

East Brandywine Historical Commission Meeting April 13th, 2016

Present: Jim Buczala, Allie Proko, Ashley Harper, Dan Rhodes, Carol Schmidt and Mark Myers

Also Present: Luke Reven, Assistant Township Manager; Frank Newhams, Zoning Officer; Michael Gill, attorney with Buckley, Brion, for the Learning Experience Project; Bob Wise, of Wise Preservation; Scott Risbon.

I. Learning Center HRIS:

- a. A revised HRIS (subsequent to the one submitted to the Township in December 2015) was not provided. Mr. Gill attended the meeting to present his case for limiting further effort on the HRIS. He started by saying that they are not willing to spend money to provide the drawings we requested to understand the appearance of the completed Learning Experience project in its setting relative to the Historic Village of Guthriesville. It is his position that it is not a requirement of the Zoning Ordinance. This is a reversal of what was agreed at our December meeting with Ms. Trunzo of his firm. As Mr. Gill had not previously met with us regarding this issue, the timeline and a summary of previous discussions were provided to him:
 - i. Our first meeting with representatives of the Learning Experience was in November 2015, prior to submittal of the HRIS for the project; at that meeting we clearly expressed our concerns about the appearance of the project relative to the Village of Guthriesville and the importance of renderings showing the expected final appearance of the project in its setting.
 - ii. The HRIS was prepared by his firm (not an historic resources professional) and submitted to the Township, and then discussed with Ms. Trunzo at our December 2015 meeting. The renderings requested at our November meeting were not included in the HRIS. Further, the HRIS argued that there was no impact to the 15 historic resources within 300 feet of the project and, by extension, no mitigation was discussed. It was explained to Ms. Trunzo that there will be an impact by the very nature of it's being new construction in an historic setting, but that mitigation was being provided primarily through landscape screening (and that that should be indicated in the HRIS). It was also explained to her that the full impact of the project on the Village could not be understood without the requested renderings of the expected final appearance of the project. After some discussion, it was agreed that the discussion on impact would be revised, that mitigation would be discussed, and that the requested renderings would be provided in some form (other details of the discussion are provided in the December minutes).

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- iii. The HC has not yet received a representation of the proposed building and what has been shown at meetings has been inconsistent.
 - iv. We have had no substantive communication regarding the project with any representatives of the Learning Experience since the December meeting until this April meeting.
 - v. It was also explained to Mr. Gill that without a clear understanding of the impact that the project will have on the Village, the HC cannot provide a recommendation to support it.
- b. Mechanisms for mitigation (the end point of the HRIS process) were discussed, and it was explained to Mr. Gill that landscape screening likely satisfied the mitigation for impact on most sides of the property, although the scale of the Landscaping Plan provided with the HRIS rendered the details of the plantings incomprehensible. However, the side of the property with the retaining wall physically precluded placement of a landscape screen; the only mitigation that remains after landscaping would be adjustments to the architecture of the building. After some discussion Mr. Gill agreed to provide the following with the revised HRIS, with the understanding that the HC will be involved with the architecture of the building:
- i. 2D elevation drawings of the four sides of the building, with accurate final grades represented, including the retaining wall and an accurate representation of the building design with exterior finish materials indicated, with the exterior elevations at a size and scale that is legible.
 - ii. Drawings representing the final views of the project.
 - iii. 24 x 36 inch Landscaping Plan (so that the details of the plantings can be understood).
 - iv. For input to architectural features the following will be provided:
 - 1. Building material samples.
 - 2. Building color samples.
 - 3. Specific architectural elements such as doors and windows.
- c. It is the position of the HC that if owner of the Learning Experience project is willing to accept input from the HC regarding architecture of the building (the only remaining item to provide mitigation for impacts), then the HC would not get mired down in the process of the HRIS, itself. Mr. Gill agreed to bring this request to his client.
- d. Section 399-79 of the Zoning Ordinance (Visual Impact Study) was also discussed with Mr. Gill. He indicated that his position was that the perspectives would be limited to the sides of the property with residential neighbors.

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- e. A letter from the HC will be sent to Mr. Gill summarizing our understanding of tonight's discussion and agreements.

II. Mitigation for HR-104 Spring House

- a. The Board of Supervisors are in the process of issuing a letter to Mr. Risbon ordering him to return the altered springhouse to its condition prior to the renovation work he performed. An appeal of this Order is expected.
- b. Mr. Risbon was present at our meeting to discuss what he might be able to do to mitigate the impact he has caused on his historic springhouse. He has already met with the Bondsville Mill Park (BMP) Committee to discuss donating resources towards a comprehensive cleanup of the site. The HC is comfortable with the concept of Mr. Risbon performing work at the Bondsville Mill Park to help with renovation of the historic Mill buildings to satisfy mitigation requirements for the issue; however, the level of effort is yet to be determined. Items discussed included:
 - i. Providing 30yd roll-offs for removal and disposal of debris from the Mill buildings and park
 - ii. Providing labor (from his landscaping business); work on Saturday
 - iii. Repurpose wood debris into mulch
 - iv. Equipment for weekend use:
 - 1. Skid loaders
 - 2. Excavators
 - 3. Grapple buckets
- c. Proposed work to be done at the Mill to satisfy mitigation needs to be formalized in a list. HC request that Mr. Risbon and Rocky Stone (of the BMP Committee) work together and create such a list and time-frame that includes cost/benefit. It is recommended by the HC that this list could be brought to the next Bondsville Mill Park meeting on (4/28; 8:00 am) as well as to the HC.

III. Trego Barn Re-use

- a. Letter from the HC was submitted to Chris Yates on March 30th 2016. No reply has been received.

IV. HR-203

- a. There was a significant fire in the house at this property. It is anticipated that a demolition permit will be forthcoming.

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- b. The HC asked Frank Newhams to visit the structure and report back as to the severity of the fire's damage.

V. Spring Speaking Series

- a. Arrangements are set for the talk at the Bondsville Mill Park on April 17th; Jim will give an introduction that includes a discussion of the historic Mill and Bryan Thomsonowak will take the group on a nature hike to discuss the horticulture of the Park.
- b. The speaker for the May archeology talk at the Twp Building has been booked.

VI. Demo by Neglect (HR-49, HR-45, HR-170, HR-161 add HR-13)

- a. HR-45, has been boarded up (the house that John Dowlin allegedly grew up in).
- b. HR-78 on 322; Locust Knoll Farm (near Osbourne Rd) notice of violation was removed due to engineer's report that silo is a robust structure and not in danger of collapse.
- c. HR-49, per Frank Newhams statement, the house is nearly completely closed up. This house may also be associated with the Dowlin family. The house is to be preserved per legal agreement between the Township and the developer that owns the property (the developer currently disagrees with the requirement to retain it, a legal issue to be sorted with the Township).
- d. HR-13 is the location of the Animal Resorts kennel and is very likely to be building a new kennel building (no update).
- e. HR-104.1 the structure has numerous openings and roof failure and a notice of violation will be issued. Jim B spoke with Chris Yates about these issues and no feedback has been given about whether this is addressed.
- f. HR-170, the Weaver Farm (Class I resource) will be developed at some point.
- g. HR -161, the Guthrie House, is not a high priority anymore relative to development, but information on the resource would still be welcome.
- h. HR-120- has been brought up as it may have a wide hole in the barn roof. The HC will bring this up to Frank Newhams.

VII. Historic Resources Protection Standards; Ordinance Revisions

- a. 399 67 -incentives for owning HRs.

VIII. Comprehensive Plan Goals

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- a. We need to start thinking about what should be added to the space in the Zoning Ordinance in the Historic Resource Protection Standards regarding additional uses/conditional uses (399-67). Bob Wise has looked into a list of possible uses, including:
 - i. Bed/breakfast
 - ii. Additional units
 - iii. Additional uses
 - iv. Area bulk relief (e.g., allowing on-street parking)
 - v. Allow building additions
 - vi. Conditional use versus variance
 - vii. Relief from impervious coverage requirements
 - viii. Tax credits (Federal; local?)
 - ix. Set up Improvement Funds (set low interest loans or set aside funds to help owners of historic resources maintain/improve them; using Township approved contractors)
- b. Mr. Wise will write something up for the HC.
- c. Tax credits from the local government are usually not available but Luke Reven said he would look into it. Low interest or no interest loans from townships has been done before.

IX. March Meeting Minutes were approved with no comment.

On-Going Administrative:

- **Historic Resource Research Update**
 - No Updates
- **Certified Local Government Program**
 - No updates.
- **HC files at Township Building**
 - Inventory is complete.
- **HC Webpage**
 - No updates.
- **Historic Preservation Award**
 - No Updates.
- **Recorded Interviews of Long-time residents (Mike Dawson)**
 - No updates.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Ashley Harper

Follow up:

Jim: send Ashley info for Historic Preservation Award. Send Allie Dawson's email.

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Jim: write letter to Mr.Gill summarizing our discussions with him at tonight's meeting.

Dan: will research more on HR-203.

Jim: will send an email to Frank N. regarding HR-102. Jim will also draft a 'nice', non-threatening letter from the HC. For example: we'd like to bring this issue to your attention...