



**BOROUGH OF NEW PROVIDENCE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, February 12, 2025 – 7:30 P.M.**
Lincoln Room - Municipal Center
360 Elkwood Avenue, New Providence, New Jersey

Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

2. Roll Call:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Class Type</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
▪ Malathi Ananthakrishnan	A	X	
▪ Dan Badgley	B	X	
▪ Molly Springer	C		X
▪ John Sponauer	C	X	
▪ Jeff Grob	C	X	
▪ Richard Angel	C – Alt. #1	X	

Also in attendance: Council member and Council Commission Liaison person Diane Bilicska.

1. New Business

- A. Welcoming new member Angel

The Commission members welcomed new member Richard Angel. Richard told everyone a bit about his background and how he came to the Commission. Jeff gave Richard a copy of the enabling ordinance that created and guides the Commission's duties and responsibilities and the PowerPoint presentation that was given to the Mayor and Council last August highlighting what the Commission's mission is, what it's done to date and what it's looking to accomplish in the near and long-term future.

- B. Discussion of Preservation NJ Article on the Current State of Historic Preservation Commissions in NJ

The article that Jeff had sent out to all the Commission members prior to the meeting was a observation on the current state of historic preservation commissions throughout the state and what avenues and methods are available to them to strengthen their abilities to assist historic property owners to realize the potential additional added value that can be realized by recognizing the historic aspects of their property.

- C. 160 Oakwood Drive

There was discussion regarding an application that was made to the New Providence Planning Board the week prior to get an approval for a minor subdivision plan involving properties owned by the Conti family on Old Brook Lane and Oakwood Drive. Since 160 Oakwood Drive is listed on the Borough's list of Historic Properties, Jeff went to the Planning Board meeting to better understand what was being proposed and what, if any, affect the action might have on the property at 160 Oakwood. The application sought to realign the property lines for 41 Old Brook Land and 160

Oakwood Drive to add more rear yard area to the 160 Oakwood lot and to add more side yard area to the 41 Old Brook Lane property. Jeff reported that he felt that there appeared to be no impact to the historic property at 160 Oakwood Drive.

After that case was completed, Jeff addressed the Planning Board and asked that once their current critical issues regarding the affordable housing mandate for New Providence have been resolved and the Borough's planner McKinley Mertz from Heyer, Gruel & Associates has more time available to dedicate to the master plan, he indicated to the Board that the Historic Preservation Commission would like to appear in front of them with a presentation highlighting their reasons for the Board recommending to the Mayor and Council that an historic preservation element be reinstated back into the Borough's Master Plan when it is up for reexamination or before.

2. Old Business

A. Status of Properties Currently Listed On Historic Properties List

The group explained to new Commission member Richard the purpose of the list of historic properties, how it was compiled, where it currently exists and what's being done with it.

B. Continued Discussion Of Other Properties With Potential Listing

Similarly, the group then explained to Richard the purpose of the list of historic properties currently not on the original list but possibly should be, how it is being compiled, where it currently exists and what's will be done with it once it is completed.

C. Continued Discussion of Letter to Property Owner

There was a short discussion regarding the value of the writing of a letter from either the Mayor or the Commission to all owners of a property listed on the Historic Properties List highlighting the historic nature of their property and if they would like more information regarding their property that they could reach out to the Commission for further information.

D. Continued Discussion of Topics for the 2024 End-of-Year Report to Council Due end of January

Jeff acknowledged to the group that the Commission owes the Council a end-of-year report for 2024 and the ball was in his court to get that completed and filed.

E. Continued Discussion Regarding Strategies discussing the economic benefits of historic preservation and making historic preservation an element of the borough's Master Plan

F. Discussion of Presentation to Mayor and Council

There was further discussion regarding the status of the progress of the Historic Commission and the need and benefits of reinstating the Historic Preservation element into the Borough's Master Plan. All agreed that the presentation was very necessary and should be advanced as expeditiously as possible.

3. Council Liaison Comments

Council member Diane Bilicska indicated that the Borough has created for all its Boards, Committees and Commissions a Board, Commission, and Committee Members' Handbook of rules and expectations of how their business should be conducted. It's outlines notices, minutes, announcements, expenses etc. and she asked all the Commission members become familiar with its contents and sign the letter of acknowledgement found on the last page of the handbook. Council member Diane Bilicska also asked that Jeff email to her a list with all the Commission members' email addresses. She further mentioned that the Borough has been going through an overhaul of all the various Boards, Committees and Commissions' web page found on the Borough's web site and asked that two work with her to get our web more consistent with the others. Jeff volunteered to assist on behalf of the Commission

4. Miscellaneous Business - None

5. Communication Items – None

6. Meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Minutes compiled by Jeff Grob