

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reorganization Meeting No. 294

Wednesday, January 9, 2008

MINUTES

The annual reorganization meeting of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (HPRC) was convened at 7:30 PM in the east Conference Room in Borough Hall. Derek Bridger, Historic Preservation Officer, opened the meeting in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, Section 5, Chapter 231, P.L. 275 by reading the following statement

In conformance with the requirements of the Law, Notice was provided of the date, time and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy of the adopted Schedule of Regular Meetings in the Borough Hall, by mailing copies to the Trenton Times, Princeton Packet, and by filing a copy in the Office of the Clerk of Princeton Borough. Adequate notice was provided to the public and to all parties concerned.

Members Jane Faggen, Nora Kerr, Jeanne Perantoni, Kirsten Thoft, and Regan Tudor were present. Derek Bridger, Historic Preservation Officer and Danielle Britton, Administrative Assistant, were also present. HPRC members Kathleen Abplanalp, James Constantine, William Howard, and were not present.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS-REORGANIZATION

Jane Faggen nominated Jeanne Perantoni to serve as Chairperson of the Historic Preservation Review Committee. Kirsten Thoft seconded and the nomination and the motion carried. Jeanne Perantoni nominated Nora Kerr to serve as First Vice-Chairperson. Regan Tudor seconded and the motion carried. Nora Kerr nominated Kirsten Thoft to serve as Second Vice-Chairperson. Jeanne Perantoni seconded and the nomination was approved.

Karen L. Cayci was retained as Counsel and Derek Bridger was named Secretary to the Historic Preservation Review Committee. Resolutions to adopt the amended Schedule of Regular Meetings for 2008 and January 2009 (June 4, 2008 meeting was changed to June 11, July 2, 2008 meeting changed to July 9) as well as the Fixing of Charge for Meeting Notices were approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE WAIVERS

**33 Mercer Street, Block 37.01, Lot 17
R3 Zone/Mercer Hill Historic Overlay District
Trinity Church, Owner; AT&T, Applicant
Replacement of cell-phone antenna in belfry of church**

This application was for approval to install larger antenna panels (approximately 6" wider) in the existing belfry of the church. These panels are not readily visible from the public right of way, approval in February 2003. The current application utilizes six panels rather than the original eight.

Approved with the condition of the original approval requiring that the mesh covering the opening be retained by J. Perantoni, December 13, 2007

**2 Dickinson Street, Block 44.01, Lot 29.01
R4 Zone/Mercer Hill Historic Overlay District
Trustees of Princeton University, Owner/Applicant
Placement of exterior radon mitigation system**

Application was made for approval concerning placement of an external conduit component of a radon mitigation system that has already be installed. A notice of violation was issued to Princeton University for installing the system without the proper building permits and Historic Preservation Plan Approval. The University subsequently applied for a waiver. This mitigation conduit was located on the southeastern corner of the building where it would blend in with existing downspouts and an electrical conduit. D. Bridger requested that the applicant repaint the upper and lower portions of the conduit so that it would more closely match the colors of the building.

Approved with the condition that the conduit be repainted to more closely match the colors of the building by J. Perantoni, December 20, 2007

HEARINGS

**10 Palmer Square; Block 20.02, Lots 68 & 42
Nassau Inn Limited Partnership/ Owner, Applicant
Nassau Inn Rejuvenation/ Expansion
Concept Site Plan Review/Historic Preservation Plan Review
Materials were previously distributed**

D. Bridger commented that this case was held over from the December meeting because B. Howard recused himself as a result of a business relationship with the Nassau Inn and there was not a quorum to hear this case. He noted that the applicant was seeking Historic Preservation Plan Review of a Concept Plan for the proposed rejuvenation/expansion of the Nassau Inn.

D. Bridger informed the Committee that the Palmer Square Development and Hulfish North sites have been the subject of several site plan amendments that date back to 1981. The original approval at these sites includes the expansion of the Nassau Inn by 125 rooms, additional retail along Palmer Square East, construction of the Chambers Street garage, development of Hulfish North, retail space along Hulfish North, and Palmer Square East (restaurant and office space, and 114 units).

In 1998 Nassau Inn received site plan approval to construct a six-story addition along Hulfish Street that included ground floor retail space, expansion of the ballroom, meeting space, new guest rooms and construction of additional basement storage area. No construction permit was granted or applied for and the variances have lapsed for this proposed development and new approval is necessary.

D. Bridger noted that the only zone change that affects this new development plan is the

affordable housing component. The applicant has indicated that the affordable housing plan will be completed by the time a formal application is submitted to the HPRC and the Planning Board. If approved, this site plan will amend the overall plan development in terms of parking and open space requirements.

Tom Letizia, Attorney, informed the Committee that the applicant is proposing to construct a six-story addition to the Nassau Inn along Hulfish Street and to renovate the rooms along Palmer Square East in the old Colonial Wing. They are also proposing to demolish the one-story building (Lindt Chocolate) along Palmer Square West and replace it with a new three-story building.

Tom Perrino, Architect, showed the Committee elevations of all the proposed development. He noted that the Lindt Chocolate building would retain the same footprint but would be rebuilt with two additional stories on top of it. The plan for renovations provides for all mechanicals to be located in the basement or recessed into the roof so that they are not visible from the street. An outdoor seating area and a new graded handicap accessible entrance to the Yankee Tap Room are also proposed. The Committee discussed the importance of maintaining a tree canopy over the outdoor seating area and agreed that a water element would be appropriate for this area. There was additional discussion concerning the use of natural paving materials, attention to scale, height and detailing of surrounding (buffer and retaining) walls. The applicant informed the Committee that they intend to hire an arborist to advise them on whether the existing large tree in the proposed plaza area could be saved. There was general consensus among that the Committee that proposed dining area creates a desirable visual effect along the public right of way.

There was some discussion regarding the proposed loading dock area with respect to the noise that the opening and closing of the garage doors might generate. The applicant is proposing to install sectional garage doors. T. Perrino noted that sectional doors require a smaller motor and could possibly reduce noise levels. Lori Rabon, General Manager of Nassau Inn, noted that the Inn must also be sensitive to their guests and that it was in their best interest to mitigate excessive noise. She further stated that the current delivery times are from 8 am until 4 pm, and they have not experienced any problems. L Rabon expected to continue the same practice after the expansion and did not expect this to have any impact on the traffic flow on Palmer Square or Hulfish Street.

Mr. Perrino provided a Power Point presentation that showed the proposed plans for development. He also described interior guest room renovations that will take place. During the “virtual” presentation the Committee noted that the upper dormers (fifth and sixth floor of the Hulfish elevation) appeared to be out of scale and requested that consideration be given to altering this design element so that it might better integrate the dormer into the façade. There was further discussion of whether the slope of the mansard roof could be decreased in order to reduce its bulky presence and lessen the impact of its height and mass on the streetscape. The applicant was also asked to reconsider the designs for the smaller size dormers located on the third floor of the addition proposed for the existing site of the Lindt Chocolate building. The Committee suggested that the applicant consider designs, which are historically referential and complement and match the existing style, size and proportion of the dormers existing along the third floor of Palmer Square facade of the Nassau Inn as well as the dormers of the other buildings along Palmer Square West.

The applicant provided samples and descriptions of the types of windows and materials, which are

proposed. Stone samples will be provided at a later date.

The Committee thanked the applicants for appearing at this concept review. Committee members were generally in favor of all aspects of the development, especially the use of natural materials and the scale on the west side of Palmer Square, also the proposed outdoor dining plaza area was a welcome addition. The committee reinforced the appropriateness of the proposed design concept that varied the surface, setbacks, mix of materials, rhythm and size of window opening in an effort to break down the scale of the large, six-story structure and to respond contextually to the surrounding, existing conditions. They also noted that the proposed development along Hulfish Street at street level and the presence of the new ballroom on the second floor, along with their sensitivity to material and lighting, would give a strong “presence” to that portion of the street. It was also suggested that additional studies be conducted to analyze the “shadow effect” of the proposed six-story addition on the opposite side of Hulfish Street.

DISCUSSION

C. Tazelaar suggested that the Committee should draft “Guidelines” on acceptable window replacements within the historic districts to be distributed as an aid to help residents who are undertaking renovations. The Committee noted that this is a recurring issue and the HPRC could provide some guidance and references. C. Tazelaar will investigate to see what informational material is available.

D. Bridger told the Committee that fees for HPRC applications are going to be adjusted from \$35 to \$75. He noted that D. Britton had done some phone inquiries and that these new fees are in line with other municipalities throughout the state.

There was a brief discussion about the possibility of re-applying once again for a grant application to create a Buffer District. It was noted that there are still copies of the previous application submission and that it could be revised and resubmitted. D. Bridger will add this as an agenda item for the regular monthly meeting in February.

There was no public comment.

At 9:20 p.m. J. Faggen motioned that the meeting be adjourned. K. Thoft seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. The next regular scheduled Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting will be held on February 6, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Pegi Johnson, Recording Secretary
Historic Preservation Review Committee