

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
February 11, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joshua Anderson, Roberta Eckman, John Kabli,
Jon Martin, Joe McCormick

TOWNSHIP STAFF: Justin Smiley, Township Planner
Phil Yocum, Historic Consultant, Commonwealth Heritage Group

I. Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. New Business

A. Applicant: ARD Exton Pad, LLC
Historic Site: Site 302, Class I Eligible, former Malvern Bank
Site Address: 109 N. Pottstown Pike, Exton
Request: Recommendation to allow adaptive reuse and expansion of historic resource

Attorney Michael Gill, of Buckley Brion, and Jason Abrams were in attendance on behalf of the Applicant. Mr. Gill explained that since appearing before the Historical Commission in December, the Applicant received two variances from the Zoning Hearing Board allowing the offsets between the eastern side of the building and the drive aisle and the parking field. Also, sidewalk was added along the western side of the property along Route 100. This was insisted on by the Planning Commission to continue making pedestrian links within the Township. Mr. Gill said that bringing the sidewalk next to the building will require removal of the steps leading to the doorway. As such, Mr. Gill said the Applicant may remove the existing door and replace it with a window. Mr. Yocum felt the door was probably added in 1964 when the original building was converted to a bank and as such he had no issue with replacing the door, adding that it would look odd to have a door leading out to nowhere. Mr. Smiley confirmed that he spoke with the Township Codes Officer who indicated it would be a simple fix to meet the Code standards. Mr. Smiley further explained that removal of the retaining wall could have a negative impact on the foundation of the historic structure.

Mr. Yocum expressed concerns with the switchback ramp on the southern side, noting that it seemed "busy" and hoped that it could be removed. Because the Applicant will be using a portion of the building as a community center during off-business hours, it will be necessary to keep the southside ramp, as the northern ramp will not be available after normal business hours. The railings show horizontal pipe which is in style with the modern addition, but not the older existing structure. There was then discussion on whether it was better to have a modern looking railing with the contemporary addition.

Mr. Yocum asked that the framing pattern of the windows have a vertical mullion creating a more square pattern to be more sympathetic to the windows on the existing structure.

Commission members expressed their appreciation to the Applicant for the efforts to adaptively reuse and retain a visible landmark in the Township.

The Commission made the following motion with conditions.

ARD Exton Pad, LLC Motion: The Commission recommends approval of land development to allow for the adaptive reuse and expansion of the historic resource with the following conditions:

- The Applicant give consideration to reconfiguring the windows to be more sympathetic to those on the existing structure.
- The Applicant review and examine the proposed railing design on the south side of the building to be more sympathetic to the design of the historic building.
- Consideration of a door vs. window on the western side of the building.

Approved 5-0 Eckman/Martin

IV. Old Business

A. Waterloo Reserve Interpretive Marker Text Discussion

The Commission discussed the draft of the Interpretive Marker, and its proposed location along Whitford Road approximately at the site of the demolished "Tenant House". Commission members will review the text for accuracy and make final decisions on text and photographs at the March meeting.

B. Thomas Mill Condition Discussion

The deteriorating condition of the Mill was discussed. It was believed that Exton Nissan is responsible for the exterior and the Township is responsible for the interior, but Staff and Members will review the Façade Agreements and Conditional Use Decision and Orders and report back. After further discussion, it was decided that the Commission members will arrange a time to go through the Mill and make an assessment before asking Mr. Yocum to provide an analysis of the condition. The item will be on the March meeting agenda.

V. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of January 14, 2019, as amended by Roberta Eckman (Eckman/Anderson)

Vote: Passed, 5-0

VI. Historical Commission Concerns

A. Township update – Justin Smiley

- **Weston Tract Redevelopment: HR Sites 001, 002, 004 (Class II), 003 (Class I NR)**

Mr. Smiley reported that Weston is selling its campus located along King Road; home to several historic sites. To date no formal application has been submitted, but Staff did meet with a group proposing a mixture of townhomes and single-family dwellings which will require a change to the current Zoning Ordinance. Staff asked that the historic sites be adaptively reused if possible. Mr. Smiley will provide more information as it becomes available.

- **Certified Local Government Discussion**

Corey Kegerise is tentatively scheduled to come to the April meeting to give a Power Point presentation on the Certified Local Government Program.

- **VPP Grant: History of West Whiteland update**
Mr. Smiley said the County is revamping its application making it less restrictive and more intuitive. The window for applying is expected to be March – May. The Township will apply again for the Grant to update the "History of West Whiteland".
- **Commission Vacancies**
With the recent resignation of Gail McCahon, there are currently 3 vacancies on the Historical Commission. The Commission members discussed using the Township website, newsletter, and social media to advertise for interested volunteers. Open Houses were also discussed for the summer or fall. Until the vacancies can be filled, the Commission will continue to operate with 7 members.
- **SharePoint Historical Commission Files**
Mr. Smiley reported that the Township has begun transferring files to the new SharePoint platform, but it will take time for all of the Historical Commission documents, photographs, etc. to transfer. Ms. Eckman will be testing external access to the system next week.

Mr. Martin asked about the status of hiring a part-time person to assist with administrative work for the Commissions. Mr. Smiley said interviews are scheduled to begin next week with hopes of a decision being made by March 1.

Mr. Anderson asked whether the Commission would be participating this year in the Town Tours and Village Walks program. Ms. Eckman explained that this was a County program that was probably already full for this year, but the Commission may want to participate again next year with a tour of the St. Paul's cemetery.

Anyone wishing to attend the seminar at the Brandywine Conservancy in March for the Chester County Historic Preservation Network Workshop should let Ms. Eckman know.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. (Anderson/McCormick)

Vote: Passed, 5-0

Recording Secretary,

Justin Smiley, AICP
Township Planner

