

**Minutes of the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee Regular Meeting
January 26, 2023**

**Metuchen Borough Hall
500 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Metuchen, New Jersey**

Chair Nancy Zerbe called the January 26, 2023, regularly scheduled meeting of the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) to order at 7:38 p.m. The chair announced that the Borough of Metuchen had posted public notice of the meeting in accordance with New Jersey's Open Public Meetings Act.

Attendance: Suzanne Andrews, Lori Chambers, Alex Malvone, Thomas Mullins, Nancy Zerbe, and Tyler Kandel (council liaison)

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Membership Update: The committee thanked outgoing member Isaac Kremer for his contributions and welcomed new members Alex Malvone and William McDuffie.

Election of Officers: Nancy Zerbe and Lori Chambers were re-nominated to election as chair and secretary, respectively; Suzanne Andrews/Tommy Mullins (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve.

Review of Minutes: The previously approved minutes of the September 22, 2022, meeting, which contained an erroneous reference to a July 2022 meeting, were re-opened; Suzanne Andrews/Thomas Mullins (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve with the reference deleted. The minutes of the December 1, 2022, meeting, were reviewed; Suzanne Andrews/Nancy Zerbe (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve.

Historic Preservation Ordinance Project

Update on review process: Nancy Zerbe and Tyler Kandel continue to meet with borough council members and borough advisors to discuss the ordinance and answer their questions. Feedback from these discussions has been considered and incorporated into the draft ordinance. The potential for a five-year abatement on increased taxes for improvements to designated historic properties has been raised and is under discussion.

Update on current draft: Nancy reviewed the latest changes to the draft ordinance; in particular, she requested that members review Section 110-288 Demolitions and Relocations in its entirety.

Public outreach and awareness: With the introduction of the draft ordinance to the Metuchen community being a focus of the committee's work over the coming year, the committee discussed ways to raise awareness and build support.

- Committee members reviewed our currently available media resources, including a video on Channel MEtv/Channel 15, a Facebook page, a collection of supportive quotes/comments from Metuchen residents, and a Google map pinned with historic properties/properties of interest. How can we leverage/strengthen/supplement these resources?
- Committee members discussed our in-progress research and media projects. How can Tommy's video idea/script be leveraged to complement our existing video, which is quite general? How can Suzanne's research on economic benefits be presented and shared most effectively? How can we best identify and address public questions and concerns?

- Committee members discussed new ideas to pursue, including: 1.) developing talking points on the value of historic preservation/historic preservation ordinances; and 2.) encouraging inclusion of our architectural heritage in promotions of Metuchen as a day-trip destination.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lori Chambers, HPC Secretary

2023 Meetings

Feb 23
Mar 30
Apr 27
May 18
June 22
July 27
Aug 24
Sept 28
Oct 26
Nov 30