road. Mike said Open Space Group made recommendation that they use funds to purchase triangle at Highwood & County Road, since it's close to Valley Hotel. TABLE
4. Oresko Monument – Paul said at Council meeting last Tuesday, HPC/Mario can have it ready in about a month. Just footing provided by DPW. Some want to landscape park first, and have further discussion. They know HPC is ready to go forward, but just want more time. Do they put in sprinklers and sod?
5. Kevin relayed to Karen he met people from 94th Reenactment; they knew Sgt. Oresko and were interested in attending and participating in the dedication.
6. Blue sign for Valley Hotel – Karen said there was talk about getting sign and putting it up as soon as possible, but now a tad premature.
7. Approval of April 9, 2015 minutes. MOTION MADE BY RENO DANESE; SECONDED BY KAREN NEUS TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THAT DATE. M. Barone abstained. So approved.
8. Railroad Station progress. Mike waiting for final proposal from T. R. Brown, as it was quite voluminous. Kevin asked if there was any money in budget for repairs. Paul not sure. Someone did look the building over and noted several areas of repairs. Person took photographs and submitted them to Jewell. Report was

presented to County with photographs that were more than a year old. Representative from New Jersey Historic Trust took photographs, sent letter to Jewell and she said they'd get right on it.

Mario said new procedure is needed; Borough owning a public building doesn't work. Mario suggested Borough give maintenance money to HPC; HPC will hire people that are needed to do repairs in coordination with Borough. Paul will ask Council if possible for town to allocate maintenance funds to HPC, who will coordinate efforts so as not to bother Borough; Jewell and DPW will be notified before anything is done.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Reno Danese; seconded by Mario Turchi. So approved.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez

MINUTES APPROVED OCTOBER 1, 2015