

HDAC Minutes: September 6, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

A Presentation was made by John Brooks, representing the VFW, 8217-19 Germantown Ave., in a request for a variance to legalize "Assembly and Entertainment" as well as "Fraternal Organization".

These variances will allow the installation of an entertainment venue referred to as an "Escape Room", which requires participating individuals to be locked in a space, and then to find clues to obtain their release. After discussion, and the agreement of the VFW to replace two first story windows and four second story windows for a total of six front façade windows using historically accurate materials and design, the committee voted to support their request for variance.

A second presentation was made by Richard Snowden of Bowman Properties, who was in need of a variance for "excessive office space", within the buildings at 8329-35 Germantown Ave. After discussion in which Mr. Snowden answered questions regarding the exterior architecture and the use of the renovated interior spaces, which include retail in the front portion of the first floor, residential in the front portion of the second floor, and commercial office spaces in the rear portions of both the first and second floor, the committee voted to support the request for this variance.

David Dalrymple Sr. and David Dalrymple, Jr. from Spirk Brothers, Inc., Contractors, attended the meeting in hopes of gaining information about the history and original materials of the building, pending the renovation of 9 East Evergreen Ave., which is the location of the Chestnut Hill East Train Station, as well as BBT Bank. They expressed concern about many of the exterior architectural features and the brick ground cover facing Evergreen Ave. which are all in need of repair and/or replacement. The committee expressed appreciation for their coming to the meeting, and it was decided that historical photographs of the building and property be obtained from the archives in the hopes of providing original materials that can be used in the renovation. Patricia will follow up with this request.

Lori presented updates of the Preservation Task Force and the Northwest District Plan.

There was a discussion regarding the renovation of Gravers Lane Station. It was learned that a rotted beam was scheduled to be replaced at the station, and Ed Wallace, our Septa contact, wanted to know if we approved of a large holly tree being removed from the property to accommodate a crane that would bring in and install this beam on the track side. The committee can support this tree's removal, and suggested it be replaced with two smaller holly bushes. It was also learned that there was not a developer at this time, who was interested in developing the station as a commercial or residential location.

This topic lead to a discussion about the fate of all the historic train stations within the community, pending the use of automated ticket machines that will take the place of ticket sales within the stations, and the possible further deterioration of the buildings. The Preservation Committee will also take up this topic at their next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Cove, Chair