**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, May 21, 2018**

**Present:**

Lisa Simonetti, Chair

Andy Drouliskos

Charles Hendricks

Jill Ruspi

Michele Shortley

**Absent:**

Susan Phillips, Alternate

**Attendees:**

Jennifer Sizemore, Secretary

Jim Ruspi, Mayor

Matthew and Rebecca Logan, Residents

Christina Pellegrino, Resident

Mike and Caroline Maurer, Residents

**Opening:**

Member Ruspi read the agenda. Chair Simonetti called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and read the mission statement. She noted that a quorum was present.

**Minutes:**

Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes, Member Hendricks seconded, all approved.

**New Business:**

HDWP 03-18: 21416 Laytonsville Road, Matthew and Rebecca Logan Residence: Chair Simonetti read from the application that the residents want to remove and replace the existing white picket fence in the front and halfway down the driveway. They also want to add a black, ornate gate with remote access that would stretch across the back of the yard and along the border with Erdle Automotive. Mr. Logan explained that the fencing is crooked because the posts are not in concrete, and the pickets are falling off. Mr. and Mrs. Logan showed the Historic District Commission (HDC) members pictures of the current fencing. Mrs. Logan mentioned that the wood fencing takes time to cure (6 weeks) after instillation, then it would be painted white. Member Ruspi asked about the height of the picket fence, and Ms. Logan said it would be the same as the current fence, or 3 feet tall. Member Henricks asked about the markings on the illustration, and Mr. Logan said a certain section of picket fence in the rear will be removed, but the metal fence will go down to the rear of the property and will match with the neighbor’s fence. Mrs. Logan added that the picket fence will be the length of the driveway, and the addition of the gate will allow extraneous fencing to be removed. Member Ruspi asked about whether one area of fencing belonged to the Logans or Erdle and mentioned that installing a second fence just inside the property line could lead to an avenue of weeds in between. The Logans said they would look into the ownership issue, though the picket fence is more of an immediate need due to their dog. There was additional discussion related to the height of the fencing and placement of the gate, which won’t be visible from the road and will be far enough back that a car can pull fully into the driveway before opening the gate.

Member Shortley asked for more information about the gate, and Mrs. Logan said it would be 42” tall with an arch and made of wrought iron. The bottom of the arch would match the height of the wood fence. Member Drouliskos said it’s common to use metal for these sorts of gates because wood doesn’t hold up well. He asked about the size of the motor, and Mrs. Logan said she wasn’t sure, but it would be behind the fence. Member Drouliskos then clarified that the wood fence would be pressure-treated lumber, not cedar. Member Hendricks asked whether anything in the picture would be removed and not replaced, and Mr. Logan said it wouldn’t.

Member Shortley asked about the property line for the back fence, and Mrs. Logan said they need to resolve the issue. They are aware of the issues their neighbor had with NVHomes related to their fence. Member Hendricks asked if there is an existing back fence, and Mr. Logan said there, is but it’s falling apart. The HDC members further discussed the new and existing fencing.

Member Hendricks asked whether there was any neighbor testimony. Christina Pellegrino, 21414 Laytonsville Road, has a wrought iron gate without a motor that was approved by the HDC more than 5 years ago. Due to both the gate and driveway being black, the gate isn’t noticeable. She mentioned that her neighbors have a wooden fence, similar to the Logans’ neighbor, and it doesn’t look incongruent. The HDC further discussed the similarities and differences between the Pellegrino gate and the Logan’s request, specifically related to the aesthetics and whether there would be viable alternatives. Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the application for replacing the white picket fence in front as an in-kind replacement, and approved the gate as presented or, if the homeowners choose, with a lower height. The fencing on the west side of the plat will be discussed further in the future pending determination of ownership and property lines. Member Hendricks specified that the gate is at the eastern end of the stockade fence, and the fence to be removed is behind the gate. Member Ruspi called for a vote on the application as amended and all approved. Member Hendricks noted that the application will continue to be on the agenda until the issue of the back fence is finalized.

HDWP-04-18, 7115 Brink Road: Mrs. Maurer said they want to remove an existing shed and build a new one in the back right corner of the yard that would be more useful. Member Hendricks showed a picture of the shed, which isn’t very visible from the street. Related to the condition of the current shed, Mrs. Maurer said Terminix had inspected the shed and there was no current infestation, but it’s at high risk of becoming infested. When the house was rebuilt, a retaining wall had been placed close to the shed, making it practically unusable. Member Drouliskos agreed about the usability and mentioned the bottom half of the framing is out of place and the concrete foundation is deteriorating. Mrs. Maurer said it would likely cost $10,000 or more to rebuild, and they would prefer to invest the money into a new shed. The HDC members talked about how the house was rebuilt. Member Ruspi mentioned that it didn’t qualify as a historic renovation because not enough of the original structure remained. Member Hendricks suggested that rebuilding the existing shed would be more of an issue if the home were still considered historic.

Member Ruspi referred to the application for demolition of the old shed and building of a new shed with dimensions of 8’ x 14’ x 10’2” height. Member Hendricks asked about the dimensions of the current shed, and Mrs. Maurer said it’s 8’ x 8’. She showed a diagram of the property with shed placement and a pamphlet with pictures of the shed, which will have the same color scheme as the house. Member Hendricks moved to approve the application as submitted; member Shortley seconded, and all approved.

**Old Business**

Mayor Ruspi said he had sent a letter to Dustin Green on Sundown Road concerning the safety hazard of the rocks on the sidewalk and asked for Mr. Green to provide, within 2 weeks, a schedule for completing the wall. He also sent a letter to Mike Sabel, who owns the house next to the elementary school, related to the repairs the house needs. He pointed out that not only is the house in the historic district, it’s a potential safety hazard to students at the school. He mentioned that the town was willing to help with applying for a grant or other financial aid. Member Hendricks asked about the HDC’s role, and Mayor Ruspi said he thought the HDC should have followed up on these issues already. Further, if any of these issues result in injury, the county and town could be sued along with the homeowner.

Member Shortley mentioned that her fence sections had been replaced and will be painted black in the near future. Member Hendricks complimented her on her trees.

Member Ruspi moved to adjourn the meeting 8:53 p.m., Member Hendricks seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sizemore