



Newtown Joint Historic Commission
Newtown Borough Hall
23 N. State Street, Newtown and by Zoom
May 20, 2024



Present in Person: Bill Mahler, John Donato, Charissa Stone
Present by Zoom: Sean Irwin, Kris Bauman (Borough Liaison)
Absent: Craig Deutsch, Marcia Lincoln-Heinz, Kyle Davis (Township Liaison)

Call to Order

Mr. Mahler called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

DOS Applications

22 Penn Street

Application for demolition of a rear existing kitchen addition and roof to accommodate new addition and dormers.

No one was present for the application. There were no questions or concerns.

Mr. Donato made a motion to recommend approval of the application as submitted. Ms. Stone seconded the motion, which was approved 4-0 by the Commission.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 25, 2024 and April 29, 2024

Mr. Mahler made a motion to approve the minutes from the meetings of March 25, 2024 and April 29, 2024, as presented. Ms. Stone seconded the motion, which was approved by the Commission, with abstention by Mr. Donato, Ms. Stone and Mr. Irwin.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report for April was:

Savings Account:

Previous Balance:	3/31/24	\$4,416.52
Interest:	4/23/24	.39
Balance:	4/30/24	\$4,416.91

Commercial Account: (checking account)

Previous Balance:	3/31/24	\$2,136.97
Leslie Dunleavy Ck #520	4/17/24	(\$44.00)
Balance:	4/30/24	\$2,092.97

The report was accepted subject to audit.

Township Subdivision and Land Development Project List

Mr. Mahler noted that there were updates to Wawa, that a new signal permit was approved, new recorded plans and agreements were received, and a pre-construction meeting was held on May 14th.

Old Business

Mr. Mahler noted that there are still two vacancies in the Township.

Mr. Bauman reported that relative to efforts and interest in retaining historic character of the Borough, Council has asked the Borough Planning Commission to work with the Bucks County Planning Commission to look at what ordinance amendments that might be used to encourage people to retain key portions of their structures. He said that one strategy/incentive might be that people could gain a greater density advantage on their property if they held onto elements of existing structures than if they did not.

He said that there may be other strategies as well, and outside expertise might be sought. Mr. Bauman said that they are looking at the increased ability to enforce existing penalties and perhaps increasing those penalties. He said that when he presented the idea of expanding the Historic District he received a reasonable amount of favorable response from Council, but they wanted to know what role the JHC might play in helping to think through either the best way to expand the district or otherwise utilize the law with respect to historic preservation to accomplish their goals.

Mr. Mahler said that the Secretary of Interior Standards has very specific guidelines for historic preservation, the most basic of those is that a structure must be at least 50 years old. He said that age does not necessarily mean historic. He said that if the Historic District were expanded to include the entire Borough, it would not change the role of JHC, which would still take each property and structure on a case-by-case basis and consider historic significance. Mr. Mahler said that the Commission would like to see an update to the historic survey and expand it to include every property in the Borough, which would make the work of the JHC easier, as it is a very good resource.

New Business

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Mahler and second by Mr. Donato, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie P. Dunleavy, Recording Secretary
Via recording