

**TOWNSHIP OF WYCKOFF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 9, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

The November 9, 2021 Historic Preservation Commission meeting was held in the West Wing Conference Room in Memorial Town Hall.

Chairman Doug Swenson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Ms. Mitchell read the Open Public Meeting Notice: The November 9, 2021 Open Public Meeting of the Wyckoff Historic Preservation Commission is now in session. A 48 hour notice of this meeting was sent to the Record, The Ridgewood News, and the North Jersey Herald and News – all newspapers having general circulation throughout the Township of Wyckoff and was posted on the Wyckoff website where agendas are posted.

Roll Call

Commission Members Present: Rudy Boonstra, Township Committeeman; Doug Swenson, Chairman; Patricia Constance, Richard Lynch, Curtis Bajak, Steven Zmuda, and Maureen Mitchell.

Absent: Beth Van Emburgh, Joseph Cestaro, and Joseph Haftek.

Old Business

The September 13, 2021 meeting minutes were approved by the Commission Members.

New Business

Mr. Swenson brought up the matter of the potential sale of the historic home located at 310 Crescent Avenue and the seller's opinion that the lack of interest by potential buyers of the home is attributed to the Township's Historic Preservation Ordinance. Mr. Swenson said that Mr. Boonstra has been taking point on that matter and will provide an update later in the meeting.

Mr. Swenson handed out a letter that was drafted by Mr. Haftek and Mr. Bajak which will be sent to the owners of the fourteen (14) properties that are currently listed on the State and National Registries of Historic Structures. This is a letter of introduction to the homeowners in an effort to provide an understanding of the role of the HPC as it pertains to preserving the exterior of designated historic homes in Wyckoff while being guided by the Township ordinance in that process.

Ms. Constance suggested adding an introduction paragraph in the beginning of the letter to provide a little background on the establishment of the HPC and its purpose and goals. She added that it should also state the reason the letter is being sent, which is to move forward with incorporating these fourteen (14) structures, which are listed on the State and National Registries, into the Historic Element of the Master Plan.

Mr. Swenson recommended referencing the attachment, prepared by Ms. Mitchell, entitled "Historic Preservation and The Master Plan" which will be included with the letter of introduction.

Mr. Bajak said the letter is a work in progress and the suggested changes can be made as well as mentioning of the aforementioned attachment in the final version of the letter.

Mr. Lynch inquired about the process and procedures that are followed if by chance an owner of one of the fourteen (14) historic structures decided to renovate the building.

There was a discussion about the process of applying for building permits and variances and fail safe procedures should the owner of a historic home wish to renovate. Mr. Swenson stated that in 2019 Bob Shannon, the Township Administrator, provided a memo along with the list of historic homes to the Building Department to alert them should they receive any construction or demolition permit applications.

Ms. Mitchell said that if any renovation project were to require a variance, the property owner would have to submit an application to one of the Township's Land Use Boards and the application would be submitted to her directly so she would be aware of any proposed changes to the structure.

Mr. Swenson stated that the HPC currently does not have the power to prevent an owner of a historic home from making renovations to the home. The HPC can only refer it to the Planning Board or Zoning Board to try to encourage preserving the historic elements. He went on to say that once the homes are incorporated into the master plan, the HPC will be able to make recommendations to the homeowners regarding exterior renovations and encourage maintaining the historic elements.

Mr. Swenson said the property located at 358 Crescent Avenue was up for auction on an online property auction site however the day of the auction, the listing was pulled. He said he spoke with the Brackett's, who are selling the property, to ask if the HPC could take a tour of the home and the property simply for the Commission's interest in the historic value of the site. Mrs. Brackett said they will consider allowing the members of the commission to take a tour.

Mr. Boonstra said he spoke with the listing broker of 310 Crescent Avenue. He explained to her that the HPC is advisory only and offered to have the potential buyer meet with the Commission to review renovation plans. The broker stated that the house just recently sold at a reduced price, so it is a moot point at this time. The realtor stated that people are afraid of the way the ordinance is written, adding that she believes it is very draconian.

Mr. Lynch stated that the Wyckoff Historical Society is dismayed that the old Sicomac School House was torn down years ago and would like to place a sign at the site noting that the school once stood there.

Mr. Boonstra said the property belongs to Fire Company #3 and you would have to speak with the Association about placing a commemorative sign there. Mr. Boonstra said the school was actually next to where the fire house currently stands. When it was no longer used as a school, it became a Wyckoff Community Club which was used for functions and events for the community. After some time, fewer events were held there and when community needed a fire company, the new fire house was built on the property. The old school house fell into disrepair and became a bigger liability than it was worth to the fire company. They had problems getting insurance for the building, the bell tower became compromised, it needed a new roof, and no one wanted to perform upkeep, so it was eventually torn down.

Ms. Constance announced that she has been searching for photos of the Wyckoff historic structures decorated for Christmas. There will be a small photo spread in the December issue of the Wyckoff Living Magazine. Ms. Constance said she was able to obtain holiday photos of the Wyckoff Reformed Church, the Zabriskie House, the Van Horn Ackerman House, and the C. Snyder House which is owned by Mr. Lynch. She added that she is not sure how many photos will actually make it into the spread.

Mr. Bajak asked the Commission members to email their comments regarding the drafting of the letter of introduction to him and he will collaborate with Joe Haftek on the final draft for review by the Commission.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
NO ONE FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENTED
CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. The meeting concluded at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Maureen Mitchell
Commission Member and Secretary