**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, November 18, 2019**

**Present:**

Charles Hendricks, Chair

Andy Drouliskos

Susan Phillips

Jill Ruspi

**Absent:**

Lisa Simonetti

Michele Shortley, Alternate

**Attendees:**

Jennifer Sizemore, Secretary

Alfredo and Rigoberto Fuentes

**Opening:**

Chair Hendricks called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. He noted that a quorum was present.

**Minutes:**

Member Phillips made a motion to approve the October 2019 meeting minutes as amended, Member Ruspi seconded, all approved.

**Public Hearing:**

7329 Brink Road (Rigoberto and Celina Fuentes) Application 04-19: Chair Hendricks stated that commission members had received the application materials as PDF attachments on two separate dates. The request is for a new brick and stone patio, driveway restoration and widening, a storage shed, and a portable gazebo; some work has already been completed. He reported that only part of the Fuentes’ property is within the historic district with the rest being in the town’s agricultural zone (not the agricultural reserve). He discussed the fact that some property in the Rolling Ridge subdivision was annexed and placed in the agricultural zone. He consulted Eric Wegner, chair of the Planning Commission, who said a shed could be built in the agricultural zone. Member Phillips asked if this type of divide was typical, and Chair Hendricks said he counted 14 properties that are only partially within the historic district. Member Ruspi mentioned that many lots are drawn in an illogical manner because the county instituted a policy of two septic systems on larger lots.

Chair Hendricks stated that the location of the shed, behind the house on the left side, would put it within the agricultural zone, so the Historic District Commission (HDC) doesn’t have purview. He talked with Mayor Ruspi who said a permit would be needed, but the fee could be waived given that an HDC application fee had already been paid. The HDC members further discussed the other projects related to the zoning. Chair Hendricks read a list of structures allowed within the agricultural zone.

Chair Hendricks said the HDC members should consider only the projects within the historic district. Mr. Rigoberto Fuentes answered the HDC members’ questions about the gazebo, particularly related to its stability and what would be required to move it. Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the driveway widening and the portions of the patio and gazebo that are within the historic district, and Member Drouliskos seconded. Chair Hendricks noted for the record that the proposed shed is not within the historic district and will require a separate permit. All approved the motion, and Chair Hendricks closed the public hearing.

**Old Business:**

HDC Guidelines: Chair Hendricks said he hadn’t gotten as far as he might have liked, but he shared a copy of the table of contents from the Montgomery County historic design guidelines to show the subjects covered. Member Ruspi suggested copying the guidelines and just removing things that don’t apply to Laytonsville. The other members agreed with this approach. Member Ruspi asked about diagrams, and Chair Hendricks said they were included. He will forward the document to the other HDC members. Member Phillips asked whether permission would be needed to copy the guidelines. Secretary Sizemore volunteered to contact the county to inquire. Member Drouliskos suggested everyone print a copy and start marking it up to discuss at the next meeting. Member Ruspi suggested, as had been previously discussed, that the HDC develop some kind of checklist property owners can use to determine whether approval is needed and help guide them through the process.

Brochure for Town Residents: Member Ruspi shared a draft of the brochure she had developed. It includes the mission of the HDC and benefits of living within a historic district along with a map of the district. The inside would include the relevant ordinances and a list of properties. The HDC members discussed rental properties and holiday decorations, as well as other information that should be included in the brochure.

**New Business:**

Chair Hendricks said Chris Alleva, a zoning consultant, made a presentation to the Mayor and Council on November 5 regarding the desire of individuals he was assisting to purchase and redevelop the gas station property at 21625 Laytonsville Road. They would like to move the pumps and reconfigure the building into a 7-11. Member Phillips thought the property was grandfathered in as commercial and could no longer be commercial if changes are made. Chair Hendricks said certain changes could be made, but the building couldn’t be expanded. It seemed evident at the Town Council meeting that the desired changes couldn’t be made under the current zoning ordinance, and Eric Wegner said the comprehensive plan would need to be changed, though it’s not due for review for another 6 years. The Council members didn’t seem to support the plan. The HDC members further discussed potential issues, such as traffic patterns and the idea presented by Mr. Alleva that the 7-11 in Laytons Village Shopping Center is at risk of going out of business.

Miscellaneous: Chair Hendricks stated that the next HDC meeting is December 16.

Member Phillips moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m., Member Drouliskos seconded, all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sizemore