

Township of West Orange
Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – April 14, 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, Ficarotta, Forseth, McConnell, Irvis, and Wosh, were present. Commissioner Drill was absent. Council liaison Tammy Williams attended, as did Ronnie Gross and Rita DiMatteo from the Llewellyn Park managers and trustees, and Kevin Malanga, a member of the public.

- 3) The next regular Commission meeting will be held via Zoom on May 12 at 7 P.M.

- 4) Minutes of the March meeting were approved as amended.

- 5) The Commission considered the draft “Certificate of Appropriateness” for the Llewellyn Park Gatehouse project. Commissioner Forseth asked whether project plans and specifications existed that the Commission might examine and also questioned when mock-ups would be available for review. Ronnie Gross explained that there are no plans or drawings owing to the fact that all of the work involves replacement of existing materials and the specifications prepared by Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc. were submitted to the Township as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness application. Mockups will be available for review during the project and language will be added to the certificate stipulating that Llewellyn Park should contact the commission at that time so that relevant on-site inspections might be conducted by a Commission subcommittee. Ronnie Gross expressed his opposition to the statement in the certificate mandating that digital images of photographs documenting the project should be provided to the Township and the West Orange Public Library “free of any copyright.” Chairperson Feeney explained that there had been precedent for inserting such language in the Edison Battery Building project. After considerable discussion, the commission agreed that this language would be removed from the certificate and that new language would be inserted indicating that Llewellyn Park would retain copyright over the images. Since this new language would need to be reviewed by the Llewellyn Park legal team, the commission will hold a special meeting later in April to consider and vote on the revised Certificate of Appropriateness.

- 6) No updates have been received concerning the St. Mark's Church building restoration. Commissioner Feitlowitz has been notified by the Township, however, that the church is planning to run an underground line that does not require a permit. Chairperson Feeney will follow up with the Township to determine the nature of this project and express the commission's concern about possible damage to the structure.
- 7) No updates have been received concerning the Pleasantdale Chateau garage complex project.
- 8) Chairperson Feeney has been in contact with the Township Clerk, who stated that a public meeting to consider the five pending property designations can be held virtually. There are some timing stipulations that need to be considered, and the meeting likely will be held over the summer.
- 9) Chairperson Feeney mentioned that a tentative contract apparently exists for a buyer to purchase the George V. Hecker Carriage House at 36 Ridge Road, one of the pending property designations. The potential buyer apparently understands and is sympathetic to the idea of appropriate restoration, and also is aware of the pending designation.
- 10) Council liaison Tammy Williams raised a question concerning the Buddhist Temple at 29 Ridgeway. She has met with the monks and they are interested in learning more about the designation process. A designation report had been prepared for this property approximately twenty years ago, owing to its architectural and historical significance. At that time, however, the designation was voted down by the Township Council. Chairperson Feeney will speak with the monks to explain the process, and explore ways to move such a designation forward.
- 11) Kevin Malanga addressed the commission and asked interested commissioners to contact the Township Council concerning the Hecker Carriage House, expressing his view that the Township should acquire the property and undertake a restoration project. Commissioners did not respond one way or the other to his suggestion.
- 12) The meeting adjourned at 8:47.