



THPC Minutes of May 7, 2009

Roll Call:

Present: Chairman Bill Saunders, Rita Heller, Don Merino, Karen Neus, Mario Turchi

Absent: Dave Wall

Open Public Meetings Act:

Chairman Saunders called the meeting to order at 8:00 P.M. and recited the Open Public Meetings Act.

Agenda:

1. 91 West Clinton – Marina Blyumin

Ms. Blyumin, owner of the Montessori school/day care facility and building, introduced herself to the members and a discussion was held regarding a fence she wishes to erect in the rear yard to surround an outdoor play area for safety purposes. Karen mentioned the fence is visible from the street; Ms. Blyumin will need THPC COA.

Don requested THPC members see sample of fence and color, a photo of the type would be acceptable also. White vinyl is not acceptable. It is a minor application and Chairman Saunders can sign off on it. There is a slight complication in that a means of egress is needed, a gate swinging out.

Mario said maintaining a painted fence is difficult, if Ms. Blyumin goes with plain, wooden stockade fence, it is much easier to keep. Karen said she prefers not to have a stockade fence, which does not seem in keeping with the style of the house and mentioned a preference for some type of picket fence, which has a pleasant visibility. Marina needs 4 foot high.

Mario and Don both agreed stockade or simple open picket; architectural landscapers believe plainer is better. Ms. Blyumin will return with samples and types.

2. Driveway at 72 Magnolia

Mr. Matsuo has two trees at the curb, which make it impossible to put in a straight driveway. He spoke with Tenafly tree person. Chairman Saunders spoke to Frank Mottola re: the HPC approval of the bend in the driveway.

3. Blauvelt Memorial

The article written in the newsletter last month was an article composed by David Wall about James Blauvelt, the only known Tenafly Civil War veteran for whom a new plaque was erected on the monument at Huyler Park on Memorial Day.

4. Signage for Historic Districts/Homes

Don spoke about the wonderful presentation Mario gave before the Mayor & Council regarding signage for historical district. The Mayor & Council was very pleased with the logo, and would use it for other items and ways to find places in Tenafly. Don introduced Mario and Mario did add a few more things about Lance Wyman and had booklet to show them also. Bill asked what the next step was, and Mario had emailed Lance asking him the same thing.

Don wants Mario to ask Lance for his bill and invoice for the signs. Don asked Joe where the \$12,000 is; Joe knows exactly where in budget allotment it is. Karen asked if Lance has an assistant, who would communicate and liase with the THPC, since Mr. Wyman travels often and is unavailable to answer questions. Mario is speaking with fabricator.

Bill thought the order of things should be: 1. bill us; 2. release production and ready drawings. Karen would like to use photographs from Mario's booklet with information so she can write article for town newsletter.

5. Grant funding for glass photographic plates

The Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historical Affairs has sent the first payment of \$900 for the grant under the Bergen County History Grant Program that was made to the Borough Historian for her project to preserve and print a collection of rate glass negatives of early Tenafly's history.

6. State Historic Preservation Office

Regarding Sewage Pumping Station – Karen reminded the Commission of Kevin Tremble's description of the brick building as being a fine example of the civic architecture of its time. Don said the sewage building is neo-gothic architecture. The architecture is important, but not the building. Mario added the public perceives THPC fighting for the building near the dump/recycling. Alice indicated office space is needed, could this building be used? It is at 155 Grove Street, Zone 0, Block 4, less than 1/3 acre, 74.5 x 70 feet. Don wondered who would purchase it, perhaps the Rifle Club as they are nearby. Don asked what do we want to do as THPC, from historical point of view, we're not interested. Bill asked why should THPC defend keeping it, it's an

awkward building in an awkward location.

The HPC agreed that a communication should be addressed to the Borough Administrator advising that HPC had no interest in the building, (this memo has already been forwarded to J. DiGiacomo).

As agreed by the HPC members, Karen will prepare the letter to SHPO to be addressed to Mr. Dan Saunders including the alternate language regarding the THPC disagreement with the findings of SHPO. Karen has already completed the letter; it has been signed and forwarded to SHPO.

THPC does not possess any information locally about claims made by Lynn Drobbin & Associates of Pelham, NY, in HARBS report that Charles Holmes House was owned by African Americans or that there was historic significance to those claims (found in the HARBS report) that there was an African American community in Tenafly about 100 years ago.

Don will ask Dave and Alice about the background of the Charles Holmes house. Drop it, if it isn't important. Mario suggested someone call Lynn Drobbins of Pelham Associates and ask why Charles Holmes House is in the report.

MOTION MADE BY KAREN NEUS TO HIRE T. ROBINS BROWN TO RESEARCH AND COMPLETE A DESIGNATION REPORT ON TENAFLY RAILROAD STATION HISTORIC DISTRICT. THE PURPOSE FOR THE REPORT IS TO SUPPORT ELIGIBILITY OF DISTRICT AS A LOCALLY DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICT; 2nd by Don Merino. So carried.

7. COTSWOLD FOUNTAIN

The fountain has been deemed as historical property, contrary to the applicant claiming it as "personal property". The applicant illegally removed the fountain and returned it only after two court decisions ordered him to return it to the Cotswold property. At one point, the applicant wanted to donate the fountain to the Borough so that he could benefit from a tax deduction. Subsequently, three issues surfaced that resulted in the HPC deciding not to accept the offer to donate the fountain to the Borough.

1. The applicant stated that he wanted the Borough to write a letter to him commending the donation to counter the unfavorable press directed at the applicant resulting from "recent" unfavorable reports in the press.
2. Purchasers of the Cotswold condo units appeared at a meeting of the Mayor & Council to report that the applicant had told them to sign a document stating that they had no interest in the fountain. Further, that if they did not sign the document, they would not be allowed to close on their condo purchase.
3. The applicant did not produce clear and irrefutable documentation that he owned the fountain and that it was his "personal property".

In this letter of April 22, 2009, the attorney for the applicant, Elliot Urdang, working under OPRA legislation, has requested any documentation pertinent to the fountain issue. Bill asked HPC members to check their computers and files on this issue between the dates of April 2, 2007 and October 1, 2007 and to provide copies of their findings to the Borough Clerk on an ASAP basis.

Mario wondered if THPC was entering a dispute that wasn't theirs. Don said he cannot vote on the application if he doesn't know who owns the fountain. He asked if the applicant (Mr. Fish) can show a deed that the fountain is his personal property, can he show credible evidence of this claim. Karen feels that Mr. Fish wants THPC to give approval that he owns the fountain. Don said it is an incomplete application because it is not known where the fountain will be moved. Don also mentioned that a public hearing should be held and that all members of the Cotswold Association should be notified of the hearing as well as all other parties included in the 250' radius from the fountain.

A motion was proposed by Don Merino and seconded by Chairman Saunders:

MOTION FOR THE THPC TO ASK THE BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR TO DETERMINE OWNERSHIP OF THE FOUNTAIN BEFORE WE ACT UPON THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

The motion was unanimously approved.

8. HISTORIC PLAN ELEMENT

Karen wonders where should it go from here, do we want to do this. She has recommendations and list of priorities; we don't need to finalize it. It is not in any shape for Mayor & Council. Perhaps give it to Planning Board. Do we need Donna to analyze each report? Mario thinks give it to Town Planner and let him whittle it down.

(At this point in the meeting, Don Merino excused himself at 9:30 P.M.)

Rita believes we should hand it off as many hours have been put into this. THPC is volunteers. Give it to professionals; Bill said that was food for thought.

9. #53 KNICKERBOCHER ROAD – GREEN BELT – EVELYN CLYMAN

Karen said Mrs. Clyman is quite elderly and frail; give information on property to T. Robins Brown. Mario thinks Karen has done enough, pass it on. Karen will call Mr. Sellinger and say everything is ready to be given to Town Planner. The goal is to connect TRB with Mrs. Clyman before she passes.

10: APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES 2009

Motion to approve made by Mario Turchi; seconded by Bill Saunders. So carried.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Karen Neus; seconded by Mario Turchi. So carried.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah L. Alvarez, Secretary

Approved 6/4/09