**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, March 18, 2019**

**Present:**

Lisa Simonetti, Chair

Charles Hendricks

Jill Ruspi

**Absent:**

Andy Drouliskos

Michele Shortley

Susan Phillips, Alternate

**Attendees:**

Jennifer Sizemore, Secretary

Jim Ruspi, Mayor

**Opening:**

Chair Simonetti called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. She noted that a quorum was present.

**Minutes:**

Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the February 2019 meeting minutes as submitted, Member Hendricks seconded, all approved.

**New Business:**

Chair Simonetti said Member Shortley was thinking about resigning from the Historic District Commission (HDC) due to extensive home and family commitments. She suggested asking Alternate Phillips if she was interested in becoming a member and having Member Shortley serve as the alternate. Chair Simonetti doesn’t want to lose Member Shortley’s experience and knowledge. Mayor Ruspi is supportive of the idea, and Member Ruspi said she thought it was a good idea as well. Member Hendricks commented that Member Shortley is very talented in her knowledge of aesthetics and contributed useful thoughts to past discussions. He also thought Alternate Phillips has provided helpful input to the HDC. Chair Simonetti said she would speak with Alternate Phillips to see if she is willing to change positions. Mayor Ruspi said the change should go on the agenda for the next Town Council meeting for approval, preferably the April 2 meeting.

**Old Business:**

Member Ruspi brought up the HDC guidelines, which need to be revised as has been discussed at past meetings. She said the initial guidelines were developed by borrowing content from other towns with the intention of revising in the future to be more specific to the unique needs of Laytonsville. The updated version should include illustrations (e.g., streetscape) and very specific examples. Some work has been done, and there’s an electronic draft and some drawings, but the Mayor would like the HDC to complete the process. Member Ruspi suggested three alternatives: (1) do nothing; (2) work within the HDC to finish the changes; or (3) hire a consultant. She suggested the third option may be the best. The HDC could research potential consultants then make a presentation to the Town Council for approval. There is a precedent in the way the comprehensive plan was developed with outside assistance. Member Hendricks agreed with an idea, suggesting a professional would have the needed talent where the HDC members or other volunteers may not. He mentioned a conference he attended about DC history where they said different districts have different published guidelines. Some of these guidelines include not just information for homeowners, but also serve as something of a sales pitch for the neighborhood with nice pictures. He thought Laytonsville’s guidelines could be similar, including pictures of certain properties to show architectural features worthy of preservation. Spending money to hire professional help could be seen as an investment to give potential property owners a favorable impression of the town. Member Ruspi and Chair Simonetti agreed. Member Hendricks thought the guidelines could be written in a non-bureaucratic, friendly way while also making clear the need for HDC approval of exterior changes. Chair Simonetti suggested the next step would be to find appropriate consultants and make a presentation to the Town Council for approval.

Member Ruspi moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m., Member Hendricks seconded, all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sizemore