

MADISON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Regular Meeting – May 11, 2021

Meeting conducted remotely through Zoom

Attending: Madison Historic Preservation (“HPC”) Chair Janet Foster and Vice Chair Jill Rhodes; Members John Forte, Max Hart, Chris Kellogg, Mary Ellen Lenahan, David Luber, John Solu and Carmine Toto; Council Liaison Astri Baillie; and Recording Secretary Laurie Hagerich.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Foster at 7:35 pm. She announced the meeting was called in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and the Open Public Meetings statement was read. A verbal roll call was taken by Ms. Hagerich.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the April 13, 2021 Public Meeting were considered and on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried were approved as written.

Sign & Façade Reviews:

Sign Review for Delikositas Deli, 42 Main Street:

An application for a new Sign for Delikositas Deli was reviewed by a Subcommittee of Ms. Foster and Dr. Rhodes and found to be too stylistically inconsistent with other signs in the Madison Civic and Commercial Historic District (MCCHD). The sign was also rejected for being back lit, a style inappropriate for the MCCHD. A detailed letter was sent to Sign & Façade Committee outlining the issues and recommending that the business owner consider a more appropriate sign for the MCCHD. Despite the time and effort of the HPC Subcommittee in reviewing the sign and making recommendations to maintain the appearance of the MCCHD, the sign was given approval. There followed discussion of many issues which need to be resolved, including the recent setting of a precedent allowing back-lit signs to the detriment of the MCCHD, the difficulties of complying with the 5-day turn-around period (put into effect in the last few years) for Sign & Façade applications and jurisdiction issues between HPC and Sign & Façade Committee. Mr. Solu spoke of his concern as landlord of the James Building in explaining to his tenants why strict compliance with the sign regulations is required when some businesses do not comply. Mr. Solu will reach out to Lisa Ellis, Sign and Façade staff coordinator, to express his concerns. Ms. Baillie will speak with Borough officials, including Mayor Conley, Planner Susan Blickstein, Ray Codey and Engineer Robert Vogel about the situation.

New Business:

26 Main Street – Alteration/addition to cell tower:

Ms. Foster reported Dynamic Environmental Associates is proposing an addition to the cell tower at 26 Main Street, located in the Madison Civic and Commercial Historic District. New equipment will be installed on the roof of the building and Ms. Foster requested the company provide more specific information on what equipment is proposed. She expects the deadline of May 29 for review can be extended. It was noted there is a Borough ordinance governing cell towers.

TCC Update:

120 Madison Avenue:

The existing 1880 Romanesque Revival building at 120 Madison Avenue is noted in the Cultural Resources Inventory but HPC has no current legal jurisdiction on the property. It is going to be demolished to make way for a proposed brick mosque. Members of the HPC have been in touch with the property owner to seek documentation of the house being demolished. The HPC will

also provide further information on traditional masonry buildings in the area in order to make the new building more compatible with the community.

Photos were shown of some iconic Madison buildings to illustrate how masonry can be used as part of traditional architectural style. Mr. Kellogg spoke about meeting with the applicant, who seemed willing to consider aesthetics and maintaining traditional architectural elements in the new construction.

49 Park Avenue and 104 Ridgedale Avenue:

Both properties are on the market and HPC would strongly be in favor of preservation. HPC's memo supporting preservation of the Park Avenue puddingstone home was given to Fran Boardman for forwarding to the realtor. The Ridgedale Avenue home is on the edge of the Bottle Hill Historic District and an important part of the streetscape. HPC had a conversation with the realtor to give reasons for its preservation.

Old Business:

Design Guidelines Update:

Ms. Foster reported Margaret Newman of Clark Caton Hintz will come to the June HPC meeting to give a report on the project and discuss the policies on such issues as solar panels and other aesthetics.

Ordinance Update:

Dr. Rhodes reported Planner Susan Blickstein's team has completed the mapping of properties which would fall under HPC control under the new ordinance. The 26 maps and historic properties must now be reviewed and ranking given to each property. Properties of cultural significance, such as churches, schools and universities must also be reviewed. Dr. Rhodes and Ms. Foster will start the visual inspection and come up with a process, after which other commission members will be asked to take part in the fieldwork to cross-check the maps and lists with an on-the-street view. Dr. Rhodes invited input, ideas and suggestions from HPC members.

Updates from Liaisons:

Planning Board:

Mr. Forte, Planning Board Liaison, reported the Ordinance Subcommittee will be meeting and working on Susan Blickstein's recommendation for better mapping.

Zoning Board Liaison:

Ms. Lenahan reported the last Zoning Board meeting was a continuation of discussion of parking, driveway, garbage and traffic. The applicant's planner spoke about why the project is good for Madison and why variances should be granted. The next meeting will be Thursday, May 13.

Open Space Liaison:

Dr. Rhodes reported that at the Open Space, Historic Preservation and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting on April 14, there was a review of the Parks Master Plan and a discussion of amounts spent for historic preservation, passive recreation and active recreation. Amounts for each were shared.

Madison Historical Society Liaison:

Mr. Lubber reported the next Madison Historical Society virtual program will be on May 20 which will be on the Battle of Connecticut Farms and the death of Hannah Caldwell. Mr. Lubber also mentioned the Friends of Madison Library are sponsoring a summer education series on American Architecture with presenter Janet Foster.

Council Member Liaison:

Ms. Baillie reported the Council continues to work on the affordable housing project. A developer has been chosen and there will be a joint meeting on May 26 with the Council and Planning Board to go over design plans.

Other Updates:

Ms. Foster mentioned the NJ Preservation Conference is set to be held virtually on June 3, June 10 and June 17 from 9 to 3 pm on each date. E-tickets will be sent shortly to those registered.

Mr. Solu reported the Borough has been granted an extension of the date to complete work on the Plaza Project at the Hartley Dodge Memorial, so that grant monies previously awarded by Morris County Historic Trust will not be lost. Mr. Forte added that other work on the Memorial will soon be carried out by the Hartley Dodge Foundation to keep the building in good repair.

Mr. Solu also mentioned that there are grant monies available from the Morris County Historic Trust that can be applied for at this time.

Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Future Meetings, Adjournment:

The next meeting of the Commission will be on Tuesday, June 8, 2021, via Zoom.

There being no further business, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Laurie Hagerich, Recording Secretary