

**Westwood
Historic Preservation Commission
Wednesday, September 12, 2012
Municipal Complex
101 Washington Avenue**

1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 P.M.

2. Roll Call (present)

David Hohmann
Otokar von Bradsky
Donald Rubin
Robert Miller, Councilmember Liaison
Gregory Dietrich, Preservation Consultant

Also present were:

Kimberly Redmond, Managing Editor, Community Life
Jim Legget, the Patch (website)
Scott Berkoben, Attorney, member of the Public

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Proceedings

Because a majority of Commission members were not present, we were not able to vote on the acceptance of the Minutes of the August 8th meeting. The vote will be deferred to the next meeting.

Most of the rest of the meeting was a discussion about the public's comments at the August meeting and how we should proceed specifically with the Westwood Historic District and generally what role should the Westwood Historic Commission take in the approval of future building projects.

Mr. Van Bradsky advocated that the WHC function primarily in an advisory capacity. We would review proposed projects within historic districts or designated as historic. We should not delay the review process. We should report our recommendations to the Planning or Zoning Board who would determine if the project is acceptable as proposed or with modifications.

In response, to the question of whether review by the WHC is mandatory, the Historic Preservation Ordinance, paragraph F1.c.5) states that "The applicant for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required to appear before the (WH)Commission and the Planning Board for the hearing on the application." This would delay the process and the members discussed whether the Ordinance should be amended to avoid this added burden on the applicant. Mr. Miller concurred with this view, stating that the Commission's authority could get out of hand, imposing arbitrary and burdensome requirements, such as what color to paint a building on property owners. Also, these decisions could be redundant with those of the Zoning and Planning Boards.

Mr. Hohmann introduced a discussion of contributing vs. non-contributing buildings. Non-contributing buildings are more problematical because of the intent of the ordinance is to bring all buildings up to the design standards of the districts where they are located, a greater burden would be borne by the owner, and more work or expense might be required than with buildings that are already conforming. As with other issues, this might be better left to the Planning or Zoning Boards.

The members proposed that the Chairmen of the Planning and Zoning Boards, Jaime Hodges and William Martin and the Borough Legal Counsel, Russell Huntington join us at next month's meeting to discuss our (recommended) role and legal authority per the Historic Commission Ordinance.

In the matter of Commission membership it was noted that Mike Lewis has not attended any meetings this year. Mr. Rubin suggested that we need to ask him whether he wishes to continue as a member. If not, his place should be made available to someone else in order to have more participating members and also to have a quorum, which is required to vote on any proposed motion. Mr. Miller said that he would contact Mr. Lewis.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at 7:30 PM at the Westwood Borough Hall if the Meeting Room is available. An e-mail will be sent out to confirm the meeting.