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Springfield Township to form new historic commission

Posted on January 8, 2020 (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2020/01/08/springfield-township-to-form-new-historic-commission/>), updated on January 8, 2020 (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/2020/01/08/springfield-township-to-form-new-historic-commission/>) by Contributor (<https://www.chestnuthilllocal.com/author/contributor/>)



This small but picturesque Wyndmoor house built by Russell Elizabeth Medinger in the 1950s was demolished in 2018, leaving neighbors upset and township preservationists looking for reforms to prevent similar demolitions in the future. (Photo courtesy of 8600Montgomery.com (<http://8600Montgomery.com>))

By Barbara Sherf

At its monthly workshop meeting on Monday, Jan. 6, Springfield Township's newly named Board of Commissioners Chairman Baird Standish proudly presented a plaque given to the board Sunday night by the Chestnut Hill Conservancy. The Board congratulated Jeffrey T. Harbison for serving for the past four years (and eight years total) as chairman. Commissioner Eddie T. Graham was named vice chairman of the board.

Holding up the award, Standish announced the creation a new historical commission and the need to fill vacancies following the establishment of a Historic Overlay Preservation Ordinance "to promote, protect and facilitate the preservation of resources of historic significance and to preserve the historic values in the Township environment."

It was noted that Springfield Township was among the first batch of recipients outside of Chestnut Hill to receive recognition for the creation of a preservation ordinance following the outcry over the loss of the Medinger House in Wyndmoor, and the realization of the

potential loss of more historic properties.

As previously reported, the unexpected razing of the what was referred to as the “Gingerbread House” or “Hansel and Gretel House” at 8600 Montgomery Avenue, described as a tiny Colonial-style building built in 1954 with meticulous accumulation of historic materials to mimic a 1700 farmhouse, was met with grief last year by the former owner and nearby neighbors.

Standish noted that “75 percent of the properties in Springfield are over 75-years old” and there was discussion of putting together the five-member commission aided by college students to help review deeds and develop a historic overlay for the commission.

Commissioners have already received two resumes to sit on the newly formed five-member commission. One resume was that of T. Scott Kreilick, a subcommittee member, president of the current Springfield Township Historical Society and owner of Kreilick Conservation. The other was that of Albert M. Comly Jr., who owns Comly Court and the Acme Shopping Center property.

“An independent consulting firm hired by the board will develop a list of historically and architecturally significant properties,” said Kreilick by phone. “We’ve been talking about this kind of ordinance since the historical society was created in 1985 and I’m thrilled to see that a commission with some teeth was been created to see that we don’t lose another Medinger house.”

“This is not a glamorous job, but a commission needs to develop this inventory of historical properties,” said Commissioner Harbison. “We’ve used students before to help map our township tree inventory in the past and it would make sense to use them again.”

Acme Markets alcohol consumption schedule changed

A representative of the Flourtown Acme location asked the board to consider a request to amend a conditional license agreement to permit beer and wine consumption to include all hours when beer and wine is offered for sale for off-premises consumption. (That would roll back the clock from 10 a.m. to 7 a.m. weekdays that single serve wines and six packs of beer could be opened and consumed in the store.)

Gregg Zoeller spoke on behalf of Acme Markets, noting that the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board asked for the change following a Supreme Court ruling and subsequent passage of state law changing the use to comply with the court ruling in favor of additional consumption hours that matched purchase hours. The ruling stipulated that if a customer is able to purchase wine and beer as early as 7 a.m., they should also be able to consume alcoholic beverages on-site at that time. Zoeller said while he doesn’t see that happening at the Flourtown location, the company was being pressured by the state to comply with the court ruling and the new law. A motion was made to approve the change of the hours to allow for the consumption of alcohol in-store at 7 a.m.

Renewable Energy Certificates

The board was asked to consider the purchase of renewable energy certificates to supply power to the township’s municipal campus facilities.

A motion was made to enter into a one-year contract with PECO to purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) through the Municipal Utility Alliance. In the short term, it will cost an additional \$500 annually, but in the long-term it is in keeping with the goal of purchasing 100 percent clean energy by 2025 and the likelihood of the price for renewable energy going down.

Joy Bergey, a member of the Environmental Advisory Board, noted that the township must do more than purchase the RECs. She pointed to Philadelphia officials who have been working with Community Energy to build a large solar park in Adams County that would provide 20 percent of energy used by Philadelphians when it is complete. She noted that Montgomery County is looking at building a similar type of solar farm to help municipalities reach their energy conservation goals.

Municipal Campus Energy Audit

The board reviewed the results of an energy assessment and HVAC controls analysis of the police/administration and library buildings. Township Manager Mike Taylor relayed that Practical Solutions of West Chester conducted an audit and found that they can save \$1,600 of the annual \$3,700 electric and gas bills by simply “tweaking existing controls” at the municipal buildings and the library. A meeting has been scheduled for mid-January with the existing HVAC contractor to review the energy saving suggestions and develop a plan to implement them.

New Business

In new business, Walgreens Pharmacy sent the board a letter for proposed additional signage noting that LabCorp was now a tenant of the property. The proposal called for two in-store window signs, two exterior signs on the brick building and an illuminated sign where the main sign is at Bysher Avenue and Bethlehem Pike. Citing the illuminated sign as a traffic hazard, Commissioner Harbison went on record as wanting no additional illuminated signage at the busy intersection. Township Solicitor Jim Garrity was directed to contact Walgreens to negotiate additional signage that did not include lighted signage at the intersection.

Barb Sherf can be reached at Barb@CommunicationsPro.com.

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A rectangular advertisement for Lownes Family Funeral Home. The top left has a dark brown box with the text "LOWNES FAMILY Funeral Home" in white, with "5 Generations since 1888" below it. To the right is a photo of the funeral home building. Below this, white text on a dark background reads: "One Name, One Family, One Purpose... To Provide funerals and Cremations at affordable prices to you!". A decorative separator line follows, then "Celebration of Life and Cremation Specialists" in white. At the bottom, the address "659 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, Pa 19444" and phone number "610-828-4430 • www.lownes.com" are listed.

LOWNES FAMILY
Funeral Home
5 Generations since 1888

One Name, One Family, One Purpose...
To Provide funerals and Cremations
at affordable prices to you!

Celebration of Life and
Cremation Specialists

659 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, Pa 19444
610-828-4430 • www.lownes.com

(<http://lownes.com>)

A rectangular advertisement for Lownes Family Funeral Home, identical to the one above. It features the company name, a photo of the building, a mission statement, a decorative separator, service specialties, and contact information.

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A phoenix rising: a history of the Chestnut Hill Fire House

The Chestnut Hill Fire House (right) and Police Station, circa 1...

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20h

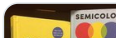
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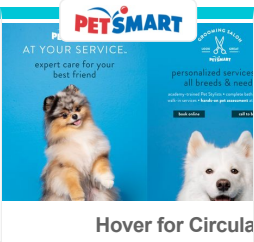
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