

**Village of Montebello Historic Preservation Commission
April 4, 2018 Minutes**

Meeting start: 8:10 pm

Members present: Dorice Madronero, Rosemary Moccio, Lisa Levin, Bill Ellsworth, Craig Long, Warren Berbit

Members absent: Matt Moetzinger

Old Business:

February minutes have not been distributed and will be considered for approval at the next official HPC meeting at the end of April.

Chairperson Levin looked at the HPC section of previous Village newsletters to find articles submitted by Mr. Long regarding notable past residents and notable properties of the Village to include in a timeline on the website. Chairperson Levin will cull together all of the information and create a timeline. Also discussed possibly bringing back Mr. Long's "Local History Quiz" for future newsletters.

Joan Will is finding out what needs to be done for us to begin putting historic artifacts and archival materials into the display cabinets in the Community Center. Joan said that she will let the HPC know once she clears it with the board. Mr. Berbit indicated that she had mentioned it to him and that all along the Village Board thought it was a good idea. He cautioned that the only thing that we would need to do would be to make sure that the display cabinets were secure and could be locked so that the items would not be disturbed. The HPC agreed that we would not place overly valuable items in the cabinets. Discussed rotating items displayed.

Members discussed putting the date stone(s) (there are 2) from the original Montebello Road bridge in front of Village Hall near the historic marker. Discussed perhaps putting one at Village Hall and the other at the Community Center. Discussion about somehow adding the story and photos of the bridge near the stone.

New Business:

Mr. Berbit discussed that in the Comprehensive Plan, there is now an overlay map of the Historic and Scenic Roads that have been designated. This overlay includes Montebello Road, Viola Road, Mile Road, Bayard Lane, Spook Rock Road (within the Village limits), Route 202/Haverstraw Road (within the Village limits), and portions of Hemin Road. The HPC will now play a big role in protecting those designated roads by issuing Certificates of Appropriateness for any modifications/alterations to properties within 250 feet of the center line of those designated roads. Any major land disturbances or changes to these properties must be reviewed by the HPC and the HPC will have the authority to determine appropriate applications for modification based on how they would affect the historic and scenic character. The statutory language has been developed, however, the guidelines by which the HPC will make its

determinations have not been fully developed and are still under discussion. The HPC's role will be to adjudicate the appropriateness of any formal application presented for properties along these designated roads. Effective date when this will be implemented is still TBD, but the hope is that the process will begin by the end of June, 2018.

Member Madronero asked what happens with regards to properties along the roads that are not "village" roads, like Route 202. Mr. Berbit indicated that even though some may be state/county/town roads, they should be cognizant of our law and try to abide by our statute, unless we tried to regulate something that they wanted to do along the road. Under the law, they are required to pay attention to the Village statutes.

Member Ellsworth asked "where in the process does the HPC come in?" Mr. Berbit answered that the HPC is the adjudicating body and will be involved at all times, since it will determine appropriateness of projects to make sure that they are in keeping with the Scenic and Historic character of the roads. The HPC will make the determination of what is and isn't appropriateness, based on the guidelines and standards that are currently in development. The property owner will have to abide by what the HPC decides. The decision would be given to the building inspector to make sure that the property owner adheres to the HPC decision.

Member Madronero asked about what happens if a storm results in downed wires because of tree limb damage, etc. and the municipality comes through and cuts down trees along designated roads for public safety. Mr. Berbit indicated that those trees/lines are likely in the state "right of way" and, since public health and safety always comes first, the Village would likely not enforce its statute in that type of situation.

Member Madronero asked if an owner wishes to make an alteration to a designated road, such as a "cut through" (which might call into question something like elevation or drainage), to whom would the HPC go to for expert advice regarding the feasibility, etc. of such an action (so that the HPC is not simply making assumptions without the benefit of an expert). Mr. Berbit indicated that in such a situation, the HPC would likely consult the Village engineer or other available assets within the Village. The HPC could also request that the applicant pay for their own expert opinion.

Chairperson Levin asked where the applications would be heard. Mr. Berbit answered that as hearing these applications is under HPC jurisdiction, the applicants would attend the regular HPC monthly meeting to present their applications. The meetings would be open to public hearing.

Member Madronero brought up the fact that the HPC does have photographic records of the houses along the designated scenic and historic roads, however, we don't really have photos of the roads themselves and the features along the roads. It would be a good idea to document the features of the roads so that we have a point of reference regarding the scenic and historic character that we are trying to preserve. We need a record of the "status quo" of the roads as they currently exist. Member Madronero suggested that we take screen shots using Google street views to compile a record of the existing status of the features of the designated roads.

Chairperson Levin asked if putting signage up on the designated historic roads made sense to make people aware that these roads have been designated and why. Mr. Long indicated that one road that should certainly be marked is the Washington-Rochambeau route: Viola Road. HPC agreed that we would look into adding signage along Viola Road to mark the route to raise awareness among residents. Mr. Long indicated that New Jersey already has markers for the route which read "W3R" and feature a fleur-de-lis design. The HPC agreed that it would definitely be a good idea to proceed with exploring how to add signage to Viola Road to indicate it as the "W3R" route. Mr. Long will bring one of the signs to show to the HPC. He will also speak to Skip Vezetti about adding the signs during the next Rockland County Historic Preservation Board meeting, since it is a County road. Member Madronero also suggested that an overlay be added to the Comprehensive Plan map indicating the route so that it could be uploaded to the Village website.

Mr. Berbit suggested that it would probably be a good idea to put together a hypothetical application to present to the HPC to give a chance to see how the Certificate of Appropriateness process would work under the new statute and to understand what kind of substantiation would be needed to defend its HPC position/ruling.

Motion to adjourn: Member Ellsworth
Second: Member Madronero

Meeting adjourned: 9:30pm