



HAVERFORD CIVIC ASSOCIATION
Board of Director's Meeting
May 10, 2022

Hala Imms ran the meeting in person and via Zoom.

Attending: In person: Hala Imms, Lorraine Jones, John McIntyre, Anne Mezey, Mo Gillen
Online: Robert Bocchino, Daphne Scullin, Ellen Langas, and Amr Salam

Commissioners: Anthony Stevenson, Scott Zelov

Review and approval of April 2022 minutes - Minor changes; Mo will email to Daphne.

Treasurer's Report - Lorraine Jones - \$2,678.18 budget.

Federation of Civics Meeting – Anne Mezey & Mo Gillen – copies of minutes from April were emailed. Major topic from May meeting (last night) was the lighting ordinance, covered later. Anne was nominated to continue as Treasurer; Mo nominated as Secretary.

Website updates & Facebook – Mo Gillen – posted tonight's meeting; prepared to post a flyer about the Sharpe Park days.

Haverford Station updates – Hala Imms - Lee Tabas has been doing major work to get people involved. Robert Bocchino said the new roof was going on today, and that SEPTA workers were repairing the stairs at the outbound station. Scott noted that part of the effort was a result of enforcement of property maintenance code, which he has been pushing for.

Historical Architectural Review Board Design Guidelines - Hala Imms

Scott Zelov has reached out to staff; they are working to create a summary. Very little opportunity for public involvement. Anthony Stevenson said he was disappointed to hear that staff thought outreach to those affected would be cost prohibitive.

453 W Lancaster Ave updates – Amr Sal

- ❖ Amr Salam (architect) said that when he and the home owner approached the township about bringing the triplex into compliance, they were told that obtaining a variance would be too difficult; the only option was to go through historic processes. He said they were not told at the time about the required covenant and easement.
- ❖ Amr presented their plan to the HARB at their meeting on October 5, 2021, then spoke to Scott Houchins (inspector at the time, now Zoning Officer), who outlined fire code requirements. Amr worked to upgrade the building to meet other requirements. He also presented the plan to HCA at the January 11, 2022, meeting,
- ❖ Prior to the Planning Commission meeting on January 31, 2022, the applicants were told about the required covenant and easement to be attached to the deed, in conjunction with their request for conditional use as an incentive. That meeting was held via Zoom, and their application was very late on the agenda. The Planning Commission viewed the application as creating an additional unit, even though the

unit already exists. There was significant discussion about the parking in front of the building, which the applicants noted is currently compliant; there is no requirement for any additional parking. Amr offered to plant some screening greenery. At the end of a very long meeting, the Planning Commission entertained a new motion to move all required parking to the rear and that motion passed quickly.

- ❖ The applicants then went to the Conditional Use Hearing on February 14, 2021. Pamela M. Loughman, Esquire, was the hearing officer; Jillian Dierks and Greg Prichard attended as township staff. During this hearing, they noted that the Planning Committee meeting minutes did not accurately capture the vote to move the parking (whether the commission intended just any “additional” parking or all of it). Pam also said the applicant would need to coordinate with the fire marshall. (Note: the fire marshall, James McCord, later said his discussion would need to wait for the Conditional Use approval). Pam said she needed 30 days for her review.
- ❖ At the Planning Commission meeting on February 28, 2021, the meeting minutes were approved (including the inaccuracy). Jillian said later that the Planning Commission needed to review the minutes again at their meeting on April 4, 2021. The applicants waited until the very end of that meeting, expecting a discussion of the issue. The Planning Commission simply approve the same January minutes.
- ❖ At the next Planning Commission meeting, on April 25, the minutes were changed to accurately capture the vote, consistent with the video recording of the January meeting. Again, this item was last on the agenda. The applicant still disagrees with the movement of the parking but was not allowed to address the issue.
- ❖ The next Conditional Use meeting now slated for May 19. Scott Zelov understood from Chris Leswing that this will be a short meeting, just to provide the corrected minutes, without any further discussion.
- ❖ Amr noted that the process is going on nine months, with no occupancy to offset mortgage payments; that a water pipe has just broken causing problems on the property; and that they have been very frustrated with the whole process, especially the requirement for the covenant and easement document, which he views as very restrictive.
- ❖ Anne asked if there was a contingency prior to final sale; Hala said they are not required, and it seemed as there was not one for this purchase. It likely would not have made a difference if the township had been clear in the requirement for the covenant and easement. Scott said the issue of clear guidance should be addressed.
- ❖ Hala noted that many records are just incorrect, and this property should have been recorded as a triplex (the cabinets on the third floor date from the ‘80s).
- ❖ Scott noted that taking advantage of an incentive requires, by code, a covenant and easement. Mo argued that the incentive cited is for conversion of a single-family dwelling does not apply to an existing duplex or triplex.
- ❖ Mo also noted that this property sat on the market for a long time, and that when the applicants appeared before HCA in January, they were open to offering the small third-floor unit at an affordable rate (it’s in a very walkable area and on the bus line). She asked if a variance could be considered based on the economic hardship that the applicants have incurred due to the process; Scott noted that variances are much harder to obtain.
- ❖ Hala mentioned the information that she had sent to Chris Leswing noting that our township zoning code does not include triplexes in MDR 2, but includes duplexes and quads. Mo noted that this is part of a bigger issue related to how the code defines quads and that it does not define triplexes at all.

355 W Lancaster Ave updates

- ❖ Hala shared an email from Jane Broderson, owner of a property on N. Wyoming.
- ❖ Anthony provided an update based on four requests from the neighbors on that street. He noted that the balconies facing N. Wyoming have been moved into the building, protruding less; the set-back and buffer on that east facade is greater than required. He disagreed with the residents' request for access to the development's pool; he felt it was not consistent. The developer has also increased the amount of brick to be used.
- ❖ There was some discussion around the change in the design of the front façade, which seems to have lost some design interest. The newest design seems flatter and one-dimensional, although the latest version, which Anthony showed, has more brick and seems a little less industrial than the one Jane had cited in her email.

Lighting and Noise Ordinance

- ❖ Mo read from an email from Ricky Guerra, President of the Federation of Civics, noting points made at their meeting on Monday night, including:
 - Whether newly installed lighting should be limited to a special permit process, or should be included as part of a land development process:
 - the permit process limits community involvement; and
 - the burden of enforcement traditionally falls upon the complainant
 - The proposed ordinance does not address the frequency of use:
 - can applicants have lights on 7 days per week, on holidays, etc.
 - can they have unlimited use for third-parties, i.e. a situation where an institution rents out its space for summer camps, night practices, etc.
 - The proposed curfew times proposed and whether they are appropriate (this relates to noise as well).
- ❖ Mo noted that some speakers at the Federation meeting were concerned that version 3.0 was released on Monday without a lot of time for public input before the Wednesday Building and Planning Committee meeting, and some thought it reflected significant input from the Lower Merion School District that might not be widely acceptable. Daphne noted that she might not be in agreement with some of those speakers as her children were LMSD students and she appreciated the opportunities afforded to them, including sports events.
- ❖ Scott and Anthony were receptive to the idea that version 3.0 includes many changes that have not been fully considered and that there is perhaps more work to do on the specifics of curfews and frequencies in particular.
- ❖ Regarding the burden of enforcement, Scott noted that Lower Merion is one of the few townships that has inspectors on staff; most municipalities contract out, apparently. Our inspectors don't currently work at night.
- ❖ Scott said lighting is not something that can be incorporated into land development; agreeing with the township staff position, he said we need to get this code right. He suggested that a delay in authorizing the advertisement of public hearing would be appropriate in order to do that.

Sharpe Park Clean Up May 20th & 23rd

- ❖ There will be mulch and plantings in Sharpe Park on Friday, May 20, and Monday, May 23. Mo to confirm the time with the Garden Workers and post on Facebook.

Primary Election May 17th

- ❖ Please vote!

Commissioners' Reports - Scott Zelov, Anthony Stevenson, Ray Courtney

Scott Zelov:

- ❖ Gladwyne Clean Up Day, held on April 23, was a big deal.
- ❖ Township finances are strong; ran a surplus in 2021 based on strong real estate transfer taxes and business taxes; sanitary sewer fund is also strong, with no need to raise rates.
- ❖ Clover Market this Sunday in Bryn Mawr; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ❖ School district enrollment is down, not up. Reasons include parents enrolling students in private schools during the pandemic.
- ❖ Billboard issue is unresolved; negotiations are underway.

Anthony Stevenson:

- ❖ The annual Memorial Day Concert, Parade, and Ceremony is back on this year, to be held on Monday, May 30. Parade starts at 10:30 a.m. and will go down Lancaster Ave from Greenfield Ave to St. Paul's Cemetery.

The next meeting will be Tuesday June 14, 2022