Laytonsville Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes, May 17, 2021

**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Videoconference Meeting Minutes**

**Monday May 17, 2021**

**Present:**

Charles Hendricks, Chair

Andy Drouliskos

Michele Halvorson

Susan Phillips

Jill Ruspi

**Absent:**

Michele Shortley, Alternate

**Attendees:**

Mary Burke, Secretary

Tom Burke

Eric Wenger

Michael McDonald

**Opening:**

Chair Hendricks called the meeting to order at 7:32. He noted that a quorum was present.

**New Business:**

The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the April 19, 2021 meeting. Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Member Drouliskos

seconded, and all approved.

Public Hearing on work permit application 01-21 for the removal of three trees from the front yard of 21710 Laytonsville Road (Burke residence):

* + The Public Hearing was opened at 7:33.
  + Tom Burke made a statement regarding the scope of the work. He would like to have a Leyland Cypress tree and two American Holly trees removed from the front of their house. In addition, he would like to prune some Sycamore branches that are near the roof and remove a dead portion of a Wild Cherry tree.
  + Chair Hendricks shared his concern regarding the Pin Oak that is in close proximity to the Leyland Cypress.
  + Member Ruspi said that the reason the HDC should be in favor of this is that it will show the beauty of the house. She sees no problem in removing them.
  + Eric Wenger noted that the life span of a Leyland Cypress is 25-30 years and that most are in decline at this stage. He also said that the Pin Oak would probably recover in two years.
  + Tom Burke said that he did a survey of the number of trees in the yard. There are 42 trees on the property that is less than one acre. He is not planning on cutting everything down, There may be other trees to cut down in the future.
  + Chair Hendricks stated that when you make a “substantial alteration of the environmental setting” you need to come to the HDC.
  + Tom Burke said that this work would not occur until after bird nesting season.
  + Eric Wenger expressed concern that Goshen Enterprises does not have a legal contract. It is missing the name and license number of the person doing the tree work.
  + Mayor Ruspi wrote an email and commented that the trees are overgrown and removing them would allow the house to show.
  + The Public Hearing was closed at 8:04.

Discussion and action on work permit application 01-21

* + Chair Hendricks asked about stump removal and whether it is something that should be required. Eric Wenger said that it was a very expensive thing to do.
  + Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the application as presented. Member Drouliskos seconded and all approved.

Discussion of the installation of HVAC conduits on the exterior of the house at 21521 Laytonsville Road:

* + Chair Hendricks realized the scope of the HVAC work during the walking tour of the town with Leslie Gottert. After discovering the conduits were very visible, and that the electric meter was not properly attached, he brought it to the attention of the HDC for discussion.
  + Member Ruspi asked if there was ever an application regarding the HVAC work. The answer was no. She stated that because of that, we really can’t go back and comment and require them to do something.
  + Michelle Halvorson said that the meter would be replaced on June 6th, and that they would try and paint the conduits to match the downspouts or suggest that the new homeowners do it.

Report on the May 10th visit to Laytonsville by Leslie Gottert, executive director of the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions.:

* + Chair Hendricks shared his takeaways from the walk. Ms. Gottert said that we have a charming historic town. In preparation for the walk, Chair Hendricks watched the University of Maryland DVD from the graduate student study on the history of each house. The town really expanded in the 1890’s. They looked at two tobacco barns (one at Rolling Ridge, and one on Mike Seebold’s property next to Laytonsville Elementary School). Ms. Gottert is going to send information on restoring tobacco barns.

**Old Business:** There was no old business.

**Open Forum:**

21521 Laytonsville Road**:** House has sold.

**Miscellaneous:** Chair Hendricks stated that the next HDC Meeting will be held June 21, 2021.

Member Ruspi moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50. Member Drouliskos seconded, and all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Burke