Laytonsville Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting, November 6, 2023

**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Videoconference Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, November 6, 2023**

**Present:**

Jen Sizemore, Chair

Kris Bradsher

Patrick Murray

Becca Saah

**Absent:**

Andy Drouliskos

**Attendees:**

James Schneider, secretary

Charles Hendricks, Mayor

John Frye, Frye Insurance Company, 21508 Laytonsville Rd.

Marcello Natale, Frye Insurance

Hunter Pitts, Servpro Restoration

Michael, Servpro Restoration

Dan Wolf, owner, 7101 Brink Rd.

Tom and Mary Burke, owners, 21710 Laytonsville Rd.

Brian Kline

**Opening:**

Chair Sizemore called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. The meeting was held by Zoom video conferencing. Chair Sizemore noted that a quorum was present and that the meeting was being recorded.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2023, meeting. Member Murray asked for clarification of the process for reviewing minutes and making edits. He then made a motion to table the approval of the October 16, 2023, minutes until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Member Bradsher seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Public Hearing on Historic District Work Permit Application 07-23 submitted by Tom Frye to repair the front of the building at 21508 Laytonsville Rd.**

Member Murray motioned to open the public hearing. Member Bradsher seconded. Unanimously approved. The public hearing was opened at 7:41 p.m.

Member Murray requested clarification on whether the repair of the damage to the building required a work permit application. Chair Sizemore responded that the visual appearance of the structure would be different because the new fascia will no longer include the saloon-style façade. Mr. Pitts added that some additional structural changes were needed to prevent a similar problem in the future. In response to questions from Mayor Hendricks, Mr. Pitts stated that the plywood siding would be replaced with board and batten Hardie Panel Vertical Siding, painted the same shade of red, and the roof on the porch would be charcoal rather than brick colored. Mr. Frye will not be reinstalling the large sign above the porch.

Member Bradsher made a motion to approve the application and issue the permit. Member Saah seconded. Unanimously approved. Mayor Hendricks agreed to send a copy of the permit via email in addition to the mailed hard copy.

Member Murray made a motion to close the public hearing. Member Bradsher seconded. Unanimously approved. The public hearing was closed at 8:01 p.m.

**Discussion of repair work to the barn at 7101 Brink Rd.**

Mr. Wolf stated that, when he purchased the property, the barn was already in serious need of repairs to the foundation, internal studs, rafters, and siding. Currently, it appears to be near the point of collapsing. This is a repairing and replacing project; no architectural changes are planned. We are just trying to stabilize the barn as is. At this time, a concrete foundation was started. The siding will either be the same or something that looks the same but is structurally superior. He is asking for permission to continue with this repair.

Member Saah asked for the name of the contractor and said she would like to see past projects they have completed on any construction on historical buildings in Montgomery County. Mr. Wolf responded that the contractor is Luther of Damascus.

The members briefly discussed the process for determining when an HDC permit is required and noted that technical corrections and clarifications to the zoning ordinance are likely needed due to problematic ordinance language. The members agreed to discuss at a future meeting. Member Bradsher pointed out that Montgomery County Housing Code Enforcement supersede HDC guidelines in terms of maintaining existing housing in safe conditions. The HDC cannot put residents at risk of being cited by Montgomery County for safety issues, so our guidelines should not conflict with county code. We need to move towards a culture of education in terms of keeping with town history while ensuring safe housing conditions in the community.

Member Saah expressed concerns about whether the stone foundation will be redone correctly. Mr. Wolf responded that the fieldstone was on one side of the barn, then there was some concrete, then some dirt and rocks. Each side was done and redone at different times. There is no consistency in any of the four sides. His current plan is to use concrete to go above the frost line to protect the rest of the building.

The members and Mayor Hendricks further discussed whether the work should be considered routine maintenance and also considered the instability of the structure given the siding removal work that had already been done. Member Murray moved that this is routine maintenance and does not need a historic district work permit. Member Bradsher seconded. Members Murray and Bradsher and Chair Sizemore voted to approve. Member Saah opposed. The measure passed.

**Open forum on Laytonsville historic preservation issues**

Tom and Mary Burke expressed interest in installing a small greenhouse behind their garage. An HDC permit is required per the zoning ordinance (Section 127.02.n) if a structure is visible from the public way, which the proposed location is not. Member Saah moved that a historic work permit application is not required. Member Murray seconded. Unanimously approved.

Chair Sizemore stated that the Laytonsville Fire Station has begun work on filing down some cement stonework around its bay doors in preparation for the installation of new exterior roll up doors previously approved by the HDC.

The commission’s next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2023 and could possibly take place at Town Hall.

**Adjournment:**

Member Saah moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Bradsher seconded. Unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Schneider, Secretary