

APPROVED
9/10/2009
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting No. 313
Wednesday, July 8, 2009

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (HPRC) was convened at 7:30 PM in the East Conference Room in Borough Hall. Nora Kerr, Chairperson, 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.

PRESENT: James Constantine, Jane Faggen, Chairperson Nora Kerr, Carolyn Robertson, Celia Tazelaar, and Regan Tuder.

ABSENT: William Howard, Jeanne Perantoni, and Kirsten Thoft.

ALSO PRESENT: Christopher Budzinski, Princeton Borough Engineer; Derek W. Bridger, Historic Preservation Review Officer and Danielle A. Britton, Recording Secretary.

ADMINISTRATIVE WAIVERS

HPRC Waiver request- Installation of air conditioning condensers

Applicant/Owner: 2-4 Nassau LLC

Location: 4 Nassau Street, Block: 19.01, Lot 2

CBD Zone/Central Historic Overlay District

Approved-Nora Kerr 5/11/2009

HPRC Waiver request- Window replacement.

80 Nassau LLC, /Owner, Michael Cremone/Applicant

Location: 80 Nassau Street, Block: 20.01, Lot: 41.01

CBD Zone/ Central Business Historic Overlay Zone

Approved-Nora Kerr 6/3/2009

HPRC Waiver request- Signage

Applicant: Paper Source/ Owner: 80-84 Nassau Street LLC

Location: 82 Nassau Street/ Block: 20.01, Lot: 41.01

CBD Zone/ Central Historic Overlay District

Approved-Nora Kerr 6/3/2009

HPRC Waiver request-Minor exterior changes resulting from the conversion of

hotel space to three apartments
Owner/Applicant: Palmer Square Management
Location: Hulfish Street & Palmer Square East (location is above Jazams toy store)
Block: 20.01, Lot: 82
CB Zone/ Central Historic District Overlay Zone
Approved-Nora Kerr 6/10/2009

HEARING

Mercer Street Reconstruction/Mercer Hill HD
Borough of Princeton, owner/applicant
Historic Preservation Plan Review

D. Bridger provided details of the application concerning the reconstruction of Mercer Street. The portion of the Mercer Street from Springdale to Nassau Street is located within the Mercer Hill Historic Overlay zone and the State of New Jersey Princeton Historic District. The road was originally constructed in 1807 as a way to help restore some of the lost activity in the area as a result of the construction of the straight turnpike, Route 1, in 1804.

C. Budzinski, Borough Engineer, introduced himself to the Committee and described the construction detail plans and the sections of the road to be reconstructed. The Borough of Princeton is planning to reconstruct Mercer Street in the fall of 2009. The project requires a Section 106 Review to be filed with the State Historic Preservation Office and comments on the plan from the HPRC will be forwarded to the State as part of the review process. A neighborhood meeting was held in mid-June of 2009 describing the project.

C. Budzinski explained that the estimated cost of the project will cost \$2.8 million dollars. The project is partially being subsidized by stimulus funding from the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Economic Recovery Program which allows the municipality to bond at lower interest rates. The project has been divided into the following three phases in order to manage the traffic disruption as efficiently as possible:

- Phase 1: Reconstruction between Springdale Road and Library Place.
- Phase 2: Reconstruction between Library Place and Nassau Street.
- Phase 3: Reconstruction between Lovers Lane and Springdale Road.

Traffic detour routes will begin with the following:

- Phase 1: Lovers Lane. -Stockton Street - Library Place.
- Phase 2: Alexander St. - University Pl. - Nassau St. /Stockton St. – Library Pl.
- Phase 3: Lovers Lane -Stockton Street - Library Place.

C. Budzinski noted that during each phase of the project; the pipe work, curb, sidewalk and base

pavement will be completed prior to the start of the next phase. The full length of the road will receive a surface-course of asphalt at the completion of Phase 3.

C. Budzinski described the scope of the project which will result in complete sanitary replacements including individual house laterals within the road right-of-way between Springdale Road and Nassau Street. The storm sewer system will be completely replaced and will connect all known sump-pump or downspout discharge pipes to the new storm sewer pipe to provide connection points behind the sidewalk. Any existing bluestone sidewalk needing warrants will be replaced in kind. The existing concrete road will be completely removed and replaced with hot mix asphalt pavement. The existing speed-humps, will be replaced and reduced by one hump.

C. Budzinski advised that due to the replacement of the Rosedale Road Bridge by Mercer County scheduled to take place between July and November 2009, the proposed Mercer Street reconstruction cannot commence until Rosedale Road has re-opened. Budzinski stated he was optimistic the County contractor would complete their work early enough in the year so this project can start in 2009. The initial work of replacing pipes on Mercer Street is scheduled to be done during the winter months.

A study, conducted by the Department of Transportation, recommended that a refuge island at the Nassau Street/Mercer Street intersection be constructed. Proposed is a Belgian Block island which will rise approximately one inch above the road surface. Committee member Jim Constantine questioned whether any vegetation or bollards would be installed to draw attention to the island. C. Budzinski stated no bollards or vegetation are proposed at this site and noted that the large turning radius required for buses in this space made any additional design features problematic. Yellow reflectors are proposed to be installed around the base of the island as a way to reflect vehicle head lights and provide an additional safety measure.

C. Budzinski stated the existing sidewalk sections would be replaced in kind with the sections of existing bluestone being reset. The existing concrete curb would be replaced in kind. The Committee questioned whether the entire sidewalk (or sections near the Alexander and Mercer Street intersection) and curbing could be replaced with bluestone, which was considered to be a more historically appropriate material. C. Budzinski noted that it was a cost factor and agreed to obtain cost estimates for bluestone or granite curb replacement. The Committee discussed the materials being proposed for the remaining sidewalks. C. Budzinski noted that the concrete sidewalks could be replaced with concrete tinted French grey to better match the existing color.

The Committee noted that some of the utility poles along Mercer Street are leaning badly and represent a potentially dangerous situation. It was noted that a 2003 engineering study jointly funded by Princeton Borough Council and the Mercer Hill Historic District Association estimated the costs involved in burying overhead utility wires in the Mercer Hill Historic District during planned road reconstruction projects and found the costs to be excessive.

Utility companies have continued to attach their lines to the existing poles, which resulted in some poles becoming overloaded.

C. Budzinski explained that the utility poles were outside of the Borough's jurisdiction but that he would put in a request to PSE&G to look at leaning poles for replacement.

Discussion:

- 1) HPRC recommended the use of blue-stone curbing in the reconstruction of Mercer Street as it runs through the historic district with a secondary preference for granite curbing. The Committee does not recommend concrete curbing.
- 2) HPRC requested that the Borough Engineer coordinates the repairs and straightening of utility poles along Mercer Street with PSE&G, in conjunction with the road reconstruction project.
- 3) HPRC requested that other property owners along a block or strip of sidewalk that have a preponderance of bluestone are given the opportunity to have bluestone laid on their walkway as well.
- 4) HPRC recommended that the remainder of sidewalks in the historic district be replaced with gray-pigmented concrete sidewalks to match the color of the sidewalks built as part of the sidewalk aprons at the intersection for Mercer and Alexander Streets.
- 5) HPRC requested that as a matter of pedestrian safety, textured or raised pedestrian crosswalks, rather than painted stripes be considered at the intersections of Mercer Street with Nassau Street, Alexander Street, the crossing at Speer Library, Library Place, Hibben Road and Springdale Road.
- 6) HPRC requested that additional traffic calming measures be considered, including the possibility of physically narrowing the Street through curb bump-outs or visually narrowing the street through the use of brick gutters at appropriate points along the roadbed.
- 7) HPRC requested that any new snap off poles required for reposting street signs be painted black.

**92 Nassau Street (Lower Pyne); Block 27.01, Lot 1, CBD Zone/CHD
Lower Pyne Associates LP/ Owner & Applicant
Historic Preservation Plan approval of partial building illumination**

D. Bridger provided a brief overview of the preservation application request to allow for partial illumination of the Nassau Street façade of the Lower Pyne structure. The building features retail uses on the ground floor and offices on the upper floors. The proposed Plan would illuminate the base of three (3) second-floor bays facing Nassau Street and four (4) third-floor panels.

David Newton, Property Manager, stated that the subject property was purchased in 1985. Architect Jerry Ford gave a brief history of the property and noted Lower Pyne was built in 1896 together with its twin, Upper Pyne, as Princeton University dormitories. The funding for the buildings was donated by Moses Taylor Pyne. Upper Pyne was demolished in 1964.

The buildings were designed to recall an English college town. The proposed illumination is LED lighting with low-voltage light strips to provide a subtle lighting of the bays and panel.

The fixtures proposed would be located on the base of three second-floor bays facing Nassau Street and the four third-floor panels.

ACTION. J. Constantine moved to approve the application. R. Tuder seconded. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The Committee confirmed a special meeting to convene Wednesday, July 15, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. at Borough Hall to continue review of the historic preservation plan and site plan for 343 Nassau Street (JVS Associates). There was a discussion of coordinating a future joint-meeting in conjunction with Princeton Township Historic Preservation Commission and to present an evening workshop on historic preservation and sustainability in the fall.

Proposed Revisions to the Historic Preservation Land Use Ordinance

The Committee discussed the proposed ordinance and made the following recommendations:

1. Rephrase the description of the proposed ordinance changes to include revisions to the Historic Preservation element and not just the demolition component. Consider changing the definition of demolition by removing the word intentional and to consider adding language to address demolition by neglect.
2. Consider minor alterations to the definition of “*significant*” by substituting a word “*contribution*” and adding descriptive language to “*community*”.
3. Expand Section 17A-193A, the introduction to Historic Preservation I, to include the existing standards as well as the Department of Interior’s Rehabilitation Standards.
4. Changes Subsection 5 of Section 17A-193A by substituting “*identity*” and “*essential character*” for the word “*ambience*” and adding “*or the community*” to the end of this section.

At 9:50 p.m. J. Faggen moved that the meeting be adjourned. C. Tazelaar seconded. Motion carried.

The next regular scheduled Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Britton, Recording Secretary
Historic Preservation Review Committee

OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In attendance for the New Jersey Historic Preservation Conference (Regeneration for a New Generation) held on June 4, 2009 in Glassboro, NJ were: Derek Bridger, Historic Preservation Officer; Jane Faggen, William Howard, Celia Tazelaar, and Kirsten Thoft.