

MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING  
TOWNSHIP OF MILLBURN  
COUNTY OF ESSEX  
October 6, 2016

A regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on, October 6, 2016 at 7:30P.M. in Town Hall.

Chairman Gadsden opened the meeting by reading Section 5 of The Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975.

Attorney Falcon administered the Oath of Office to Elizabeth Wanga.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Mr. Davis Mr. Frenkel, Chair Gadsden, Mrs. Gaylord, Mrs. McNett, Mr. Metsky, Mrs. Wanga

ABSENT: Mrs. Canfield, Attorney Christopher H. Falcon, Mr. Kirshenbaum

ALSO PRESENT: Attorney Brent Carney, Historic Preservation Consultant Barton Ross and Secretary Nicole Verducci

MINUTES:

Upon a motion by Karen Gaylord to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2016 meeting as submitted, seconded by Mary McNett and with unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved.

**MEMORIALIZATIONS**

Approval of Application #371, Julieanne Nettune, 123 Highland Ave., Short Hills

Upon a motion by Karen Gaylord to approve Application #371 as submitted, seconded by Elizabeth Wanga and with a roll call vote as follows:

Mr. Metsky - Yes  
Mrs. McNett-Yes  
Mr. Frenkel-Yes  
Mr. Gadsden-Yes  
Mrs. Gaylord-Yes  
Mrs. Wanga-Yes

Approval of Application #374, Joseph Lynch, 73 Knollwood Rd., Short Hills

Upon a motion by Karen Gaylord to approve Application #374 as submitted, seconded by Mr. Frenkel and with a roll call vote as follows:

Mr. Metsky - Yes  
Mrs. McNett-Yes  
Mr. Frenkel-Yes  
Mr. Gadsden-Yes  
Mrs. Gaylord-Yes

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Mrs. Wanga-Yes

**REGULATOY APPLICATION #376**

Application #376;  
**Block #3104, Lot #2**

Applicant: **Jon Gordon**  
**153 Highland Avenue, Short Hills**

This is a designated site in the Short Hills Park Historic District. The applicant seeks major renovations at the property.

Tim Conway of Rosen Kelly Conway, Architect, presented changes suggested by the Commissioners at the September meeting. The area that was focused on is the tool house in the rear yard. Referring to exhibit A-4, the basement and first floor will remain the same as the previous presentation. Referring to exhibit A-5, the three bedrooms will be pushed to the back of the house. The existing bathroom and elevator will remain in the same location. Referring to Exhibit A-8, the bathroom will be more compact, allowing the front of the house to open with a shed dormer on the side of the house. The dominating dormer used to add light in the main space was changed to a single shed dormer which will match the existing detail in the rear and the front. The stone will remain the same.

Mr. Roth summarized his report stating the plans presented are more appropriate. The shed dormers match the main house. The rear of the house has to be reviewed by the Commissioners. The front is acceptable.

Mr. Gadsden opened up questions and comments from the Commission.

Mrs. McNett stated it's a very nice job. Mr. Metsky, Mr. Frenkel and Mrs. Wanga agree the house works well.

Mr. Davis questioned the materials of the roof. Mr. Conway stated it is asphalt shingles. If possible a wood shake will be used and stained to match the color rather than a synthetic material. Mr. Davis questioned if there is any copper roof on the building. Mr. Conway confirmed there is over three windows.

Mrs. Gaylord stated she loves the plan and is happy with the smaller windows.

Upon a motion by Robert Frenkel to approve, seconded by Karen Gaylord and with a majority roll call vote, the application was approved.

**REGULATOY APPLICATION #375**

Application #375;  
**Block #3104, Lot #4**

Applicant: **Vijay Mehta**  
**171 Highland Avenue, Short Hills**

This is a Non-designated site in the Short Hills Park Historic District. The applicant seeks demolition and construction of a new single-family house at the property.

Matthew Rosenbaum, Architect presented a study of neighboring homes and the proposed site to determine the massing, scale, proportion in order to establish the design parameters. Aerial views of the property and streetscape were presented as well as the existing survey and existing floor plans. Photos of water damage, mold issues and electrical issues were shown, requiring a complete removal of the infrastructure. The current unsalvageable roof

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is sagging and not sized to code with much water damage. Analysis was done showing that most of the neighboring houses have a main mass anchored by end walls and an extension from the main body.

Examples of concept sketches were presented as well as proportion principals.

Front, rear and side perspectives were presented in great detail.

Mrs. Wanga asked if changing the setback was taken into consideration. Mr. Rosenbaum stated due to the wetlands, changing the setbacks was avoided after comparing configurations of other homes. Mr. Rosenbaum stated placing a large scale mass in the rear would make the house appear lopsided. Mrs. Wanga questioned the elevation difference from the front of the garage to the upper portion of the house. Mr. Rosenbaum stated the difference is approximately 34.5 feet. Mrs. Wanga stated various materials should have been presented. Mr. Rosenbaum stated that the consideration of materials has not been discussed. Sample materials were presented as possibilities. Mrs. Wanga feels while improved, the house is too tall.

Mr. Mehta has no preference on the materials and will comply with the Commissions suggestions.

Mr. Davis liked the comparison of the surrounding houses. Mr. Davis and Mrs. Gaylord feel a modern home is not in keeping with the historic districts. The house looks exaggerated vertically and he would like to see it brought down in comparison to where it sits on the street. More landscaping is requested to mask the house. Mr. Davis stated it is not clear as to why the driveway has to be moved. Moving the driveway will disrupt the landscape. Mr. Mehta stated he is comfortable with any landscaping that the Commission suggests. Mr. Rosenbaum stated it is not his intention to clear the land. Most of the existing trees will remain. The driveway shift is being presented to make the grade lower and have the garage as close to the first floor as possible, which was requested by the homeowner. Mr. Davis suggests lessening the scale and incorporating the landscape into the building if possible. Mr. Rosenbaum stated he will make an effort to have that occur.

Mr. Frenkel stated it looks like an office building. The house needs to be toned down or possibly one level.

Mr. Metsky referring to the right side of the Rosenbaum House example that these houses work nicely on their sites in terms of how they are integrated with the landscape. 171 Highland has materiality issues. The second floor works nicely. Mr. Metsky and Mrs. McNett agreed there is no connection between the rear and the front. A stronger horizontal line of the main house will be an improvement. If the lines were consistent with the front the house will appear less bulky. Mr. Rosenbaum agreed to integrate the component.

Mrs. McNett stated that because she believes that different architectural styles are important to the fabric of the community, a Hartshorn House should not be replicated.

Mr. John Gordon, a neighbor was sworn in and stated he has no objection to a well designed modern house. The idea of neighbors across the street not liking the house because it does not resemble theirs is unfair. He agrees with the boards comments as far as massing and the driveway relocation but is willing to live with it. The existing structure is not historic and creating a faux Hartshorn house will not contribute to the neighborhood.

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Mrs. Melanie Rosenbaum, resident and realtor was sworn in. She stated that people stay away from the historic district because of the HPC Commission. She is concerned that the Commission's opinion is devaluing the homes in the historic districts. Many historic homes for sale are sitting and being reduced due to the lack of interest. She questioned why there is an issue with replacing a modern home with a modern home. The notion of the driveway is to maintain the large trees and to hide the modern looking home. From a realtor's perspective, good people want to move to the neighborhood and add value to the historic district.

Mr. Ross stated these plans are a better version from last month. We are moving in the right direction.

With no further questions or comments Mr. Rosenbaum agreed to return to the November meeting for further discussion.

**REGULATORY APPLICATION #377**

Application #377;  
**Block #2110, Lot #8**

Applicant: **Ahnow & Lily Lee**  
**21 Wells Lane, Short Hills**

This is a Non-designated site in the Short Hills Park Historic District. The applicant seeks major renovations at the property.

Ahnow and Lily Lee, Applicants, Mr. Roth and Daniel Dubinett of Dubinett Architecture, were sworn in.

Mr. Dubinett gave a brief history of the home.

The goal in the rear of the house is to refurbish the sunroom transforming it to a breakfast/family room connected to the kitchen. Additional bedrooms and a bathroom will be added to the second floor. Rooflines will be reshaped in order to create dormers giving the space they need.

Exhibits A-1A and A-1B of an artistic rendering was proposed. A-1A presented the front rendering as a visual perception of the house. Materials were discussed. The roofline was presented. The garage and front door will remain the same and are slightly set back. Photos marked as A2-A6 showing two story colonial homes in the neighborhood were presented. The roof shape was presented as a mixture of gables and hips. One tree will be removed which is a small Japanese maple. The historic oak will be preserved.

Mr. Ross, referring to his memo, stated the materials should not be synthetic. Mr. Ross stated he would not use resin materials on a historical house. He stated that he prefers smooth hardy board which has been approved before. He feels it will be a good contrast.

Mrs. McNett agrees synthetic materials should not be used. Mr. Dubinett stated resin is a material that does not rot. It is used in the town's historical neighborhoods and once painted will resemble wood which unlike resin does not last more than 5 years after exposed to weather. He also stated he will be using a vinyl soffit also looking like wood with the

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advantage of being vented. Wood will have to have a vent installed which will be unattractive.

Agreeing with Barton, Mr. Metsky feels the roof is too large and bulky. If reduced in height the scale will be an improvement. The renderings are not accurate. The portico is an issue and is very bulky and overwhelming. The garage door needs improvement.

Mr. Dubinett stated the height would not change if it was a gable or a hip roof and would cause the structure to be larger which they are trying to avoid.

Mr. Frenkel questioned the material of the roof. Mr. Dubinett stated asphalt.

Mrs. Wanga is pleased with the rendering. The issue is that the façade is too pronounced and doesn't go with the subtlety of the shape of the house. The front gable is different than the elevation.

Mr. Davis questioned if the existing dentil molding will remain. Mr. Dubinett stated it will be removed. He stated the bay windows over the garage, comparing the photo to the rendering, does not reflect what it would actually look like.

Mrs. Gaylord stated cedar should be used instead of resin. She feels the bays over the garage are in reality only the half the width on the rendering. Mrs. Gaylord feels the bay box is too deep and needs to be narrower. She suggested the house plan be presented on a board and colorized.

With no further questions or comments Mr. Dubinett agreed to return to the November meeting for further discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further suggestions or comments from the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nicole Verducci, HPC Secretary