

MADISON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting – April 11, 2023

Meeting conducted remotely by Zoom

Attending: Madison Historic Preservation (“HPC”) Chair Jill Rhodes, Vice Chair Adrienne Novak; Members, John Forte, Max Hart, Chris Kellogg, Mary Ellen Lenahan, David Luber, Tyler Merson and John Solu; and Recording Secretary Laurie Hagerich. Absent: Council Liaison Debra Coen.

Updates:

Dr. Rhodes announced that Council Liaison Debra Coen has resigned from the Borough Council and a new liaison will be appointed soon. Adrienne Novak has agreed to serve as a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment and she was congratulated on this appointment.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Rhodes at 7:35 pm. She announced the meeting was called in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. A verbal roll call was taken.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the February 14, 2023, Public Meeting were considered. On motion made, seconded, and carried, the minutes were approved as written.

Sign & Façade Reviews:

22 Main Street – The Nature of Reading book shop:

A photo was shown of the hanging sign for this new business. The sign was previously approved by HPC’s subcommittee in order to meet the turn-around time frame.

TCC Reviews: None received by April 4, 2023.

New Business:

51-55 Main Street – Verizon Wireless Tower Installation

An application has been filed by Verizon to install a new antenna 63 feet high on the building which is 50 feet high. A similar application was filed and approved about 10 years ago. Dr. Rhodes tried unsuccessfully to get further details and information from Verizon. After discussion it was agreed more information and clarification is needed. Dr. Rhodes will write to Verizon to request same.

Historic Preservation Awards:

Several proposed residential properties worthy of recognition were discussed, as well as properties in the Downtown Civic and Commercial Historic District. The property at 62 Ridgedale Avenue in the Bottle Hill Historic District recently renovated by Jeff Freidel was chosen for recognition in the residential category.

In the commercial category, two properties were chosen: Madison Wine Cellar at 29 Main Street, specifically architect Jerry Bruno, who has been very sensitive to maintaining historic preservation in Madison and influenced the property owner to restore the façade on the building and make adjustments so that the new signage would be more aesthetically pleasing. Hopefully, this example will encourage other property owners to work with HPC in the future. The second commercial property chosen was Sunday Motor Co., as an example of adaptive re-use of an existing building.

The following assignments were given: Mr. Solu will reach out to Jerry Bruno for information to use in the awards recognition; Dr. Rhodes will contact the owners of 62 Ridgedale Avenue; Mr.

Forte will follow up on the design of the lawn signs for 2023; Ms. Novak will contact owners of Sunday Motor Co. and work with Dr. Rhodes on a press release.

Historic Preservation Conference:

The 2023 conference will be held June 12 and 13 at Stockton University in Atlantic City. The theme is “Fun and Fury”. Members are asked to notify Dr. Rhodes by April 20 to qualify for the early bird registration and have payment made by the Borough.

Updates from Liaisons:

Planning Board:

Mr. Forte reported a change of use was approved for 25 Green Village Road and the next date for review of revised plans for the 3-5 Central Avenue project is April 18. HPC presence would be helpful, and several members indicated they would attend.

Zoning Board:

Since Ms. Novak is now a Zoning Board member, it was agreed she will replace Ms. Lenahan as HPC liaison on the Zoning Board. Ms. Lenahan reported the last meeting involved property on Main Street near the Chatham border, not in a historic district.

Open Spaces:

Mr. Merson reported the Open Space Committee completed re-organization at the last meeting and will not meet in April.

Historical Society:

Mr. Luber reported the next Historical Society program will be on Tuesday, April 18, with historian Peter J. Wosh speaking on “Murder on the Mountain, Crime, Passion and Punishment in the Gilded Age.”, conducted via Zoom. In March the program featured a speaker on the City of Paterson.

Other Business:

Mr. Solu showed photos of recent repair made by NJ Transit to a stanchion at the stairway on the corner of Waverly and Lincoln Place, located in the Civic and Commercial Historic District. The repair was made without review or approval by HPC. The material used in the repair is incompatible with the rest of the area and detracts from the overall appearance. Further NJ Transit did not apply for the required municipal permit prior to doing the work. It was agreed HPC will reach out to the NJ Transit historic preservation representative to request a visual inspection of the site and ask for remediation of the work. At the same time a visual inspection of some other repair issues pointed out by Ms. Novak will be requested.

There was discussion of recent façade painting and other façade changes being done in the Civic and Commercial Historic District, as well as new signage being installed, without prior HPC review and approval. Dr. Rhodes will draft a memorandum to Lisa Ellis of the DDC bringing attention and asking for resolution of these issues.

Mr. Forte mentioned that a home on the corner of Academy Road and Green Village has been demolished and will be replaced with a much larger structure. The Academy Road residents are unhappy about the demolition and replacement structure. As a caution to other neighborhoods in Madison, he mentioned this because an effort to have the Academy Road neighborhood made into an historic district was unsuccessful. Had the residents not opposed the historic district application, they would have had a voice in this demolition and replacement.

Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Future Meetings, Adjournment:

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 9, 2023, on Zoom. There being no further business, on motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Laurie Hagerich, Recording Secretary