

Historic Preservation Advisory Committee to the Lawrence Township Planning Board

Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2021

Opening of Meeting/Call to Order

The general meeting of the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee to the Lawrence Township Planning Board was called to order at 7:31pm on November 8, 2021 in the Manager's Conference Room at the Lawrence Municipal Building by Ed McDonald.

Roll Call

Members	Present	Absent	Time of arrival after meeting called to order
Joe Ciccone	X		
Joseph Como (Vice Chair)	X		
Denny Cox	X		
Wolf Hul	X		
Edward McDonald (Chair)	X		
John Pavlik	X		
Mike Powers (Liaison)		X	
Douglas Sargent	X		

1. Approval of August 2021 Special Meeting Minutes

Members	Made	Second	Yes	No	Abstain
Joe Ciccone		X			
Joseph Como (Vice Chair)			X		
Denny Cox			X		
Wolf Hul			X		
Edward McDonald (Chair)			X		
John Pavlik			X		
Douglas Sargent	X				

2. New Applications

a. 2688 Main St. - Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church

Architect, Robert Cerutti, and Jeanne Aicher, a member of the Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church for over 40 years and a former employee of the church for 28 years, presented plans for two one-story additions to 2688 Main St, the Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church, a key structure in the Lawrenceville Historic District.

An existing site plan was used to describe the structures that currently make up the church including the original Meeting House (1764), Chapel Building (1898), Gymnasium (1954), one-story lounge and classroom addition (1980s), Colonnade (mid 1990s), and kitchen addition (late 1990s).

The first of the two one-story additions will be positioned in front of the existing colonnade. This addition will include a multipurpose room with movable partitions to provide small, medium, and large meeting spaces for the church. The new façade of the addition is in keeping with the existing design of the simple post and beam colonnade. The stucco and white trim exterior of the addition is meant to match the existing buildings, but also blend into the background and not upstage the historically significant Meeting House and Chapel that it connects. New skylights are planned above the existing corridor of the colonnade to allow for more natural light. A wheelchair porch lift is proposed to allow for ADA access to the Meeting House and the existing non-code compliant exterior ramp would be removed. No windows into the Meeting House will be covered up by this addition, but one door will be incorporated where the existing ramp is. Some basement windows into the Chapel Building will be covered up, but they are currently windows into an existing stair. One tree would be removed during construction.

The second one-story addition is an expansion to the existing lobby. In addition to expanding the lobby space, additional bathrooms will be added, including a barrier free bathroom, and an elevator will be added to provide ADA access to the Chapel Building. The exterior of this addition will not be visible from Main Street but will consist of a welcoming glass lobby with a blank wall and trellis where the bathrooms are located.

The addition in front of the colonnade will push forward into the existing cemetery approximately twenty-five feet. There are about thirteen headstones in the footprint of the proposed addition and approximately twenty headstones in total that will be disturbed by the construction, but some may be able to go back into place. Some of the impacted gravestones date back to the 1830s and 1840s. A ground penetrating survey was conducted to map the location of the existing coffins and determine their depth. It was described that all coffins will remain, but some headstones may need to be relocated. An attorney was consulted about moving the headstones and it was determined not to be an issue unless the families of the descendant's object.

When the Gymnasium building was built in the 1950s, graves were disturbed during construction. Some gravestones that were disturbed were moved to the other side of the cemetery with a stone that commemorates those that were relocated. During construction, they discovered that not all gravestones mark actual graves. It was noted that the church has an inventory of all gravestones.

It is the intention in the design of the new additions to honor those whose headstones will be disturbed or moved. Some ideas were presented about how to do that, including displaying the disturbed headstones in the new addition. It was noted that all gravestones will be preserved and that the project had been approved by the Session. The HPAC was most concerned about preserving the names on the gravestones and the historical nature of the church. The committee unanimously approved the application on the condition that the disturbed gravestones were relocated elsewhere on site to celebrate the founders of our community while remaining accessible to the public.

Motion to Approve:

Members	Made	Second	Yes	No	Abstain
Joe Ciccone			X		
Joseph Como (Vice Chair)			X		
Denny Cox		X			
Wolf Hul	X				
Edward McDonald (Chair)			X		
John Pavlik			X		
Douglas Sargent			X		

Adjournment: Ed McDonald made a motion to adjourn. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:33pm.

The next general meeting is scheduled for 7:30pm on December 13, 2021 in the Manager's Conference Room at the Lawrence Municipal Building.

Minutes submitted by: John Pavlik II, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP