**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**May 15, 2017**

**Roll Call:** Chair Sheree Wenger called to order a meeting of the Laytonsville Historic District Commission at 7:30 p.m. Commission members Jill Ruspi and Michele Shortley were present. Member Charles Hendricks arrived during the discussion of the minutes. Member Lisa Simonetti arrived at the start of the public hearing on the work permit application for 7110 Brink Road. Alternate Joanne Howes arrived during the course of the meeting and sat with the audience.

**Public Attendance:** Jim Ruspi, mayor of Laytonsville; Susan Phillips; John Ols; Eva Ols; and Brian Dribben were also present.

**Minutes:** Member Hendricks had prepared and provided to commission members minutes of the meeting of April 17, 2017. Member Ruspi moved to accept the minutes as presented. Member Shortley seconded the motion, and it was approved without dissent.

**Preliminary Statement:** Chair Wenger read the preliminary statement.

**Work Permit Hearings:**

21513 Laytonsville Road (Bataller/Phillips residence): Chair Wenger opened a public hearing on historic district work permit application HDWP-02-17 submitted by Neal Bataller and Susan Phillips. Ms. Phillips reported that the couple had replaced the metal shingles on the front of their house eight years ago. A February 2017 windstorm lifted the metal roof of the garage from the rear and tore off a few of the new shingles from the front of the house. The couple wants approval to replace the corrugated roof at the back of the house with red metal shingles identical to those on the front of the house, to repair and repaint the flat section of the roof near the driveway, to replace the damaged roofing on the back of the garage with standing seam roofing of the existing style, and to paint the whole garage roof red. Commission members and Ms. Phillips discussed application procedures for state and county historic property renovation tax credits. Member Hendricks moved to approve the application as submitted, and the motion was seconded by Member Shortley. The motion was approved unanimously.

7110 Brink Road, Lot 14, Section C, Laytonsville Preserve (Ols residence): Chair Wenger began the public hearing on work permit application HDWP-03-17 submitted by John and Eva Ols by expressing concerns about the comparative size of the new homes in Laytonsville Preserve compared to older homes nearby. John Ols stated that he currently has a two-car attached garage. He proposes to construct a new, detached, two-car garage, 24 feet by 28 feet in size and 16 feet in height, right behind his driveway, with the garage’s east wall aligned with the east side of the driveway. In answer to a question, Mr. Ols stated that he thought his attached garage had a peak height of 22 or 23 feet. At this point, Member Ruspi recused herself from the hearing, observing that she lived across the street from the Ols. When he presented drawings of the proposed detached garage to the commission, Mr. Ols observed that the garage doors would be 8 feet tall and the 12/6 roof would rise only another 7 feet, for an actual total of 15 feet in height. The garage would have a window on the west side facing the Ols’s house. Mr. Ols wishes to provide electricity to the garage but no water. In answer to a question, Mr. Ols said that his lot size was one acre. In response to another question, Mr. Ols could not say just how far his garage would be from Pat and Michelle Murray’s house on the lot east of his (Lot 13), but he said there was quite a substantial gap there. Asked his rationale for wanting the garage, Mr. Ols observed that he had a pickup truck and an SUV that would not fit in his 22-foot-long garage, his wife has two cars, and his two children each have a car. Mrs. Ols stated that their son attends college out of town but would be returning home in about a week.

Chair Wenger asked about the material that would be used in the proposed garage. Mr. Ols said that it would match the house and that the design of the two proposed garage doors would match the design of the single garage door he already has. He said he would be willing to face the front of the garage with brick if the commission wanted that, and, when some commission members expressed a preference for a brick façade, Mr. Ols suggested that brick be used. The trim and paint scheme would match that of the house. Mrs. Ols said that she and her husband had talked to Pat and Michelle Murray about the proposed garage in the process of obtaining homeowners association approval for the plan and the Murrays were not opposed. Each adjoining lot-owner had to sign off on the plan to for the Ols to obtain homeowners association approval, but as Lot 15 had not sold yet, the prospective owners’ there were not consulted. Chair Wenger observed that she would want landscaping to be included in the plan.

Jill Ruspi of 7111 Brink Road, speaking from the audience, asked why a public hearing was being held on a proposal to build a structure that had already been prohibited. Chair Wenger replied that the town had previously decided not to permit NV Homes to build detached garages when building their new houses, but any homeowner in the Historic District may request permission to build an accessory building subject to the approval of the commission. Member Hendricks observed that the commission had approved the construction of a detached garage at 21620 Laytonsville Road (Lot 2, Area C, Laytonsville Preserve) in lieu of an attached garage. This was done to reduce the size of the house. Chair Wenger and Member Simonetti observed that one homeowner in the Rolling Ridge development constructed a town-approved detached garage in addition to the attached garage built with the house.

Mayor Jim Ruspi stated that he understood from his years of service on the town council that Laytonsville would not permit the construction of detached garages with these new houses. He took some solace from knowing that there are limitations on the amount of space that the new buildings can occupy. Member Hendricks asked if a formal prohibition on detached garages had been enacted, and Mayor Ruspi said that he did not know, but that his understanding derived from his attendance at many meetings of the mayor and council and at other meetings.

Commission members discussed some of the issues involved with detached garages in the historic district generally and the location Mr. and Mrs. Ols proposed for a detached garage on their lot. Member Shortley suggested that the proposed detached garage might be less obtrusive if it did not face the street. Chair Wenger proposed to continue the hearing and to hold a work session to discuss the proposal further, allowing time for members to examine the location more thoroughly. Mr. Ols agreed to mark the proposed location on the ground and observed that adjoining property lines are already marked by stakes. Member Hendricks moved to continue the hearing to a work session to be held before the regular June 19 commission meeting at a time chosen by the commission chair with the concurrence of a majority of the commission members. Member Shortley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Other Business**

7400 White House Lane (Lot 1, Area C, Laytonsville Preserve): Member Hendricks asked whether the builders were adhering to the conditions applied by the commission to its approval of the work permit pertaining to the house being built on this lot. Chair Wenger replied that the builders had added windows and sim board to comply with those conditions. Member Hendricks shared photos of the windows on the west side of the building, and Chair Wenger stated that these windows matched the plans that the commission had approved.

21720 Rolling Ridge Lane (Lot 5, Rolling Ridge subdivision): Although not in the historic district, this is a lot over which the Mayor and Council has given advisory authority to the commission. Brian Dribben, who has a contract to purchase this lot, presented the commission with drawings and photographs of the type of house he wants to build there, observing that he was proposing to build a side-load attached garage rather than the front-load attached garage shown in some of the photographs and drawings. He wishes to use siding on most of the house but stone surfacing behind the porch. In reply to a question from Member Ruspi, he said that the windows and doors would be rectangular. Mr. Dribben stated that he planned to contract with CGC Builders to build the house. Chair Wenger explained that the commission expects applicants to obtain homeowner association approval before the commission would approve a plan.

Chair Wenger asked Mr. Dribben for more detailed plans with dimensions. He said that the first and second floors of the house would together have 3,400 square feet of space, with half on each level. He proposes a house that would be 58 feet long and 54 feet deep with a maximum ridge height of 38 feet and a totally underground basement. Chair Wenger questioned whether the town’s height limit would permit the height Mr. Dribben proposed and asked him to check on that height limit. Mayor Ruspi commented that the town calculates the height of a building to a point halfway between the base and the peak of the highest eave. Chair Wenger invited commission members to send questions to Mr. Dribben and proposed to put off further discussion of these plans until the upcoming work session. Chair Wenger also asked Mr. Dribben to try to incorporate some common architectural features of older homes in the town in the design of this new house. Chair Wenger also urged that care be taken that the home built on this lot not overpower the historic Rolling Ridge house.

21607 Laytonsville Road (Town Hall): Mayor Ruspi stated that he wants to install lights and electrical receptacles on the pavilion. The commission concluded that this could be done without its approval. The town also wants to install seven light poles on the town hall grounds at the six locations marked by stakes along the parking lot and driveway and at a seventh location near the fire pit. He is proposing to use poles similar to those now on Mobley Farm Drive. Chair Wenger asked commission members to look at those poles and at the other lamp posts in town to consider what poles would be appropriate for the Town Hall property. Mayor Ruspi added that Andy Drouliskos is looking into obtaining new cedar shutters for the Town Hall, and the mayor said that the town would submit a work permit request for this.

**Adjournment:** Member Ruspi made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Member Shortley. The motion was adopted unanimously, and the commission adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Hendricks