

HISTORIC COMMISSION

MINUTES

March 28, 2018

8:08 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	

AUDIENCE: _____

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated she received the Resolution placing the Historic Component is back in the Master Plan on October 26, 2017 by the Municipal Land Use Board.

SARA BARTELLONI: Made a motion to resume the process of designating the two home.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Took a vote: Mary – yes
Sara – yes

ERIC MODEL: Questioned if there was any informal feedback from the Council, as he would like to make an informed and educated vote.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Stated this has not been brought up to him recently.

ERIC MODEL: Voted yes.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Voted yes.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated to start the process over and to see it through.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned what they would like him to ask the Council and what they want to ascertain.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated he does not have to ask the Council, but this has been an ongoing issue.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Stated he is not sure what the issue is.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised it is the designation of two properties.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated that Sara was talking about the process of the designation. The Commission brings the designation to the Planning Board, who makes a recommendation about the designation and then it goes to the Council, who officially decides whether something is historically designated

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Advised he is going to be the new designee on the Land Use Board.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised this is not the first house that was designated in River Edge.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised the Resolution was the end result of this particular designation. The Planning Board could not find the Historic Component to the Master Plan, so the designations were never brought to the Council.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated it also involved meeting with Master Planner.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if designating the home means they cannot change the outside.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised it is only the outside of the house with the street view. It doesn't involve the inside of the home only if it's a museum. This is a common mistake of the historic designation status.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised it does not mean they cannot change it, but the owner would have to come before the Commission before they made any changes.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated most homeowners feel that no one has the right to tell them what to do with their house and they are against having their house historically designated.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if the homeowner has a choice.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised as part of the process, the homeowners have the right to come for a hearing. Indicated when they first started the designation of the 2 homes, one homeowner was fine with it, but the other homeowner was not.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated Mike Ginch was concerned about the one house because the homeowners were doing work on the house, plus the house sits on a double lot and if they decided to sell, they can knock down the house. One house is on the State and National Registrar.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated she does not know how this is going to turn out, but their purpose is to designate historical structures.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Suggested Councilman Chinigo drive by the house.

ERIC MODEL: Indicated if prior to closing on a property, there is a designation in the Title Work stating the house is historic, there is an obligation for that to be revealed to the potential homeowners. Questioned if there is something the Commission can do to provide a sense to the Community that the property is historically significant before the property is purchased, the potential owner cannot complain they were unaware of the significance of the home. Questioned if there is a formal list of properties that are historically important and, if so, to keep that alive and vibrant, because you can then show the community there is an ongoing list, which is constantly being reviewed and balanced out, to show that the Commission is working together with the Community.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised the Council asked them to procure a list of properties they ultimately would feel could be designated.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated they gave them a list of the properties that are already designated and ones that are historically relevant, which is part of the Historic Component of the Master Plan.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if the designation is made first, then it goes to the Council for a vote.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised they ask for the properties to be designated and have a formal hearing with the Borough Attorney present, which is the opportunity for the homeowners to appear.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if the homeowners can stop it.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated they cannot, only the Council can.

ERIC MODEL: Questioned if there was anything preventing them from sending an FYI list to Council to let them know there are possible candidates down the road to be designated, so they are not surprised later on down the road with a designation.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated the homeowner of the Blair House had no problem with the designation, but the other homeowner was against it and part of his excuse was he did not know his house was historic.

SARA BARTELLONI: Questioned Phyllis if there were multiple houses on the list she put together with Mary and should the Commission advise the Council these are the historic properties they want to designate, instead of looking to designate individual properties.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated that would be another conversation.

ERIC MODEL: Stated from a historic preservation point of view, you indicate these places are relevant and the Council can question if they are significant enough to have them designated historic.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised her motion was to move forward and resume the designation of the two properties and she still agrees with that, but questioned whether the rest of the properties should also be thrown out there for designation.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated she would have to bring that up at the next meeting to decide on that issue, but they can resume the process of designating these two homes.

ERIC MODEL: Questioned if there is any reason why they should not go forward with these two properties.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: No.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated she believes the initial concern of the Council, when they asked for the list of historical properties, was they thought the Commission would go around town and start designating houses.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised the Bergen County historians indicated what properties were historical that should not be demolished, which was the list they gave to the Council.

ERIC MODEL: Questioned why you should not share that list, when someone else has already made that determination. Stated it is not the Commission's battle to determine whether a property should be historically designated, but it is to point out that something is historically relevant.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised there is a legal procedure to historically designate a property.

ERIC MODEL: Questioned at what point does the homeowner's voice get heard.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised at the hearing before the Commission.

ERIC MODEL: Questioned if the standards are the same for the Commission as the Planning Board and Council. Stated the mission of the Historic Committee is different than the Planning Board, it is that of preservation.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised there was no opposition in designating the Herrick House.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated Mr. Newman brought an attorney with him to the Planning Board, but the Planning Board was not persuaded by their argument. Indicated most homeowners argue they were not aware their home was historic, however they have pages of information on the River Edge Hotel showing it is historic.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if that homeowner made any changes.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised he tried to make some changes to the home, but they asked him not to and requested the Building Dept. to let the Commission know if the homeowner was going to do anything, but he still has not.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Stated the Council ultimately votes on whether the houses are designated historic.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated that is because you are the elected officials, they are the appointed officials.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if there was any criteria they need to look at to determine whether the house needs to be historically designated.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised that is in the Ordinance.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised the houses that are selected to be designated need to show a very specific part of the development of the town, the history of the settlement of the town, it cannot just be aesthetically pleasing.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned how you find out if your home has a historic designation on the national or state level.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated she is not sure.

ERIC MODEL: Stated there should be a process for a "would be" buyer to be aware of the sense of community and whether it is a lawyer or realtor, as part of their due diligence, they advise the buyer the community sees that particular home as relevant, because the owner may have an issue with that designation down the road.

SARA BARTELLONI: Questioned if Eric thinks seeking historic relevance, rather than historic designation is better and if the Ordinance should be changed to reflect that.

ERIC MODEL: Indicated he is not sure, but he would think other communities would have that.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned what the ramification is, if the house is designated and the homeowner decides to make a change anyway.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated she is not sure, but believes they can be fined, but she will have to look at the Ordinance.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Stated as a Committee there are certain things you have to do and you have to be dispassionate about it even though a homeowner would not like this to have done, but you are guided by your Charter.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated they are here to preserve the history of River Edge.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated the only thing that makes her believe to go for the designations is, if you don't, and you continue to talk about photographs, you may as well be a Historic Committee and not a certified local government Historic Commission set to preserve specific historically relevant times in the town.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised reusing of a historic property is fine, as long as it is still up and not knocked down.

SARA BARTELLONI: Indicated in the Master Plan they have the cobblestone street, as well as Clarendon Court sign listed. Advised the cobblestone street on Webb Avenue, is slightly visible through the macadam and indicated they should ask for a clean sweep to either cover them or not.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated they do not want them covered.

ERIC MODEL: Said you are talking about being an advocate also, so every year you should ask for the restoration on Lincoln, even though it may come upon deaf ears, but as a group you want them to acknowledge this is important and you are still asking for it to be restored to the condition it should be.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned who owns the cobblestone street.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated it is not a county road. Questioned what is going to be done with the Clarendon Court sign.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned if there is someone they can hire.

SARA BARTELLONI: Advised the sign is hand painted and it was already designated, so it has to be taken care of. Questioned if there is a company that Historic Commissions rely on.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated she will contact the State.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated to have the sign under way by the summer.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Questioned whose budget it will come out of.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated if you need to use the archiving budget, then use it, as it is a property that was designated and has to be done.

ERIC MODEL: Stated he would like the sign to be as close to the original as it can be.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised the Record has been having old pictures in the newspaper and questioned Eric if he would check to see if they have any pictures of River Edge they can use for the archives.

ERIC MODEL: Stated he will take a look.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Advised there are some Pinterest groups that have pictures of River Edge.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated after collecting the materials, they need to be put online, and thought about getting a Grant. Advised she spoke with Jonathan Kenny, who said

that qualifies for a Grant, but Mike did not think we were ready for that yet, as he believed there should be more material.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated she does not agree with that. Advised it is very expensive to do, but once it is set up it is just a matter of someone understanding how to upload and maintain.

COUNCILMAN CHINIGO: Questioned if it could be a high school internship.

SARA BARTELLONI: Stated they have some talented computer students, but she believes it would require a lot of time and you need to follow through.

ERIC MODEL: Questioned having Marguerite do that work.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Indicated that would have to come out of our budget. Stated the CLG yearly Report is finished. It was hours of work for Mary and herself.

ERIC MODEL: Thanked them for all the work on the report.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Stated there is a vacancy on the Commission due to Elizabeth McGinity's resignation.

PHYLLIS ANGELO: Advised she met with Alan about the budget. Formal approval will be April 9th. Budget for 2018 is \$4,853.00.

Next formal meeting April 25th 2018.