

MINUTES
CLOSTER HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MONDAY, July 22, 2013
Municipal Chambers, Closter Borough Hall
8:00 PM

A. Call to order – Statement of Open Public Meetings Act

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Attendance

Present: Tim Adriance, Irene Stella, Jennifer Rothschild , Orlando Tobia, Francesca Macchiavelli, , John Kashwick , Jayne Rubenfeld (8:09 p.m.)-Waldron, Joel Zelnick

Absent: William J. Martin

D. Minutes- June 24th, 2013 MSC Stella, Macchiavelli

E. Open to Public: No one wished to speak

F. Hearings – no hearings scheduled .

G. Correspondence (none)

H. Old Business

1. Active future proposals for designation

a. Closter Borough Hall – tentatively scheduled for October hearing; specifications for repair/restoration have been put out to bid

b. Nagel/Auryansen Cemetery – Ms. Stella reports on the condition of the cemetery – grass has been cut recently

c. Vervalen House 151 West Street – no report

d. David Durie House 285 Schraalenburgh Road – no report

e. St. Paul’s Lutheran Church – no report

f. High Street District – Ms. Bouton Goldberg reports on 566 High Street house history; 447 High Street used to be home to a test pilot/daredevil, A.F. “Duke” Krantz, who flew a plane in King Kong; Ms. Stella reports that Adele Chase had sent information about her grandmother who lived at 549 High Street and had been nationally acclaimed in the Truman, Johnson and Eisenhower administration for her work in education

g. G. Trautwein-Haring Area – no report

2. **Pamphlet for Realtors, Public** – Ms. Rothschild reports about pricing

3. **Talks with Toby** – discussion about subjects

4. **Cemetery Award** – consensus is that the certificate should be given out at a mayor and council meeting; Ms. Stella discusses how she will schedule it with the DPW and the Council

I. Liaison Reports

1. Council – John Kashwick – Council voted upon \$188K on maintenance work to be done on Borough Hall; discussion about Abram Demaree homestead –Mr. Ksashwick asks for

the letter that was sent to the Building Department; Ms. Rubinfeld-Waldron suggests that more specificity be included in the letter; the Lustron designation failed at the last Mayor and Council meeting and there has been press coverage; after the designation a call was received from the County regarding the use of Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund monies, which is a 50/50 matching grant, and on Wednesday night the Council will be voting on a resolution. Mr. Tobia reports on his tour of the Lustron. He accompanied Leslie Ringelstein. He reports that the property and location is great, and that in his opinion, it can be fixed and repaired. He states that it's just phenomenal and hopes that it won't meet the wrecking ball. Ms. Bouton Goldberg asks Mr. Kashwick if it would be helpful to the Council to have him speak at that meeting. Mr. Kashwick asks that he arrive by 7:45 p.m.

2. Planning Board – Irene Stella – the first presentation from the architect for Closter Plaza took place (discussion about “Closter Plaza” vs. “Closter Marketplace”). Ms. Stella states that his presentation went until 11:30 and that there was no time for a question. August 7th, August 8th and August 29th will be meetings devoted to the Closter Plaza application. The architect is a Closter resident, Conrad Roncatti. Ms. Stella reports on the plans. The signage has been planned, and the old “Closter Plaza” sign letters will be placed in a planting. Discussion about the original Closter Plaza sign. Mr. Adriance states that this sign is an example of mid-Century modern signage in Closter. Ms. Bouton-Goldberg distributes a draft letter that she wrote about saving the sign. Discussion about the style of the lettering. Consensus is that it's mid-20th-Century modern. Mr. Adriance suggests tying in Wildwood, NJ as an example of a place that has embraced the significance of this design. Discussion about the “bowling bar” sign that used to be at the Closter Rec and is now in Brooklyn. Mr. Adriance suggests that she send a draft to Bill Martin for feedback. Discussion about the significance of the sign and whether to proceed with designation. Ms. Stella suggests that perhaps the Homans Ave. side of the plaza would be a good place to display the sign. Discussion about the value of old signs. Mr. Adriance brings to the Commission's attention all of the positive comments that were posted on the “Are You from Closter” Facebook page. Ms. Bouton Goldberg asks to whom this letter should be addressed. Ms. Stella suggests that it be addressed to the Planning Board. Ms. Rubinfeld-Waldron suggests that an informal request be made, outside of a meeting. Ms. Stella tells her to go ahead with this plan. Ms. Stella cautions that the Planning Board wishes for this procedure (approval of the renovation plan) to go very quickly and smoothly. Mr. Adriance asks if we have the name of the architect, lawyer and/or principals. He suggests that we bring the letter to a meeting. Ms. Stella also wishes for the letter to be given to the Planning Board members.

4. Other – brief reports on topics related to historic preservation *only*: Mr. Adriance reports: Fine Homebuilding magazine (Sept 2013) has an article about historic designations. It describes what typically requires approval and what does not. There is also a sidebar - “properties within designated districts gain value more steadily than other homes” Ms. Macchiavelli suggests putting a link to these articles on our HPC website

Lustron: Mr. Adriance reports that some members of the Council, Planning Board are stuck with the “if it's not from the Revolutionary War era it's not historic” Cites Bailey book. He states that perhaps ¾ of the buildings in that book are not, in fact, pre-revolutionary. “If it's modern history, it's not historic,” seems to be the sentiment. Another theme: “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” If something looks dirty, in need of powerwashing, etc., then it is devalued. Also, there is a misconception about the fact that the interior of a structure being

reviewed (they are not). Also, the issue of owner consent has been weighing into the process. Mr. Adriance discusses individual liberties vis a vis preservation. He argues that historic preservation is no more restrictive than any other planning or zoning laws. There is an argument to be made about how one's activities affect their neighbors and neighborhoods. Mr. Zelnick reports about his research into the issue of the housing crisis facing returning veterans after World War II. He looked into the Congressional Record. He also looked into Abraham Lincoln's covenant with the veterans after the Civil War. He draws a link to the Lustron house and what it represents. This is why he used the metaphor of Gettysburg in his letter to the editor, which was written and sent prior to his being appointed to the Commission— it isn't preserved because of its beauty, per se. This low-cost, mass-produced Lustron house is a monument. Discussion.

J. New Business

1. Auryansen House-450 Piermont (move this into the list, above, to the Trautwein-Haring area) Mr. Adriance will bring photographs next month, and the Commission will discuss it then.
2. Goals for 2013 – already discussed in Old Business
3. Continuing education – report all classes and lectures attended to Jayne
4. Distribution of Agenda – has to be on the borough website by Thursday prior to the meeting; Ms. Stella will continue creating it. Mr. Adriance makes suggestions that only one bullet point be done for “active proposals for designation” keep pamphlet and cemetery award on for next month only; take off goals,
4. Other: Yearly report to the Council – Ms. Rothschild suggests that the CLG report be sent to the Council, rather than a separate report. Mr. Adriance asks Mr. Kashwick when other Boards and Commissions submit their reports.

Mr. Zelnick reports on Bill Evans on Maple Street. Mr. Zelnick states that he would like to see if a historical sign could be attached to the street sign, and perhaps an historical marker could be placed in front of the house. Mr. Adriance suggests establishing a “Closter Hall of Fame” of notable individuals who have lived here, and who have had an impact in Closter, e.g. Belskie, Baillie, war veterans buried up in the cemetery. Ms. Rothschild suggests a plaque in Borough Hall. Could also go up on the website and/or in a display in the library or Borough Hall. Mr. Adriance further suggests that if this list were established, then a bus tour could show people where these places are. Discussion about various movies and t.v. shows that were filmed in Closter. Ms. Stella reports that Mickey Mantle had lived on Durie on the West side between Knickerbocker and Schraalenburgh, but the house was unfortunately torn down. Ms. Stella reviews a list that she states was deleted from the historic element of the master plan. Ms. Bouton Goldberg reports that she has about 70 houses that she has photographed; she requests that she have a budget to print the 8 X 10 photos, for an exhibit.

K. Adjournment MSC Rothschild, Zelnick at 9:09 p.m.