

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR (virtual) MEETING MAY 17, 2022**

ROLL CALL

Janice Allen (absent – excused)
Peter Beckman
Sherlock Bender (absent)
Stephen Harlan
Scott Lamperti (absent – excused)
Steve McIntyre, Vice Chair
Katherine Miller, Chair

Also present:

Dominic DiYanni, Esq., Associate Borough Attorney
Stephanie Sherwood, Recording Secretary

Call to order at 7:05 pm. Ms. Sherwood read the Compliance Statement.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 18, 2022:

Aye: Harlan, McIntyre, Miller
Abstain: Beckman

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Slate Alternatives** – K.M. Ms. Miller began a discussion on slate alternatives for consideration by the commission members going forward. Most homes in the district have Pennsylvania slate roofs which could be nearing the end of their life span. Various slate alternatives were shared for review by the members. The lighter weight of the faux slate would make the labor more cost effective. CertainTeed produces asphalt shingles with the appearance of slate and Grand Manor produces asphalt shingles with the appearance of cedar shingles. Mr. McIntyre noted that asphalt shingles' appearance of depth from a distance. Noting that a slate roof is more an aesthetic, Mr. Harlan favored focusing on the preservation of wood windows, railings, and other architectural details of the homes. Mr. Beckman spoke in favor of allowing slate alternatives, although he preferred the preservation of Yankee gutters or built-ins. Mr. McIntyre voiced his concerns with Yankee gutters as they may become problematic for up-keep which could lead to the deterioration of the roof.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Frank D'Amore, 40 Willow Avenue, North Plainfield, commented that 159 Sycamore Avenue has a synthetic slate roof which looks good. He urged for the commission to not allow asphalt shingles. He explained that he had replaced his slate roof over the course of several years. Applicants claiming financial hardship should have to prove so as per the Newark case, he concluded.

Alexandra Esparza, 27 Rockview Terrace, North Plainfield, commented that she owns two houses on Mercer Avenue. Ms. Miller noted that she would send the information on the financial hardship assistance to her. She further noted that an asphalt shingled roof would not be acceptable for that house.

Ms. Miller summarized the discussion, specifically that the Architectural Review Committee would have the ability to approve asphalt shingled roof replacements while the replacement of a slate roof would necessitate approval from the Historic Preservation Commission. Each roof replacement application would be considered on a case-by-case basis, including gutters. All members agreed.

Ms. Miller made a motion to approve the replacement of slate roofs with real slate or Eco Star in the same pattern as the existing slate roof. Gutters or built-ins would be restored and each application would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Mr. McIntyre seconded and on roll call carried all four voting aye.

2. **Wood Fence Designs** – K.M. Ms. Miller began a discussion on wood fence designs to be considered by the commission members. Several other Historic Preservation Commissions are allowing dog-eared fences. Mr. McIntyre shared pictures of four different types of wood fences, including dog-eared, gothic, picket and stockade. Mr. Harlan stated his preference of applicants replacing an existing fence style like-for-like, while allowing for dog-eared if it is a new fence installation. Mr. McIntyre spoke in favor of requiring wood fences, regardless of the style, and not allowing vinyl or chain-link. Messrs. Beckman and Harlan agreed. Ms. Miller reminded that several properties within the district have installed dog-eared fences without approval or permits.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Frank D'Amore, 40 Willow Avenue, North Plainfield, spoke in favor of requiring the gothic style wood fence as it has more character which aligns with the district. He warned the commission members to be cautious with what they allow for front yard fences.

Alexandra Esparza, 27 Rockview Terrace, North Plainfield, indicated her displeasure with the requirements for repairs to houses in the district. She noted that as a realtor, she discourages clients from purchasing houses in the district.

Mr. McIntyre made a motion to approve the installation of fences in the following styles made of wood: dog-eared, picket or stockade. Wrought iron or aluminum that resembles wrought iron is acceptable as well. Mr. Beckman seconded and on roll call carried all four voting aye.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Miller, seconded by Mr. McIntyre and on voice vote carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm.