

East Fallowfield Township Historic Commission

2264 Strasburg Road
610-384-7144

Chairman: Paula Latta Coyne

Member: Fred Bissinger

Member: Arthur Deleo

Member: Sue Monaghan

Member: Lee Schlingman

APPROVED MINUTES

Historic Commission Meeting Minutes September 12, 2007

Attendance: Paula Coyne, Chairman, Members: Fred Bissinger, Lee Schlingman, Sue Monaghan.

Independent Consultant: Jane Dorchester, Architectural Historian.

Secretary: Deirdre K. Desiderio

Absent: Arthur Deleo.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Paula Coyne. Introductions were made of members and welcome Deirdre K. Desiderio as the new Historic Commission Secretary.

First Topic:

**Presenter - Ashley Hickman from EB Walsh Associates regarding the
Abrahams Plan (also historically known as the James Wilson Property)**

The property is a 35 acre tract. Zoning is an R1 (Rural Residential) 2 acre net minimum. Existing conditions: 2 existing houses known as LOT 2 and one known as LOT 1. Proposal is to subdivide property into 11 Lots; including 9 brand new lots with new homes, keeping the existing structures as they are on LOTS 1 and 2. In order to have access to the Lots they are proposing a road known as Road A which extends back about 1200 ft of pavement to the cul-de-sac.

Sue Monaghan asked where the site is located. The work entrance to Hennessy's is directly across the street of entrance. The proposed driveway is about 100 ft to the west on Strasburg Rd.

The owner of Lot 11 would be responsible to maintain after the subdivision.

There will be onsite sewer and onsite septic for all new lots as well as existing lots. They are in Preliminary Plan stage they've been through 2 review letters from the Township Engineer.

The members went over the Plans in detail with Mr. Hickman with suggestions, concerns and questions.

Parcel #1 is a Historic House. Paula Coyne is concerned also about the cemetery (the beauty of the cemetery is the view over the hill, etc); and about the fact that Strasburg Road is a Historic Road. The impact of the neglect of the present owners to allow the vegetation to grow up is not good for the Historic character of that road. Paula Coyne continues "so you have a huge responsibility on how you build the entrance that you are planning". Mr. Hickman pointed out that the main concern is the site location. There is no way around Penn Dot's requirements.

The question was raised of how many trees are being taken down? The only tree clearing is at the back of the site. Weren't there to be trees cut on Strasburg Road for the new entrance? There are some old trees being taken down. There will be about 8-10 trees removed. Lee Schlingman was concerned as to why they wouldn't want to keep the trees up to block wind and things of that nature; especially mature trees look nice in a residential area.

Sue Monaghan asked why can't they use the unnamed road as the entrance to the development and reconfigure the lots. Was that considered? It's a pre-existing road off of Sycamore Lane. So you don't have to use Strasburg Road. Was that question brought up to the Township Engineer? Mr. Hickman replied that it probably was, but probably in the very beginning, and not agreed upon.

Regarding the Stormwater issue and run-off comments, Mr. Hickman explains the actual engineering calculations which are that the post developed flow for a 10 yr storm, which is a storm that happens once every 10 yrs, is less than the pre-developed 2 yr storm which is more frequent.

Paula Coyne states that the road floods now. Fred Bissinger states basically this is an engineer to engineer thing and if the Township Engineer is happy with it, it's not for us to make changes to decisions already made.

Sue Monaghan's concern was if there were going to be any alterations to the terrain on LOT 1.

Mr. Hickman states that no septic or sewer will be put in prior to resale.

Jane Dorchester states addresses 2133 & 2135 Strasburg Rd are located on LOT 1. (2 houses, spring house and 1 barn).

Paula Coyne points out Section 1210 Landscaping and Buffering in Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Fred Bissinger suggests that they ask Developer to have larger setbacks if a new house is to be built; between LOT 1 and LOT 2.

Jane Dorchester suggests to have the Developer agree to go back and check the Historic Ordinance about how far away new lot lines need to be from exterior walls of historic resources should be and if it's not in compliance will they make an adjustment.

Fred Bissinger agrees not to make a decision now, but as a condition of an approval

Sue Monaghan asks would the set back take into consideration the entire property or just the old house. Jane Dorchester says the entire property. But in this case it's what exists today.

Jane Dorchester explains the Ordinance is not only concerned about the developed house, but in this case there are multiple resources which makes the entire property historic so you need to be careful about property lines for all of them. For the existing property line you can't change that, but that is something that needs to be realized even for future use. Jane Dorchester continues, "It has a lot to do with where you site the houses too. It's the entire land. The Historic property is the entire tax parcel. It doesn't matter if you have one resource or 10, it's the parcel. The way the Ordinance is written is that their intent is to preserve the entire historic property".

Sue Monaghan asks, "Was House 2 in existence when the parcel became historic"? Jane Dorchester responds, "no".

The definition of a Historic house, is that it must be 50 yrs or older. So that building in itself is not historic, therefore you have the ability as to what the Developer can do with that property. House #2 would be considered a non-contributing resource on historic property.

Paula Coyne suggests that the Historic Commission discuss their concerns in more detail and proposed items, prepare points and then send them to Mr. Hickman.

The HC suggests that Mr. Hickman take what they spoke about tonight and come back to the next HC meeting which is scheduled for October 10, 2007.

Paula Coyne suggested that Mr. Hickman obtain a copy of the Historic Ordinance.

The Concerns of the Historic Commission are as follows:

- 1. The entrance to look as old as possible so as not to look like all the other Developments; taking into account appearance and water run off concerns.**

Some suggestions were made during the meeting:

Maybe plant trees on both sides of new entrance so it looks like more of an old historic site not like the typical Brook Crossing Development. Don't put a Developer Subdivision road sign, just the standard township road name sign. Mr. Hickman states there is no island in the middle; just 2 lanes with curbing on each side. It looks more like a Township road not as a development. There are no sidewalks more of a rural site. No trails with just one cul-de-sac.

- 2. Driveway not to be as close to historical home, parcel #1.**
- 3. LOT 1 and Strasburg Road not to be changed - keep as is.**
- 4. Setback line for LOT 2 along LOT 1 property line should be increased beyond the normal for a new residence.**

5. **If a new house is built on LOT 2 it would be reviewed by the Historic Commission for design guidelines to try to make it appropriate to the historic district.**

Second Topic:

John and Marnie deCarville (100 Providence Hill Road, East Fallowfield, PA 19320) were in attendance as the owners of the Historic Property known as the Joseph Gladden House on West Chester Road.

They attended meeting to get some information regarding the historic findings of their house from the Historic Commission. Sue Monaghan provided them with copies of the history of the location.

The house was originally built sometime between 1780 and 1820. It is located on the National Registry. This house was a "Penn Plan" which is a "Floor Plan" not a style as was described by Jane Dorchester. It was attributed to William Penn. He wanted two things: not too much of it facing the street due to fire protection and also a more efficient way of heating. It's actual an Urban floor plan.

Discussions were made regarding the structure of the original old house both inside and out. Sue Monaghan shared with Mr. and Mrs. de Carville the description of the fire place, chimney and kitchen area.

Mrs. D e Carville asked about what restrictions there are regarding this historic house. Fred Bissinger commented there weren't really a whole lot of restrictions. The only thing is that if you make any changes on the outside the board would appreciate it if you'd let us know. If you made paint color changes, no, but if you made structural changes, like a picture window or something. Mr. de Carville asked who was responsible for the house being rebuilt in classical lines. Paula Coyne answered that it was the East Fallowfield Historic Commission who went to Rouse Chamberlain's Architect to ask him what he could do, and Sue Monaghan's husband, Garth Monaghan Supervisor, did some negotiating in trying to convince him that it would be an asset rather than a liability in one of our first HC meetings we had. That is why the Historic Preservation Ordinance was devised. So that historic houses such as this would be preserved. Mr. de Carville commented that he was very grateful for their hard work or they wouldn't be here.

Third Topic: Town Tour

Paula Coyne suggested having another Town Tour because this past springs Tour of Mortonville was so successful. Location suggestions were made, one being the Village of Towerville and the other being the Village of Ercildoun.

Jane Dorchester suggested before they even make a decision of a location, talk about logistics. There should be a beginning and end location that would be easy to access such as parking, traffic control. Churches would be a great location because of their parking lots and easy access.

An ideal place would be the Village of Ercildoun, where there is the Grove which is owned by the Quaker Church. There is a School. A suggestion was made; buses could taxi people to the church and to the Grove from the South Brandywine School.

The Town Tour would be on a Thursday night at 6pm so Paula suggested they have police presence for traffic.

Jane Dorchester suggested 1) Notify the Fallowfield Historical Society by means of a formal letter composed by Paula Coyne as the Historic Commission Chairman.
2). A letter to the Churches notifying them and asking for their opinion and assistance and 3). A letter to the School as well.

At the Historic Commission meeting Paula Coyne made a motion to the Historical Commission members for an agreement as to the location for the Town Tour being at the Village of Ercildoun. This motion was seconded by Fred Bissinger. Vote was unanimous.

Fourth Topic: Historic Photos

Paula Coyne motioned to recommend to the Township Secretary to purchase a black binder with inserts for photographs for historic preservation. HC members looked through photos donated to the EFHC by Rick Rasmussen of Mortonville in the late 1940's to decide as to what photos would be nice to have displayed on the Historic Commission webpage. The photos were given to Rick by Jimmy Lee who was given them by his grandfather.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deirdre K. Desiderio
Historic Commission Secretary