

**LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 21, 2011**

Roll Call:

The regular meeting of the Laytonsville Historic District Commission (HDC) was called to order by the Chair, Sheree Wenger, at 7:30 p.m. Commission Members: Charles Hendricks, Jill Ruspi , and Alternate Lisa Simonetti were present.

Attendance: Jim Ruspi and Murphy Richards were in attendance.

Minutes:

The minutes from the meeting of February 21, 2011, were presented and approved as corrected.

Preliminary Statement by Chair

The preliminary statement was not read.

Old Business:

Mr. Murphy Richards of the Laytonsville District Volunteer Fire Department (LDVFD) attended the meeting to discuss the sign recently installed in front of the Laytonsville Fire Department at 21400 Laytonsville Road. . The scrolling and animation of the sign were the primary areas of concern with the new sign. Chair Wenger stated that approval had been given for the sign, with the stipulation that there was to be no scrolling or animation. She said that the commission had been informed prior to approval of the sign that the sign that the LDVFD had chosen did not have animation or scrolling capabilities. She also stated that she had received a couple of complaints. Mr. Richards stated that initially the sign had been in a 4-day test mode which was utilizing all of the signs' capabilities, some of which had not been anticipated.

Mr. Richards indicated that there was no intention to use the animation feature of the sign. He sate that side to side scrolling occurred when the message exceeded 15 characters per line. If more than two items were programmed into the sign, it would scroll. Mr. Jim Ruspi asked how this was handled with the previous sign. Mr. Murphy replied that they changed the message every two weeks. Member Hendricks asked how much the sign cost and Mr. Richards replied that is cost \$15,000. Member Jill Ruspi commented that knowing that there was miscommunication on the capabilities of the sign helped to explain the confusion at the time of the sign installation. Member Hendricks stated that if a roof was installed with materials that had not been approved, the property owner would be asked to change it to be in compliance. He noted that while a scrolling sign might not be a big deal, the challenge is that it sets a precedent for not following the terms of the permit for the project.

Mr. Richards stated that the sign could be programmed so that it would not scroll, but requested

approval from the HDC to permit scrolling. The Commission discussed whether another hearing was necessary to provide Town citizens a chance to share any concerns about the sign. After reviewing the Town's policies on signs, the Commission found that Town's Zoning Ordinance, Section 128.03 (c), prohibits flashing, blinking, moving or intermittent lighting. Chair Wenger suggested that the HDC seek guidance from the Mayor and Town Council. Member Hendricks made a motion to authorize Chair Wenger to write a letter to inquire of the Mayor and Town Council whether scrolling in the LDVFD sign conforms to Section 120.03 of the Zoning Ordinance and to defer the HDC decision on the LDVFD request to permit scrolling until the HDC received response from the Mayor and Town Council. Member Simonetti seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

New Business:

Chair Wenger stated that she had been unsuccessful in making contact with the secretary at St. Bartholomew's Church to see if she has the original blueprints of the house at 21615 Laytonsville Road, which is used as the church office at 21615 Laytonsville Road. Member Hendricks stated the church office hours were Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 am – 3 pm. He also indicated that the church had not made any decisions regarding the windows. Chair Wenger stated that she will keep trying to contact the church secretary. If the original blueprints are not available through the church office, the next step would have to go to Rockville to look for them.

Chair Wenger reported that Colleen Young said that she is seeking a better sign to announce both her business, The Pink Poet Antiques, and her tenants business, Coco too, located at 21414 Laytonsville Road. The size of the permanent sign is a challenge as it must be limited to 12 square feet. Zoning prohibits use of a movable or portable sign. Chair Wenger will visit Ms. Young at the Pink Poet to discuss possible solutions.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Member Hendricks made the motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Member Simonetti. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Charlene Dillingham

Clerk, Town of Laytonsville

