

HISTORIC COMMISSION
MINUTES
April 25, 2018
8:05 p.m.

<u>ATTENDANCE:</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Phyllis Angelo</u>	X	
<u>Mary Donohue</u>	X	
<u>Sara Theresa Bartelloni</u>	X	
<u>Mike Ginch</u>	X	
<u>Eric Model</u>	X	
<u>John Cookson</u>		X
<u>Liaison Dario Chinigo</u>		X
<u>Deborah Power</u>	X	

AUDIENCE:

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised the Planning Board reinstated the Historic Component to the Master Plan, with a Resolution, so the Commission can restart the historic designations, which were the River Edge Hotel and the Blair House. Indicated they voted at the last meeting to go ahead with the designations. Stated she checked with Attorney Sarlo, the Borough Attorney, and questioned how to go about the process, if an advertisement needs to be done, a formal meeting, then the Planning Board and finally the Town Council, as she thought possibly a formal meeting may not be necessary, however Mr. Sarlo said they do need a new formal designation hearing to restart the process. Stated they did vote on this at the last meeting, but no decision was made as to when to start the process.

MARY DONOHUE: Stated to start as soon as possible.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: States she would like to hear what everyone thinks.

MIKE GINCH: Stated he would like to hear what Deborah thinks about the Spring Valley property.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated it is an interesting house and it needs to be protected, but questioned how fair or arbitrary you are about the properties you are selecting to designate.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated there is a criteria in the Ordinance.

DEBORAH POWER: Questioned why the Korteweg's house is not being discussed.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised she is not on the State or National Registry, like the house they are talking about designating now.

DEBORAH POWER: Questioned if the Blair House is on the Registry.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated the Blair House is not, but the owner does not have a problem with the designation. Advised the State does not understand why the house on Spring Valley has not been designated, because it is on the State and National Registry. Advised the homes on the State and National Registry have priority to be locally designated, which is why Kevin wanted to put the Campbell Christie House, the Demarest House and the Steuben House on the local designation, because without that they could be knocked down.

MIKE GINCH: Stated with that being said, that does not mean just because the house is not on the National and State Registry, it should not be addressed.

ERIC MODEL: Indicated he agrees, but the Commission is making a statement by stating that this particular place matters to us, the Commission.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned Deborah if Kevin told her what happened when he wanted to designate Korteweg's house.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated she knew he wrote about it and he did give Virginia the history of her house.

PHYLLIS ANGELO; Advised Kevin wanted to make a historic district out of Summit Avenue and Virginia's house was the center of that, but she was against it and she came to a meeting of the Commission and said she not only did not want the designation, but questioned if it was possible to take her house off the County Survey as being significant and she was told the Commission has nothing to do with the County Survey and they cannot take her house off of it, then it was dropped.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated the surveys are only a guide.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated Kevin looked over all the surveys and said River Edge homes on the survey were historic.

DEBORAH POWER: Questioned other than New Bridge, what other buildings are on the survey.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised she will have to look at the survey but in the 2000 survey 13 additional historic sites were added but not designated. Like the red house on 385 Kinderkamack Road and Kevin did not want to designate the home on Wayne and Kinderkamack as he said they did some work on the house exterior.

MIKE GINCH: Questioned about re-evaluating the homes on the survey, with a fresh perspective.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated it becomes property rights, as one house on Wayne has been subdivided.

ERIC MODEL: Stated the story regarding the house on Wayne seems historically significant and that something should be done, but not necessarily with a formal designation. Stated if we are asking for artifacts from residents that lived here for a long time and we are determining what artifact is significant to the history and legacy of the community, he thinks there should be a structure as to whether it meets the formal criteria or not.

MARY DONOHUE: Stated it is interesting about Wayne and Greene and since the town had an important role in the Revolutionary War, it should be taken into consideration.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned if we are going to try and designate a dozen houses at one time.

ERIC MODEL: Indicated the list is only a portion of historically significant homes, but at some time in the future a house may be elevated to be historically designated.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised that is why she gave everyone the Bogart information, as that has all the houses in town that are either historically designated or historically relevant.

DEBORAH POWER: Questioned if the homeowner on Spring Valley is still objecting to the designation.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated he did in 2013, so she still assumes he is objecting even though he does not have any argument that it is not historic, he just does not want the designation. She stated she gave the Building Dept. the list of the homes that are historical so the Commission can be made aware if a homeowner on the list is planning on doing work on their house.

MIKE GINCH: Stated unless it is designated, there is nothing you can do about it.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated at least the Building Dept. can advise the Commission if a homeowner is seeking to do work on their home. Advised the Newman House was very cooperative this year and Sara worked with them on the colors to repaint the shutters.

DEBORAH POWER: Questioned how she perceived the paint color.

SAR BARTELLONI: Advised it was based on the period of the house and Bergen County provided a lot of information, so they were able to give the homeowners some options of colors they could use.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned what everyone wants to do, as she would like to take the 2 houses and start all over with the designation, but if everyone wants to add other houses that is fine, just let her know what houses you want to add.

MIKE GINCH: Indicated no one is objecting to proceeding with the 2 houses, but the Commission should refocus what is relevant and put that in line for further discussion. He further stated if someone asks why these two houses you are looking to designate, you will be able to tell them you are looking into other homes, but these 2 seem to be the most obvious in your opinion.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised that is what they asked the last time around, if you designate these 2 homes, how many others are you going to want to designate and she stated there is not more than a dozen homes in town that rise to the level of historic designation.

MIKE GINCH: Suggested making it an agenda item to start looking into detail at the other houses.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated they will take the survey they have and walk around and look at the houses they have and decide if they want to make changes to the list. Questioned Deborah if she feels she has the expertise to help with that, as far as architecture.

MARY DONOHUE: Stated Deborah is consumed with work.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated she is over committed.

MARY DONOHUE: Stated if you decide to do this, it should be done within the group.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated you need the expertise of someone.

ERIC MODEL: Stated in defending designating this particular house is the Commission is not arbitrary and capricious and this house was not singled out. Stated there is a process the Commission considers, and it is not just houses, but artifacts as well.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: The Commission can get someone from the County to work with the Commission.

MIKE GINCH: Questioned if the list can be narrowed down, so you are not asking someone to look at 40 houses, and questioned if you can go to the Building Dept. to see what building permits were taken out in the last 20-30 years to see if there have been any major improvements done to the homes.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated one issue is people that are not involved in this community have no idea what to look for in a historical home in this town. Stated it is not unreasonable to advise the Council that it is not just one house that is historical, it has always been several houses, i.e. Herrick House, the Spring Valley home, etc., and believes if you put together that type of list and indicate it is not just house #13 on the list, but also house 14, 15, 20, that are historically significant. The Council should be made aware that there are other houses that should be designated, but you are not looking to designate every house and street sign in River Edge. Indicated the Commission should look into getting signs placed in front of the homes that are historically significant which would state why it is historically significant.

DEBORAH POWER: Advised that may get you get into a confrontation with a homeowner who does not want that and may set a bad tone if you get into an argument with the homeowner.

ERIC MODEL: Stated there was a vote at the last meeting about the designations.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised they voted on continuing with the designation, but she is still unclear whether to proceed with the two houses or with other houses, because if we are proceeding with other houses, we are not ready.

ERIC MODEL: Stated he understood the process was derailed, and he voted to put the designations back on track to fulfill the intentions of this group.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated she believes the starting point is to get the Council to understand there is more than one house that should be designated historic. The list is good, but at the same time the entire Elizabeth Avenue is listed as historic.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised in the 1990s when they knocked down Dr. Krassil's house, there was no Historic Commission at that time, so they went to the Council and told them they could not stop the owner from knocking down the house, but they would like the owner of that development to name the driveway Dr. Krassil Way and the Council agreed, which may be something to bring up to the Council now that they have started the project.

ERIC MODEL: Stated he believes that is a private street, not a public street, so he doesn't believe they are required to do that.

MIKE GINCH: Stated there are bigger things to work on.

SARA BARTELLONI: Suggested instead of going ahead with the 2 houses, to go through the list and decide which property you would like the town to ultimately designate.

MIKE GINCH: Questioned if it be unwise to ask guidance from the Council or the Liaison regarding this option.

SARA BARTELLONI: Questioned why not go before the Council and ask them how they would like the Commission to present this suggestion to them.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated a letter can be sent to the Council.

MARY DONOHUE: Stated it is better to do it in person.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated you want to send a letter so it can be placed on the Agenda.

ERIC MODEL: Indicated to explore that possibility down the road, right now you are putting the "train back on the track."

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated we can send a letter to the Council requesting a meeting on the Committee level to talk to them, rather than a formal meeting.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated the Commission should acknowledge that the historic component listed 40-50 properties as being historically relevant and advise the Council that these properties are historically significant for a reason and question the Council how they would like the Commission to proceed.

ERIC MODEL: Stated all you want to say is you want to get the process of designations started again, and once it is started we will speak to the Council as to how inclusive the process might be and said he does not want to designate the houses yet.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned if you want to mention that we are thinking about designating other houses.

ERIC MODEL: Said you don't want to mention that.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated she wants to continue historically designating houses, and finds it ridiculous there is only one home on the list that is being designated at this time.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned who will be involved with the Committee to look at the list and decide how to proceed.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised she will look over the list, but it is about whether the façades are in tack.

Discussion was had regarding placing signs by historically relevant properties, including the railroad track indicating its use to be the Underground Railroad.

MARY DONOHUE: Stated they also suggested markers to be placed at the beginning and end of the street, to explain the street names. Indicated to have a community effort to have the people on the street help.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated the tiles on the wall in the Library use to be in a case for a long time, and now that they are on the wall you notice them and believes some people may feel they want to be part of that project. Stated the Commission has a concept and we are asking the community if they want to be part of that concept.

ERIC MODEL: Suggested taking an inventory of what locations would need markers and put that on the website indicating the places and what the stories behind them are.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned how much the markers would cost.

DEBORAH POWER: Indicated a metal marker is not much money.

SARA BARTELLONI: Suggested coming up with a theme and create a buzz in the community by actually marking some places. Questioned if you need permission from the Council to start the signage program.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated it depends on where the sign is located, because if it is near the sidewalk then you would have to get permission from the Council as that is town property.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated it is a big undertaking on researching any property. Advised they are getting requests for markers at the Historical Society and are in the process of marking where the British Invasion took place on the Palisades. Stated everyone wants the oldest house in the town, and questioned where you would get the research from as you cannot ask the homeowner for it.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated they will write a letter and get the process started.

MIKE GINCH: Questioned if you can narrow the list down first.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated she would not even reference the list.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated they will have to meet informally to go over the list before appearing before the Council.

ERIC MODEL: Stated he will volunteer working on the non-house list and will merge it into the list, so when the list is presented to the Council it will show that there is more than houses you want to designate.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised they asked John at the last meeting to look into The Record archives regarding what information they may have on River Edge, but has not heard from him. Questioned if there are any River Edge archives Deborah has that can be part of the archive project.

DEBORAH POWER: Questioned Phyllis if she went to the Society's library to look at what they have there.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated she has not and questioned Deborah if there is anything she is personally archiving that can be part of the Commission's project.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated she has been very busy with other projects.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated Mary, Mike and herself will go and take a look at the Society's library. Advised she spoke with Jonathan Kenny who told her they qualify for a Grant to get the photographs on line.

SARA BARTELLONI: Questioned if there are Grants available to help with the signage program.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated not that she is aware of.

MIKE GINCH: Questioned if they know what they have remaining to archive and, if so, who is prioritizing the information they archive.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated her and Mary are prioritizing the information. Indicated there is nothing to do on the survey at this point and questioned if Mr. Hoogstrate would be willing to do an oral history.

MIKE GINCH: Stated he is anxious to do the oral history, whether he is on the Commission or not.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated she needs a Resume from him to send to the Mayor. Questioned if there was an update regarding New Bridge.

DEBORAH POWER: Advised last week they had an archeologist who spoke about Native Americans and a technologist gave a demonstration. Stated they have over 1,000 members. Advised there needs to be some type of "street scape" at New Bridge and there is no curb on the Society's property so people are parking on their grass to get the train.

MIKE GINCH: Questioned if the Mayor could get involved with the curbs.

MARY DONOHUE: Indicated he may be able to help and she will speak with him.

DEBORAH POWER: Stated there are a couple of modern houses being built in town and questioned if the Summit Avenue district is on the historic list.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised it is on the list as historically significant.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated Kevin tried to get the Summit Avenue on the list as a district and no one wanted that.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised they are looking about getting a sign that says "Welcome to Summit Avenue." She read a letter into the minutes to give to the Council regarding the cobblestone street and suggested they could mention the sidewalks in the New Bridge area.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 24, 2018