

TOWN OF NEWBURGH
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FEBRUARY 12, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Cox; Phillip Field; Steve Shoemaker; Troy Wells; Anne Rust Aurand, Town Council Liaison substitute for Tonya McGuire

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Sue Morrison, Ken Hughes

ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENT: Lori Buehlman, Town Manager; Chris Wischer, Town Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cox called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Shoemaker moved to adopt the minutes as presented. Mr. Field seconded and the motion carried.

REPORTS

Staff

Ms. Buehlman said the Town Council approved the fee waiver for Preservation Hall for the Preservation Celebration on May 14. She said she will speak with Lynda Browne about starting to plan for the event.

216 W. Jennings tree removal

Ms. Buehlman said the new owner, Dawn Morand-Onay, was not aware the house was in the Historic District. Mark Goodpaster, the tree man, will provide documentation as to the tree's condition when it was removed. The owner has an appointment Wednesday with Ms. Buehlman.

Mr. Wells said he talked with the realtor and she had no clue about the property. Mrs. Aurand said she knows at least twice a realtor told a prospective buyer that a home with a green sign would be subject to historic preservation restrictions.

Lori said the realtor should have known the house was in the district. Leanna Hughes, a realtor, said it would be easy for a realtor not to know that. Mr. Wischer said it might show up on the title but it would be the town's responsibility to have that recorded. Zoning ordinances are recorded currently, Mr. Wischer said. Having that information recorded could be required through the new historic district ordinance, Mr. Wischer said, but it might be cost prohibitive to go back and record each at this point. The solution could be as simple as an annual letter to each realty agency in the area with a map of the district, suggested Mr. Cox. He asked Mrs. Hughes to track down the list of realtors. Mr. Field suggested it might be tied to the annual preservation event.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Cox said the Preservation Month event is a function of the Education/Outreach Committee. The committee's idea was to hold a reception and brief program to educate the public and elected officials about the economic impact of historic preservation.

For this year, Historic Newburgh, Inc. has asked Phillip Cooper to speak at the May 14 event. He is formerly the chief of economic development in Evansville.

Mr. Cox said he will contact Lynda Browne about getting invitations sent. Mr. Shoemaker said he has a list of county officeholders.

PETITIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Morrison asked the HPC to take a stand on the proposed rezoning of a portion of the Williams' property on the west side of town for a Wal-Mart grocery and gas station. She said the HPC is charged with the duty to safeguard the fabric of the historic district. She said she doesn't want to lose what makes downtown Newburgh unique and having a Wal-Mart on the west end will change shopping patterns downtown.

Mrs. Aurand said the Planning Commission will hear comments at a public hearing on March 2. Comments must be presented at the meeting or in writing in order to be included in the meeting record.

The Williams family and Wal-Mart will present their plans for the property at that meeting. After that, the members of the public will have an opportunity to speak to the Planning Commission. The Site Review Committee has met with Wal-Mart representatives about the concerns that have been voiced. A traffic study has been conducted and safety issues considered.

The Planning Commission will send its recommendation to the Town Council, pro or con. Wal-Mart may submit a use and development commitment.

Mr. Cox said it is not the responsibility of the HPC to take a stand on this issue.

Mr. Wischer said this is the first time he has been involved with a rezoning matter like this for the town. He reassured the Commission that the town has the people with the expertise to manage it.

He noted the property northwest of the Williams' property is also for sale. It is a much larger plot and is currently zoned R3 except for the front 50 feet, which is zoned commercial. Both Williams and Grimm asked to be annexed. Otherwise, the rezoning issue would have been before the County Commissioners and Newburgh would not have been involved in the discussions.

Mr. Field said he could think of no other group that would have more to lose than the HPC if the rezoning goes forward.

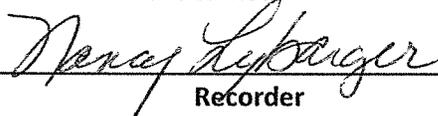
Mr. Shoemaker asked if the Site Review Committee will meet again before the Planning Commission public hearing. Mr. Wischer said they are waiting for study results now, so there may not be another meeting before March 2. Mr. Shoemaker asked that the HPC be informed if there is something that needs to be shared. Mr. Wischer said he will keep all boards and commissions informed.

He explained that the Planning Commission is only considering whether the property is suitable for C2 zoning. He said there are like more issues that will be addressed before the matter is eventually settled.

Mr. Wischer introduced his assistant, Kristen Head, who will attend HPC meetings if he is not available.

ADJOURN

Mr. Shoemaker moved to adjourn. Mr. Field seconded the motion and it carried.

 
Chair Recorder