



## Westfield Historic Preservation Commission

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**Meeting Date:** September 18, 2023

**Meeting Type:** Regular Meeting of the Commission

**Attendees:** Maria Boyes (Chair), Jennifer Jaruzelski (Vice-chair), Kelly Kessler, Ann Freedman (Planning Board), Greg Blasi, MaryAnne Healy, Barton Ross (HPO), Kathryn Reed (Alt#1), Maryellen McVeigh (Alt#2), Tom Jardim, (Town Attorney)

**Absent:** Mark LoGrippo (TC), Jacqueline Brevard, Carol Tener (Town Historian)

**Approval of Minutes:** July 24, 2023. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ann Freedman and seconded by Maryellen McVeigh. The motion carried unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Moment of remembrance for Katie Spikes** – The Commission observed a moment of silence in memory of Katie Spikes. Maria Boyes remembered Katie as a vital member of the Commission who was passionate about preservation as evidenced by the designation of her own home on Stoneleigh Park earlier this year.

**Informal review of proposed changes to 667 Fourth Avenue** – Youseff Abdou— Mr. Abdou advised the Commission that he would be using the original plans that were approved by the Commission as they were presented with one slight modification. He requested that a grouping of three windows on the front façade (on plans, see front elevation 1 on sheet A2.0) be reduced in size by taking one light out of the bottom of all three windows to facilitate warranty coverage by the manufacturer. As the manufacturer will not warranty unfixed windows resting on the floor, any windows planned to be floor-resting will be fixed, solid pane windows. Mr. Abdou also stated he would be using materials as specified in the approved plan and will return to a future meeting with samples.

**Minor Certificate of Appropriateness for 3 Stoneleigh Park roof replacement** – Kelly Kessler, the Commission's Expedited Review Officer, met with the homeowner who requested a certificate of appropriateness to replace a slate roof with shingles. Due to the deterioration of nails, the slates have been falling off the roof. A cedar shake roof underlays the existing slate roof. The homeowner found the cost of replacing roof with new slate prohibitive and selected Certainteed Belmont asphalt shingles which are designed to replicate the appearance of slate with variations in texture and color. Kelly Kessler classified the work being performed to be minor and the certificate of appropriateness was issued.

**Update on RFP for historic downtown survey awarded to H2M** – Tom Jardim reported bids were unsealed and the contract awarded for a historic preservation master plan and the preparation of a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the downtown historic district. The contract was awarded to H2M Associates of Parsippany, NJ. Mr. Jardim stated the committee had made a conscious decision to go with a company that has public community outreach experience. Several Commission members expressed concern that H2M lacks preservation experience and has no prior record of preparing nomination forms for the National Register. Maryellen McVeigh asked if a representative of New Jersey Historic Trust, the grantor, had been notified as required by the terms of the grant and asked if anyone from the Trust was present at the meeting. Mr. Jardim was unsure whether they had been notified but, stated they had been sent a copy of the RFP. Maria Boyes

reiterated the importance of having a member of the Historic Preservation Commission present at meetings. Barton Ross will act as liaison for the Commission for future meetings. Mr. Jardim was not aware of any upcoming scheduled meetings.

**HPO Report** – Barton Ross, the Commission’s Historic Preservation Officer, reported that a residence at 237 Midwood Place in Westfield that sought a demolition permit was a modified Sears bungalow dating from 1924. He determined the structure has no special architectural or historic significance and the commission has no further comment.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

##### **Committee Reports**

**Devlin Awards Committee:** Jennifer Jaruzelski reported nominations were received and deliberations had begun. A definitive date for the award ceremony has not been determined. The Town Hall Community Room and Lion’s Roar were discussed as potential venues for the award ceremony which is planned for October or November.

**Communications/Education Committee:** Jennifer Jaruzelski reported plans for the Build Westfield in Lego 2024 event were proceeding. The event is scheduled for January 20,2024 with the High School’s cafeteria being the preferred venue. A firm commitment from the Board of Education to use the cafeteria has yet to be received.

**Homeowner Relations:** Plaques for Stoneleigh Park have been received. Anastasia Harrison will be contacted regarding presentation of plaques.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Peter Primavera of 552 Boulevard in Westfield attended the meeting to address the Commission. He congratulated Maria Boyes on her election to Preservation New Jersey’s Board of Trustees. Mr. Primavera expressed his outrage at the award of the Historic Preservation Master Plan bid to H2M Associates. He stated that the firm lacks any relevant experience in historic preservation work, National Historic Register applications, or historic sites inventories. Mr. Primavera also expressed his concern over the condition of the Mills-Ferris Pearsall House that is part of the proposed Sophia development.

Commission member Kelly Kessler asked Tom Jardim if there was recourse for demolition that is resultant from neglect. It was suggested a complaint could be made to the zoning office. Tom Jardim also noted that there is a \$10,000 per day penalty until structure is restored for unauthorized demolition.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Kelly Kessler and seconded by Ann Freedman. The motion was carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.