

Historical Commission of Birmingham Township
Minutes of the meeting of March 22, 2016

The regular meeting of the Birmingham Township Historical Committee was called to order by Vice Chairman Mike Forbes at 7:25 pm in the township building.

PRESENT: HC Members: Mike Forbes, Nancy Needham, Carla Westerman, Kate Marshall

ABSENT: Matt Bedwell

Others present: Mary DeNadai

There are not enough members in attendance from the last meeting in order to approve the minutes from February 23, 2016.

Update on the Subcommittee

Update from Mike on the subcommittee regarding subsection 122.36.4 (dealing with demolition, modification and alteration) The plan is to compare this BT section to the Pennsbury and East Brandywine ordinances. There are a number of areas that the BT ordinance does not address: (1) not rules for what modifications are acceptable under HC (HARB has specific guidelines and standards), (2) the BT ordinance does not provide any specific guidelines or any meat that deals with any historic properties outside of the HARB district. Maria states that there are two hundred historic structures in BT. She suggests that the distinctive characteristics of each of these HRs be recorded. She worked on the design standards for Pennsbury township and others in the area and country. She can bring in examples of these for the group to use to create their own. She also suggests that the township look at past regrets in order to see what could have been in place in order to have prevented them.

Mike breaks this down to three areas:

1. Distinctive characteristic/design feature standards that architects can use as a reference;
2. Massing issue – volumetric appearance/size of a structure (height, width and depth)- and how it affects the surrounding area;
3. Impact of non-historic properties on historic properties and view shed

Mary suggests hiring a planning consultant who has a good track record doing this type of work. She also suggests using Cory Kegerise, he is the Eastern Field Representative for the PA Historical Museum Commission. He deals with certified local governments (CLG) and can bring his expertise to a meeting after he has toured the township. He can help obtain funding through grants to help draft an RFP for such work. Perhaps meet with Karen Marshall (or Jeannine Speirs) from the County, Cory Kegerise and also someone from the Brandywine Conservancy to kick off this entire process.

Discussion also ensued about updating the township maps to include view sheds to help with understanding where building can be built and how they will impact the surrounding area. Ms.

Needham states that the BT guidelines in are fairly extensive and suggests that the guidelines simply be adopted as part of the ordinance.

Electronic Library Update

No new news at this time.

New Business

An architect (Josh Allison) contacted Mike Forbes regarding the process/guidelines he must adhere to regarding an HR in BT (1479 Creek Road). Ms. Needham suggests that he refer to the guidelines within the ordinance that are available on the township website (122-36).

Ms. Needham asks the group for available dates to schedule a tour of the Randall Spackman house.

Mr. Forbes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:33m. Seconded by Ms. Needham and voted unanimously. The next meeting will be Monday, April 25, 2015 at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Boorse
HC Secretary