

**Minutes of the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee Regular Meeting
January 28, 2021**

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Chair Nancy Zerbe called the January 28, 2021, regularly scheduled meeting of the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) to order at 7:40 p.m.; the meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Attendance: Suzanne Andrews, Erin Murphy Casey, Lori Chambers, Steve Kitsko, Richard Miller, Thomas Mullins, Steven Patrick, Nancy Zerbe; and Tyler Kandel (council liaison)

New Members: The HPC welcomed new members Erin Murphy Casey and Steve Kitsko as well as new council liaison Tyler Kandel and provided a review of past committee efforts in preserving the character and architectural resources of Metuchen.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Review of Minutes: The minutes of the December 3, 2020, regular meeting were reviewed; Suzanne Andrews/Thomas Mullins (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve.

New Business

Reorganization and Elections: Nancy Zerbe was re-nominated to election as chair, Suzanne Andrews/Thomas Mullins (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve. Lori Chambers was re-nominated to election as secretary, Suzanne Andrews/Thomas Mullins (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve.

New Jersey Historic Trust Grant: A grant proposal by the HPC has been funded with \$15,000 from the New Jersey Historic Trust and a match of \$5,000 from the borough. Funding was approved to hire a consultant to develop a proposed historic preservation ordinance for Metuchen; the consultant's scope of work includes: 1.) reviewing Metuchen's background material; 2.) drafting an ordinance; and 3.) working with key stakeholders and the public to incorporate feedback and revise the draft ordinance. Nancy Zerbe will work with Borough Administrator Melissa Perilstein on the grant process, including the initial step of putting out an RFP to hire a consultant.

NJDoT Letter to Consulting Parties: Members reviewed a letter from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDoT) regarding the proposed replacement of the Grove Avenue Bridge over the Port Reading Railroad Historic District, a National Register-eligible historic district. In response to the letter's requests, the HPC agreed to: 1.) confirm its interest in continuing as a consulting party for the project; and 2.) identify no additional cultural resource concerns with the project beyond those cited by the NJDoT.

Discussion of 2021 Goals. The two main projects for the coming year will be submitting the draft Historic Preservation Element for the Borough's review and hopefully adoption, and overseeing the consultant hired with the New Jersey Historic Trust grant. Members reviewed other possible projects for the upcoming year, including signs to mark the Middlesex Avenue-Woodwild Park Historic District, a public outreach video on Metuchen's historic resources, and educational outreach to local realtors. The HPC agreed to consider a.) prioritization of the projects; and b.) the potential to organize subcommittees to address each.

Old Business

Historic Preservation Element of the Municipal Master Plan: Nancy Zerbe reported that she and planner Chris Cosenza are finalizing the appendices of the draft element, which was approved by the

HPC at its December meeting. Upon completion, the element will be submitted to the Borough administration for their review and processing.

Public Posting of HPC Minutes: Lori Chambers reported working with borough administration to have the 2019 and 2020 minutes reviewed, approved, and posted on the borough website.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lori Chambers, HPC secretary