

## **Historic Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes – June 15, 2017**

A meeting of the Mountain Lakes Historic Preservation Committee (“HPC” or the “Committee”) was held on Thursday June 15, 2017, in the meeting room of the Mountain Lakes Library. In attendance were Chair Lesley Karczewski, Vice Chair Tom Dagger, Alex Gotthelf, Rob Infante, Margaret DeWitt, Roberta Matalon and Borough Council Liaison Dan Happer. Absent were Sima Chowdhury, Ginny Cassidy, and Michael DeWitt

### ***Approval of Prior Meeting’s Minutes***

The minutes of the May 11, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved in the form in which they were distributed to the Committee upon motion by Tom Dagger and seconded by Margaret DeWitt.

### ***Chairperson’s Report***

Lesley Karczewski and Alex Gotthelf appeared before the Borough Council to acknowledge the Committee’s appreciation to the DPW. In particular, Lesley expressed appreciation to Ryan Dunn and Kris Pietresusky for all their help in rehabilitating the “dynamite shed/pump house” and moving us out of the trailer. Dan Happer said it was well received.

### ***Treasurer’s Report***

Roberta Matalon presented the report:

**Balance** as of June 15 2017: \$31,621.85

Roberta is transitioning into the position of Treasurer. The Committee agreed to use the current balance in the bank account (which in the past has been higher than the corresponding amounts that have been reported) as a new starting point. She will be ordering new checks and changing the address to 400 Boulevard, Mountain Lakes, New Jersey 07046.

### ***Archive Report***

Rob Infante did some research into the software called Past Perfect and determined that we are not ready for it at this time because it requires a dedicated computer and the cost of the software is high. This software is recognized by the Morris County Heritage Commission (“MCHC”) and the Committee will consider applying for a grant in the future to purchase the system. Grants are available for up to \$7,000. The deadline is around December. It is possible that a web-based version not requiring dedicated hardware will be available in the future, and that could also bring the cost down.

The Committee will prepare an Interim Report to the MCHC to have the remainder of our grant money for digitizing released. Rob and Lesley reported that we are in compliance with the requirements and they do not anticipate any issues.

Rob is making progress with digitizing maps. IDI has submitted an invoice of \$2,500 to the Borough. There is \$500 remaining from the original grant for \$3,000.

Rob reported that posting fire department photos on Facebook was a big hit.

Rob presented a budget for additional supplies:

- \$300 glass plate storage
- \$500 tubes for large format documents and maps
- \$600 buffered boxes
- \$30 buffered paper for interleaving.

**Motion:** Lesley Karczewski made motion to approve an additional \$1,500 expenditure (total of \$3,000) for purchasing supplies for the archive, Tom seconded it. The Committee voted to approve the request.

### *Preservation Shed*

Alex Gotthelf submitted a donation for \$250 from a resident who was repairing their Hapgood. The trim on hand matched exactly. The new shed is a success. Some work remains to add some organization and there is a need for an exterminator. The chestnut paneling is scarce as much of it was taken from 32 Condit for restoring a Hapgood. 32 Condit is still not torn down. Alex reported that we are still interested in the porch windows and will keep in touch with the owner so they can be removed just before the demolition takes place.

### *Borough Council Liaison Report*

Borough Council is extremely busy but Dan had nothing to report specific to the HPC.

### *Old Business*

- Ordinance Forum

The forum to present the new ordinance to the public was a success. There was a turnout of nearly 20 people made up of architects, realtors, builders, Committee members and members of the community. The presentation was recorded for future reference by a videographer.

- HPC Data Storage

Lesley reported that the Borough Communications Committee is in a holding pattern as they have been unable to get in touch with their web guy. They are looking at alternatives.

- Preservation workshop

Tom Dagger, Alex Gotthelf, Sima Chowdhury and Rob Infante attended the workshop with Debra Schiff and found it very informative. The morning session had 4 Committee members and Rob attended the more hands-on afternoon session where he worked on preserving specific pieces from the archive. Tom noted that a key take-away is that the process can be overwhelming unless approached consistently and incrementally over a long period of time. The Committee should plan for the size requirements of the archive to grow by 4 to 5 times after conservation is complete.

- 324 Boulevard

Photo documentation has been completed.

- Mountain Lakes Book Reprints

Margaret DeWitt reported that the republishing of the book is progressing well.

### *New Business*

- Landmarks Protection

Tom Dagger noted the significance of, and concern for, the Mountain Lakes downtown commercial district (the buildings near the railroad station and Midvale stores) to the historic character of the town. He introduced a proposal for the Committee to pursue a landmark protection ordinance from the Borough Council under the state Municipal Land Use Law, which would include converting the Committee into a a “weak” form of historic preservation commission, with ultimate decision-making authority on changes to designated landmarks vested in the Planning Board, in order to protect this area including the historic commercial buildings. The Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan has addressed the need to protect these and other landmark buildings under this approach so the concept is already documented.

Tom cautioned that if a developer should submit an application for redevelopment of this area, there is currently no legally enforceable protection.

At Dan Happer’s suggestion, Tom offered to prepare a “discussion item” to be used in presenting this matter for discussion by the Borough Council. Dan advised that the Borough Council is currently swamped and that this proposal should probably wait until the Fall.

The Committee agreed that Tom should begin drafting the discussion item framing the proposal for the Borough Council now so that something could be ready to be submitted by the Fall.

#### *Date for Next Meeting*

Next meeting date – July 20 at 7:30 in the Mtn. Lakes Library. There will be no meeting in August as is the custom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned upon motion by Tom Dagger, seconded by Alex Gotthelf.

Minutes prepared by Alex Gotthelf.