Laytonsville Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes, January 16, 2023

**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Videoconference Meeting Minutes**

**Monday January 16, 2023**

**Present:**

Charles Hendricks, Chair

Michael McDonald

Jennifer Sizemore

Andy Drouliskos

**Absent:**

Kris Bradsher

**Attendees:**

Mary Burke, Secretary

Tom Burke

Sharif Hidayat

Cody Hidayat

**Opening:**

Chair Hendricks called the meeting to order at 7:36. He noted that a quorum was present.

**New Business:**

Approval of minutes from November meeting: Member Sizemore made a motion to approve the minutes as edited. Member Drouliskos seconded and all approved.

Reconsideration of portions of the draft consolidated HDC guidelines approved by the commission at its September 19, 2022, meeting, in light of Town Council concerns about the draft’s guidance on handling historic district property owners’ desires to alter the environmental setting of their properties:

* The Town Council discussed these at the December 13, 2022, Town Council meeting. Member Tom Burke expressed concern with the specificity regarding the guidelines as they relate to environmental setting. Tom Burke wanted to speak as someone who recently went through the process of removal of trees from a home in the historic district and is not speaking as a Town Council member.
* Mr. Burke stated that he found the process confusing. At his hearing, the discussion focused on the trees and went into concerns about the trees themselves. In the guidelines pertaining to landscaping, the term environmental setting is broadly defined. Tree cutting should not always require a permit and a hearing, and parameters should be set to define this.
* Chair Hendricks said that it seems as though the guidelines were not focused on during the hearing. His concern is the lack of thresholds as to who needs a permit and who doesn’t. We need to put limits on what needs to be brought to the Historic District Commission. His thought is that for existing homes, most landscaping doesn’t require the HDC. It is the major work that needs to be looked at.
* Chair Hendricks would like the town to revisit the $50 fee for a Historic District Work Permit.
* Chair Hendricks proposed that the HDC move ahead to discuss some of the other known issues (example: solar panels) and bring back a more substantial set of guidelines for the Town Council to review. The members will come to the next meeting with their suggested topics to address for the guidelines.

Update on the work of the Laytonsville Historical Center to design and install five wayside interpretive signs in the town, including two in the historic district:

* Jane Evans hosted a meeting of 8 people at her home regarding the signs. The group discussed hardware issues and the theme of the sign at the Town Hall.
* The Historical Center realizes that they will need a Historic District Work Permit for the two signs that will be on Town Hall property.

Update on construction underway at Lot 5, Rolling Ridge (21720 Rolling Ridge Lane):

* Chair Hendricks shared a photo of the house taken early in January 2023. He said the final windows meet the criteria we set out for them. Member Drouliskos reported that one window was cracked by a mason and must be replaced. The septic system will be installed soon.

**Old Business:**

**Open Forum:**

* The Rolling Ridge house lost a landmark tree during a recent windstorm.

**Miscellaneous:** The next meeting will be Monday, February 20, 2023, at 7:30 pm.

Member Sizemore moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00. Member Drouliskos seconded, and all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Burke

Town Clerk