

Malvern Historical Commission

Meeting March 26, 2012

Minutes

Members Present: Deb Collins, Lynne Hockenbury, Barb Rutz, Joan Stackhouse

Members Absent: Barb Leighton

Guests Present: Nancy Schmitt, Keith Hartman

A public information session was held at 7:30pm to discuss the proposed historic resource protection standards for the Borough of Malvern. See addendum to these meeting notes.

The regular monthly meeting was held after the public information session.

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 pm

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for February 2012 were approved.

Membership: The Historical Commission has two openings.

Financial Report: Nothing to report.

New Business:

- A. **First Baptist Church:** Marilyn Salyers was interested in how the Historical Commission could support the longevity of the First Baptist Church property. The Commission members will support whatever historical information they need and we will continue to try and get the historic ordinance passed.
- B. **Schedule another Public Information Session:** The Commission will look into scheduling another historic ordinance information session for the public.
- C. **Nancy Schmitt's Comments:**
 - a. Nancy was invited on Monday, April 9 to talk at the Simpson House in Downingtown to the Newcomers Club of Central Chester County at 7PM.
 - b. She handed out copies of the Gus Rubino story that was in the Inquirer and will file in the business files.
 - c. Nancy handed out a copy of a 19 page draft on Mr. Fisher and Fisher & Son Co., Inc.

Old Business:

- A. **Malvern Blooms:** Paperwork has been sent in. Schedule for the day will be determined at the next meeting. Deb C. stated that she will be out of town on May 6th and unable to attend.
- B. ***Century in Malvern:*** The books that are damaged will be re-cut and re-glued with new covers. The new covers will be treated. All this will be done at no charge.
- C. **Interviews:** Joan interviewed Art Gable last week.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50pm.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, April 23 at 7:30pm.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Deb Collins
Secretary, Malvern Historical Commission

ADDENDUM – PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION

PROPOSED HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION STANDARDS

MARCH 29, 2012 at 7:30PM

Malvern Historical Commission Members Present: Lynne Hockenbury, Deb Collins, Joan Stackhouse, Barb Rutz

Historian: Nancy Schmitt

Subject Matter Expert: Tom Scofield, Historic Preservation Specialist

Residents: 12

Tom gave an overview of the Borough's 2008 historic Resource Atlas. The Malvern Historical Commission uses this atlas as a reference to historic properties as identified by the state and the county. This atlas can also be found on the Borough's website in tabulated format.

Tom went over the definitions of each type of resource. After looking at the resources and those which are contributing to the historic significance of the borough, it appears that we have the makings of a nice district. The question is how do we go about protecting/preserving the history of these resources?

Some questions that arose from the residents in the audience:

Q: What about the Retreat Property? Can it be included in the district?

A: There is a need for contiguous land; we want to avoid a donut hole.

Q: What about Malvern Prep?

A: Let's remember that this is about buildings, not land.

Q: What would be regulated?

A: The Malvern Historical Commission would only be an advisory board. Discussion then included the definition of a HARB (Historic Architectural Review Board). This is the rigid level of legislation from 1961 that is not being discussed for our Borough.

Q: What is West Chester using?

A: A Zoning Path

Q: Will ours be patterned any in the area?

A: Ours is similar to many in the area.

Q: First Baptist Church is looking into getting on the National Registry.

A: Nancy Schmitt commented that it is important to remember that there is no such thing as forever. Jane Davidson was helping with the church's interest, so she would be the best one to talk to about the concern.

Tom Scofield commented that historic ordinances were there to create a layer/opportunity for review of resources. Currently the Borough does not have any.

Q: Regarding Vacant Lots: Is this a tool that could be used as a Right of First Refusal for the Borough? So the Borough cannot put a clause that says we have a one year right of first refusal?

A: Tom has not seen this done.

Resident Comment: The Borough cannot deny a home owner reasonable use of their property.

Nancy Schmitt Comment: Let's not forget Adaptive Reuse. A good example is the Old Fire Company building and the old Knots and Weaves building that was recently rebuilt after the fire.

Tom Scofield Comment: Adaptive Reuse is hard to regulate, but you can dialogue.

Q: Does Adaptive Reuse fall under the Design Review?

A: Potentially. The Malvern Historical Commission will check with the Planning Commission.

Q: If the street view doesn't change, then it doesn't fall under this?

A: Nancy Schmitt: As needs change.

Q: Can you rate Malvern's zoning as effective compared to the state or is it loose?

A: Tom Scofield: It is somewhere in the middle. Staffing is a major driver for this.

Q: What about the exterior? Paint Color, for example? Will that be regulated?

A: No, but painting brick inhibits the brick to breathe, creating accelerated deterioration, so this may be a concern.

Q: The benefits are clear for the Borough. What are the benefits to the property owner?

A: Federal income tax credit for commercial property, pride for the homeowner, and generally speaking, the resale value increased for a home identified as a historic property.

Q: Regarding the review of a vacant lot – what if a post modern house, not of the Victorian type found in Malvern is requested to be built. There is an interest in architectural uniqueness.

A: Tom Scofield: Guidelines are established.

Q: How do you regulate that?

A: There are not too many vacant lots in the historic district that we have identified.

Q: Preserve the diversity or integrity?

A: A community is made up of diversity and there is much diversity in Malvern.

Lynne Hockenbury commented that the Planning Commission has conditional use leeway.

Barb Rutz commented that Malvern has been trying to create an ordinance since the 1980's.

Nancy Schmitt commented that it is nice to see new construction taking a "Victorian" look.

Resident Comment: Over the years the Borough has done a good job regulating adaptable reuse. Example: Pisano's.

Q: Will this affect the cemetery?

A: This zoning overlay does not affect existing zoning.

Q: What is the actual process?

A: Lynne Hockenbury and Amy from the Planning Commission: We are testing the waters; We want an ordinance that the residents want.

A: Tom Scofield: The Planning Commission will review, there will be a public announced meeting and then the Borough Council reviews for approval.

Q: Who is crafting the ordinance?

A: A sub-committee consisting of 2 Planning Commission members, 2 Malvern Historical Commission members and Tom Scofield.

Resident Comment: "Proceed! My roots are here! Let's get it done."

Resident Comment: Suggestion: If West Chester is strict, make it known which communities are strict.

Q: Do you think businesses in Malvern would welcome this?

A: The National Bank of Malvern spent money to keep their building period appropriate.

Deb Collins mentioned that if residents wanted to be a part of this, the Historical Commission has two openings.

Barb Rutz mentioned that Malvern is a "walkable town" and this makes it unique.

Nancy Schmitt commented that a survey done a few years ago indicated that many residents would welcome historic preservation.

Meeting ended at 9:10pm.

