

Township of West Orange
Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – March 10, 2021

- 1) Notice of the date, time, and location of this meeting was given to the Township Clerk, was advertised in the *West Orange Chronicle*, and has been posted on the Township Bulletin Board and the Township Website in accordance with the requirements of the New Jersey Open Public Records Meetings Act.
- 2) The meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order at 7:02 P.M. Commissioners Feeney, Feitlowitz, Forseth, McConnell, Irvis, and Wosh, were present. Commissioners Drill and Ficarotta were absent. Council liaison Tammy Williams attended, as did Ronnie Gross and Rita DiMatteo from the Llewellyn Park managers and trustees.
- 3) The next regular Commission meeting will be held via Zoom on April 14 at 7 P.M.
- 4) Minutes of the February meeting were approved as amended.
- 5) Commissioner Feitlowitz chaired the meeting. He announced that the Certified Local Government grant was submitted to the State of New Jersey on time and thanked municipal officials, the Township Council, Hunter Research, and Commission members for supporting the project and meeting tight deadlines. If funded, the \$50,000 grant will enable the completion of historic structures surveys in West Orange.
- 6) Ronnie Gross and Rita DiMatteo submitted their proposal to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for work on the Llewellyn Park Gatehouse, a designated property. The work will involve exterior masonry repointing, exterior finish carpentry restoration., wood shake roof restoration, copper gutters and leaders repair, and exterior painting. The Llewellyn Park managers have received a capital grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust, raised the necessary additional funding, contracted with a historical consultant and a contractor to perform the work, and plan to start the project in May with a completion date by the end of the summer. The entire project cost will be approximately \$300,000 and the presenters thanked Brian Feeney for providing a letter of support for the grant. Ronnie Gross indicated that the lighting work on the Gatehouse already had been completed as part of a previous project. The Commission voted

unanimously to approve and accept the proposal as a complete application. A separate vote on acceptance of the Certificate of Appropriateness will occur at the March meeting.

- 7) Commissioner Feitlowitz reported that he is still awaiting a response from St. Mark's Church concerning renovations to the exterior brownstone. No new work has been conducted.
- 8) Brian Feeney reported that he had spoken with the Pleasantdale Chateau owners in the Fall and that they still planned to restart the garage renovation project as the pandemic eases.
- 9) The Commission still has five property designations pending. Either Commissioner Feeney or Commissioner Feitlowitz will contact Karen Carnevale, the Township Clerk, to determine whether the necessary public meeting that would move the designations forward might be accomplished through Zoom. Tammy Williams asked about the status of the Hecker Carriage House on Ridge Road. Commissioner Feitlowitz reviewed its historical significance, as well as its deteriorated physical condition owing to the fact that it has been vacant for approximately two decades. Commissioner Feeney noted that the Planning Board has placed a deed restriction in the title that will not allow a purchaser to destroy the building.
- 10) Commissioner Feitlowitz opened a discussion concerning the HPC website. Commissioner Wosh has been working with Shari Quirk in the Mayor's office to streamline the site and add new content. All of the HPC's surveys, including the Guter/Acroterion report from 1991 and the more recent neighborhood surveys, now appear on the site. Approved minutes also are regularly posted. Commissioner McConnell suggested several improvements to the "Historic Designated Properties" tab, including placing the properties in chronological order with brief descriptions concerning their significance; linking them to attractive photos; and ultimately allowing viewers to access the designation reports if they want more detailed information. Commissioner Irvis recommended adding content to the "Events and Programs" tab that would provide information on future meetings and contain Zoom links. This will be done in time for the next meeting. Work will continue.
- 11) Commissioner Irvis moved, and Commissioner McConnell moved to adjourn the meeting, which was approved unanimously at 7:56.