

**VILLAGE OF COXSACKIE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
January 14, 2025**

Chairperson Patricia Maxwell (“the Chair”) called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were Historic Preservation Commission Members: Michael Rausch, David Dorpfeld, Chris Fisher, Hannah Kastanos, and Wendy Warren. Nancy Harm was absent.

A motion to approve the minutes from the November 12, 2024, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting was made by Wendy Warren and seconded by Chris Fisher. Chairperson Maxwell voted yes. Michael Rausch voted yes. David Dorpfeld voted yes. Chris Fisher voted yes. Hannah Kastanos voted yes. Wendy Warren voted yes. The motion carried.

New Business

Lighting on Reed Street- Michael Rausch stated that the Historic Preservation Commission needs to plan for oversight of whatever decorations are added by the Village to the overhead lighting that is currently going up on Reed Street. The new pole light decorations do not fit with the character of Reed Street. He would suggest that the Village take down the pole decorations on Reed Street completely, and just have the storefronts decorate their windows, and have the overhead lights strung.

Wendy Warren stated that back in the 90’s the Village had old fashioned wreaths with lights, similar to what Athens has. She asked if the Village saved the old decorations that used to be put up. She said that she knows that over the years, there was a problem with where the DPW stored the decorations all year long. There was a lot of wear and tear on the wreaths, and that is when the Village started to go with the snowflakes.

Michael Rausch stated that if the Village decides to still put the lights on the poles on Reed Street, he just wishes that they don’t put the new colorful ones up, and instead puts up the snowflakes, if anything.

Chairperson Maxwell stated that she agrees, that the new pole lights do not fit the aesthetic of downtown. She believes that she saw the DPW stringing the wires downtown for the overhead lights.

Michael Rausch stated that the plates were set on the buildings to map out where the wires will run for the overhead lights. He still feels that the lights should be on a timer, rather than be on for 24 hours a day.

Chairperson Maxwell stated that the Village Board was on board with having the overhead lights be on a timer.

Wendy Warren stated that the overhead lights will be run in a zig zag pattern, but there will be one string running across Reed Street that would allow for banners to be hung in the future if need be.

Properties Receiving New York Forward (NYF) Grants- Michael Rausch stated that he thinks that some of the NY Forward Grant projects should be starting this year. With the way that the grant works, money needs to be expended, and the work needs to be completed according to the requirements of the grant, before being able to submit for reimbursement. However, you will not be reimbursed for interest, if you had to borrow the money. He said that the Village owned building located at 14 South River Street will house the Coxsackie Historical Society, as well as house a museum. The Village is supposed to start work on that building this year.

Wendy Warren asked if the Village still has to submit any plans of work being done in the Historic District to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Michael Rausch stated that that is correct, for exterior plans only.

Chairperson Maxwell stated that technically, plans for the building at 14 South River Street, should have to go before the Planning Board also, since it has been a discontinued use for so long. However, that is up to the Planning Board.

Wendy Warren asked if this applies as well to the potential new light poles that will be going in as part of the new streetscape design downtown.

Chairperson Maxwell stated that that is correct. That would have to get approval from the Historic Preservation Commission because it is located in the Historic District. Also, as part of the discussion with the Village regarding the Heermance Library sidewalks, the Village would continue replacement sidewalks similar to the library's all the way up Ely Street, including the slate if Aaron Flach chose to replace it.

Michael Rausch stated that the new sidewalk that was replaced downtown looks markedly better than what was originally planned. It blends in nicely with the sidewalks around it.

Wendy Warren asked about what is going to happen with the traffic pattern downtown.

Chairperson Maxwell stated that that is part of the NY Forward grant as well. The Village received money towards a redesign of the infrastructure downtown.

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Michael Rausch stated that it was around \$200,000.00. It was for work on sidewalks, streetscape, signage, a traffic study, things like that. They would have to explore a couple of different options, such as making Reed Street a one-way down. There were even talks about making lower New Street a one-way going up, but that does not seem viable. They will need to figure something out. It gets busier, and busier, downtown. Crosswalks are desperately needed for crossing the street in front of the library, and at both ends of Reed Street. They need painted crosswalks. They even talked about putting a stop sign at the bottom of Mansion Street, in order to really slow traffic down. He has witnessed people going the wrong way around the park, and ignoring the two one-way signs that are already posted, along with arrows on the road. There have also been people going the wrong way up lower New Street as well. It is frustrating to see. He said that he does have an update about cell service downtown. From what he understands, Verizon is going to put panels on the roof of the State Telephone building, and AT&T wants to put a mini cell tower on a pole downtown. It should be about the size of a transformer on a pole. It would be good to have both carriers. As for the Village building at 14 South River Street, he, and a few others, met with Delaware Engineering, to discuss the exterior and interior plans of the building. The Cocksackie Historical Society would like to see a second story on top of the bathroom space that can be utilized. He is sure that everything will have to be raised slightly, and a ramp be built, due to that area being prone to flooding. There were talks about putting a patio on the back, and a personal elevator to allow handicap access to the second floor as well. He also said that it would be nice to put a few windows in on the north side of the building, because right now there aren't any. All these talks are just preliminary. There haven't been any architectural renderings done yet. It is still early, but hopefully that project starts moving this year.

McQuade Building- Chairperson Maxwell stated that the building review will be done in conjunction with the Planning Board and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Aaron Flach is planning on going before the Planning Board in February. The exterior renderings for the building have already been completed. The exterior plans are not a lot different from what you see right now. So, that will be something happening this year, which will be something that will come before the Historic Preservation Commission.

Dave Merchant's Building- Michael Rausch stated that Dave Merchant will be wanting to move forward with his storefront design and landscaping at his building downtown this year.

21 Reed Street- Chairperson Maxwell stated that if a new storefront goes in the former Violet Moon Apothecary shop at 21 Reed Street, any exterior work will have to go before the Historic Preservation Commission. She has not heard anything from owner, Amy Bennett, yet, but she knows that they have been repainting inside.

Hannah Kastanos stated that she would like to see a more service oriented business go in this

space, as opposed to just retail.

5-7 Mansion Street (Old Bender Building)- Chairperson Maxwell stated that there is a potential new storefront going in 5-7 Mansion Street as well. Owner, Amy Bennett, has already received Planning Board approval to put in the apartments on the upper floors, but nothing has moved forward yet.

Old Business

1. 2-6 Reed Street/33 South River Street- (former Cumming's Hotel) – Chairperson Maxwell stated that the building review will, as of now, be done in conjunction with the plans for the McQuade Building, that both will go before the Planning Board. This will be coming up in the next couple of months.

2. Training- Chairperson Maxwell stated that she will continue to forward any webinars received from the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) to the board members. The NAPC allows for the downloading of webinars on their website in order to fulfill training requirements. The board members need to complete 4 hours of training/year.

Public Comment Period

No public comments were offered.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the Historic Preservation Commission meeting was made by Michael Rausch and seconded by David Dorpfeld. Chairperson Maxwell voted yes. Michael Rausch voted yes. David Dorpfeld voted yes. Chris Fisher voted yes. Hannah Kastanos voted yes. Wendy Warren voted yes. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nikki Berezna
Clerk