

**Chesterfield Township
Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes November 7th, 2023**

Chairmen James Codella called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

The Open Public Meeting Statement was read and Compliance Noted

Roll Call:

Present- James Codella, Timothy Beggs, Eugene Cardone, Jennifer Lynch, Robert Forwood (online attendance) Denise Koetas-Dale, HPC liaison

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Beggs made a motion seconded by Ms. Lynch to approve the September 5th meeting minutes with Mr. Forwood's corrections. All were in favor, motion carried.

New business:

Historic Inventory review- Mr. Codella led the discussion concerning the Historic inventory proposal. He explained that there is a lot of misrepresentation of the proposal circulating. An inventory of the historic structures in Chesterfield has not been performed since the 1970's. He explained that the inventory is necessary so the township and residents can be knowledgeable and aware of the many historic structures in the town. Mr. Codella stated the historic inventory does not give the HPC any additional capabilities, the HPC is advisory to the Planning Board only. He explained that Chesterfield has what is referred to as a "weak" HPC which means everything that is voted on at a HPC meeting must then go through the Planning Board. The HPC only gives a recommendation. Mr. Codella discussed how the HPC has recently held discussions to reform the fee structure and possibly remove the \$100 application fee all together. There is no plan of expanding the Historic district to include homes from the 1960's and 1970's. Ms. Lynch agreed that the Historic inventory is vital to the community and explained that the goal of the HPC is to provide resources to the community not to penalize people or tell them what they can and cannot do. Mr. Cardone stated that he works with Margaret Hickey who produced the proposal for the Historic Inventory and states she is excellent and that her fees are extremely reasonable.

Thomas Orban- 26 Church street- Expressed concerns regarding the HPC voting to move forward with the Historic inventory approval prior to getting the public's opinion. Mr. Codella advised that this is not the time for public comment, public comment will be held towards the end of the meeting where everyone who is attending the meeting both in person and online will have a chance to speak.

Mr. Beggs made a motion seconded by Ms. Lynch to move forward with the Historic Inventory proposal before the end of the year 2023 so the HPC can utilize the 2023 budget. All in favor, motion carried.

26 Church Street- Mr. Codella led the discussion, the driveway has been modified without HPC approval as well as two new 4' high pillars on either side of the driveway. Mr. Codella stated the pillars appear to be cemented into the ground and therefore a permanent fixture. Mr. Codella stated that the HPC should instruct the homeowner to make a retroactive application to the HPC. Mr. Codella will reach out to Township zoning officer/Code Official, Glenn McMahon to inquire if there is any need for a zoning application as well.

Old Business- Storage trailer on Front Street – Ms. Lynch informed the members that this concern has been addressed as the trailer is no longer on Front street.

A motion was made by Mr. Beggs seconded by Ms. Lynch to open public comment

Steve Hazen- 447 Main Street- Stated historically he does not trust the HPC, and he has a problem with the HPC telling people what they can and cannot do to their homes. He feels that the \$100 application fee is unfair and he expressed concern that the Township was not concerned when they demolished the old township building. He stated that Mr. Orban should have been notified that his property was up for discussion at this meeting.

Molly Hazen-447 Main Street-Stated that life is hard enough without the HPC making it more difficult. She expressed that the fee and regulations of the HPC pose trouble for residents who are financially struggling as some historic replacements materials can be pricey. Mrs. Hazen asked for clarification on what the difference is between the HPC and the Historic Society. Mr. Codella explained that the Historical Society is not affiliated with the township and that they are an outside organization. Ms. Hazen asked if the HPC offers any financial assistance to those who cannot afford the approved materials the HPC recommends in their guidelines. Ms. Lynch states that there isn't funds available but the HPC can provide knowledge on different grants and resources that may be available for HPC regulated repairs or replacements.

Bryan Mahon- 16 Chesterfield-Crosswicks Rd. Stated that he has requested on multiple occasions that the HPC consider modifying the historic district boundary to exclude his home as it does not fit the requirements to be considered historic. Ms. Koetas Dale explained that this should be able to be addressed in the near future.

Ms. Lynch made a motion seconded by Mr. Beggs to adjourn. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned 8:13pm.