

2019 HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD (HPAB) ANNUAL REPORT

Members: Victor Bary, Anna Bauer, Teresa Bulger, Kinney Clark, Amy Imhof, William King, Linda Livelli, Alex Lyubarsky, Michael Mason, Maureen McDougall, Ronald Meeks, Julie Murphy, Debra Nicholls, Sarah Oliver, Nancy Price, Stephen Price, Eric Rubinson, Steven Saltzman, Loretta Smith, Maureen Strazdon (Chair), Janet Storti, Andrea Yurcisin (until June). Township Committee liaison: Mary O'Connor.

HPAB met every month, usually on the fourth Thursday at the Community Center. A list of meeting dates is posted in the Municipal Building and members of the community are invited.

At the first 2019 meeting, the Board decided on priorities for the year. They were: having a Historic Preservation Element (HPE) adopted as part of the Cranford Master Plan Re-examination, applying for NJ HPO Certificates of Eligibility for several Cranford buildings, writing design guidelines for Sunny Acres homeowners, and creating podcasts and a speaker series about Cranford's history. Furthering public awareness of historic preservation by continuing to offer plaques for significant buildings, writing articles, and publicizing Cranford's historical resources were also identified, as was continuing to provide advice to the Township on historic preservation.

As part of HPAB's advisory activities, on October 2, Steven Saltzman, Sarah Oliver, and Teresa Bulger presented the Historic Preservation Element (HPE) to the Cranford Planning Board for inclusion in the Cranford Master Plan Re-examination. The HPE was written by an HPAB subcommittee that included Steven Saltzman (chair), Teresa Bulger, Kinney Clark, Amy Imhof, Sarah Oliver, and Maureen Strazdon, and is based in part on the *Phase I Cranford Historic Resources Survey: Review of Existing Documentation, Baseline Inventory, and Survey Updates*, done by HPAB member Kinney Clark in 2016, and from input from a public meeting in July. The 101-page HPE follows guidelines from Sustainable Jersey and includes ten sections and five appendices, including an action plan/agenda that provides short-, mid-, and long-term guidance for Township committees, boards, organizations, and resource owners. The document does not contain any restrictions or rules for what property owners can or cannot do. Based on the discussion on October 2, the HPE was revised and resubmitted to the Planning Board on October 11. HPAB is awaiting further discussions with the Planning Board with a view to the adoption of the HPE within the Master Plan Re-examination.

In August an HPAB application resulted in a Certification of Eligibility for the Cranford Hotel as contributing to a historic district. An application for the Sperry Observatory is in progress. A Certification of Eligibility is a formal finding from the NJ State Historic Preservation Office that a property or area is eligible to be designated as historic and verifies its historical significance.

HPAB continues to maintain a webmap/storymap that allows drill-downs and more information on each resource listed in the *Phase I Cranford Historic Resources Survey* that is available on HPAB's website, PreserveCranford.com, and as a link from the HPAB page on Cranfordnj.org.

Preservation efforts included an HPAB offer to help Union County College restore the sundial that had been installed on the campus next to the Observatory in 1974 that had fallen into disrepair. In spite of input from the Union County Freeholder Board, UCC did not respond to HPAB's offer and the sundial has been removed and is presumed to be destroyed. HPAB also sent guidelines to the owner of the carriage house on Forest Avenue that will be elevated with a FEMA grant.

To further support the Township Committee, HPAB commented on the historic impact of variance requests. HPAB sent Annual and Financial reports to the Township Committee in February, and members attended Township Committee Workshop Meetings throughout the year. HPAB continues to request that Sunny Acres properties be included in the in Cranford's SDL portal, a database that includes data on all properties in town, as required by the HPAB ordinance.

To raise awareness of preservation and to raise monies for HPAB projects, oval bronze and green plaques stating "This Historically Significant Building Contributes to the Character of Cranford" had been designed and produced by HPAB in 2017 and offered to 54 owners of buildings identified in HPAB's *Resources Survey*. In 2020 the plaques will be offered to owners of all buildings in the North Cranford Historic District as defined in the *Resources Survey*. A special plaque was also designed and offered to Sunny Acres home owners in 2019. Also, HPAB continues to sell maps of Cranford that are color-coded with the years houses were built, as well as the *Cranford's History and Architecture – A Journey Through Time* DVD.

HPAB continues to work with other organizations in Cranford. In March HPAB and the Cranford Historical Society jointly presented the Annual Preservation Award to the Marsiglia family for their restoration of the cornice on their building on North Avenue. HPAB continues to support the Heritage Plaza and Riverwalk at Cranford Heritage Corridor, spearheaded by HPAB member Michael Mason. HPAB members Teresa Bulger and Maureen McDougall led a walking tour of the South Side of Cranford in conjunction with the Cranford Municipal Alliance Annual Cranford Cookout in May. In June HPAB had a table at the Celebrate Cranford event in downtown and distributed a short scavenger hunt. HPAB created a booklet highlighting Cranford's historic sites that was used in the Paint Out in September. Lastly, HPAB participated in the Cranford Women's Club House Tour/Green Thumb Holiday Boutique by selling maps and DVDs at the event.

To help communicate HPAB's mission, information about Cranford history and HPAB activities were posted on the HPAB website and on HPAB's Facebook page which started the year with 806 likes, and ended with 855 likes. Articles about HPAB activities and positions appeared in *Cranford Monthly*, *Westfield Leader*, *Suburban News*, *TapIntoCranford*, and on Cranford Radio.

Maureen E. Strazdon, Chair

January 16, 2020