

**Minutes of the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee Regular Meeting
May 18, 2023**

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

Chair Nancy Zerbe called the May 18, 2023, regularly scheduled meeting of the Metuchen Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) to order at 7:37 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: Lori Chambers, Brian Keenan, Alex Malvone, Steve Patrick, and Nancy Zerbe

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

Review of Minutes: The minutes of the April 27, 2023, meeting were reviewed; Alex Malvone/Brian Keenan (M/S/C, unanimous) to approve with edits.

Draft Historic Preservation Ordinance

Nancy Zerbe provided the following information regarding the draft ordinance:

- Administration of the grant has been assigned to the borough's new project manager, Linda Koskoski.
- Nancy confirmed with the New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT) that an extension to the work period under our grant agreement is required; the borough has applied for the extension, and it is currently in review.
- Nancy and Lori Chambers will coordinate on the quarterly grant reports due to NJHT.

Public Outreach: Promoting Historic Preservation

The committee discussed progress in our efforts to foster public appreciation of Metuchen's historic resources and build public support for our historic preservation efforts, including:

Facebook: Committee members discussed ideas for new content areas as well as strategies for expanding the number and reach of our Facebook posts. The HPC resolved to:

- Commit to at least two new Facebook posts each month; *Alex Malvone* to take the lead on coordinating the posting process. Member-written posts will be reviewed and approved by the committee; *Nancy Zerbe* will forward final, approved posts to Alex to select and post.
- Promote posts as widely as possible; HPC to invite cross-posting by other Metuchen forums, and members to share posts with their own followers.
- Brainstorm ideas for content areas that create positive, emotional connections via "fun facts" and community pride points linked to history, architecture, historic resources, etc; *Lori Chambers* to develop preliminary list of ideas pulled from nomination/other materials.

FAQs / Talking Points: Committee members discussed the need to develop FAQs/Talking Points to address the most common questions that residents will ask about the ordinance; *Brian Keenan* to develop preliminary list of ideas for the committee to build out.

Community Support: Committee members discussed the need to build a community of pro-preservation allies and supporters. Members agreed to start by inviting interested friends and neighbors to our meetings. It was also agreed to seek ideas/insights from representatives of peer

towns that have successfully introduced ordinances in their community; *Nancy Zerbe* to reach out to a colleague from Maplewood.

Other Business

Nancy reported meeting with Dawn Mackey, the new executive director of the Metuchen Downtown Alliance. As a Westfield Council member, she shared her experience both during the adoption and the implementation of Westfield’s historic preservation ordinance. Discussion points included: the importance of addressing residents’ concerns; the importance of access to Certified Local Government (CLG) grants up to \$50,000 from the state’s Historic Preservation Office, in partnership with the National Park Service; and possible first-choice historic resource designations under the ordinance, among other topics.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lori Chambers, HPC Secretary

2023 Meetings

- June 22
- July 27
- Aug 24
- Sept 28
- Oct 26
- Nov 30