

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
September 6, 2023

The meeting of the Chesterfield Township Planning Board was called to order by Chairman Nei at 7:00PM. The Open Public Meetings Act statement and Sunshine Statement was read and compliance noted

Roll call was taken showing present: Aparna Shah; Suruchi Batra; Gerard Hlubik; Denise Koetas-Dale; Tom Sahol; Matthew Litt; Michael Nei; Raymond Lumio; Roman Horoszewski (7:06) Absent: Gary Pollack; Jeffrey Kolakowski. Professional staff present: Douglas Heinold, Solicitor; and Leah Furey-Bruder, Planner

AGENDA MATTER(S) REQUIRING RECUSAL(S)

None

HPC APPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

Fellowship Crosspoint – 187 Crosswicks-Chesterfield Rd, Block 502, Lot 17 Demolition Permit.

Mr. Heinold gave an overview of the regulations of this application. The HPC recommendations are treated as expert testimony. We have received letters from residents expressing concern regarding this application, during the pandemic letters sent in could be used in place of a person attending however this has since expired. If the board approves the demolition then a permit can be granted, if the board denies the application then under code 123-14C which allows 2 consecutive 4 month periods so the applicant, the HPC and the Governing Body can come up with a decision on how if anything could be done to save the building.

James Codella, Chair of the HPC was sworn. Mr. Codella read the summary that was sent to the Planning Board regarding the application. The conclusion of the summary states: All but one of the Commissioners concluded that it was feasible and practical to preserve the Mansion in its current location. Furthermore, it was determined that the costs associated with repairing and weatherizing the exterior of the Mansion supplied by CrossPoint's Architect were reasonable given the fact of the size of the structure in question. The name in itself, the "Bullock Mansion", indicates that there will be significant costs involved with general maintenance and upkeep of its exterior. The applicant had the responsibility prior to purchasing the property for \$1.00 to have the structure inspected and to understand that it was located in an historic district and that there might be significant costs to repair and maintain the Mansion. The costs quoted to preserve the exterior of the building and not unreasonable, and it was the conclusion of 4 out of the 5 total voting Commissioners that it was feasible and practical to preserve the Mansion in its current location. One Commissioner had to recuse himself from the vote because he joined the HPC after the initial meeting in March and did not have an opportunity to review the tapes of the prior meeting, however, he also went on record stating that he would have voted to conclude that the preservation of the Mansion was feasible and practical in its current location.

Therefore, by a vote of four (4) to one (1), it is the recommendation of the HPC that the CrossPoint COA application to demolish the Bullock Mansion be denied.

Peter Chacianas, Attorney for CrossPoint stated that the church was gifted from Shadyrest Church in 2020. September 20, 2020 Fellowship Church received Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan approval for two additions to the church separate from the

Mansion. The applicant appeared before the HPC for the additions and at that time the HPC expressed concern with the exterior of the Bullock Mansion, at that point the Church, HPC and Township were working together to see if something could be done. During the process his client became aware of a demolition by neglect and feared that fines and or a lien on the property could be pursued. Understanding that it wasn't targeting their application another meeting was held at the Township in April. The applicant agreed to hold off on the demolition to see if the Township could come up with funds to move the Mansion onto the Township property. In May the HPC asked what the status was and his client received a response that the Township doesn't have the means to move the Mansion at this time, the applicant then proceeded with the demolition application. Mr. Chacianas stated that it is not feasible nor practical to fix the exterior to only let the interior go which can not be used. The proposal to fix the exterior is \$650,000 the proposal to fix the interior and exterior is a little over 2.2 million, the proposal to move the building is \$375,000 and the proposal to demolish the building is \$73,000.

Mr. Heinold asked Mr. Chacianas if the applicant would like to consider talking to the Township to discuss alternatives.

Mr. Nei stated that the HPC did try to work with the applicant. Ms. Koetas-Dale said that the Township stated that they didn't have the funds at this time however waiting the 2-3 years was never off the table. Mr. Chacianas stated in his email that they were willing to wait that period of time but it was after the fact that the Township didn't have the funds that they proceeded with the permit to demolish.

Mr. Heinold stated if the Church doesn't have an immediate need for the site then the applicant can meet with a Technical Review Committee and discuss proposals.

A motion was made by Mr. Sahol second by Ms. Shah to take a recess at 8:05.

A motion was made by Mr. Litt second by Ms. Sahol to resume the meeting at 8:30.

Mr. Chacianas would like to request an adjournment to see if a resolution can be discussed.

A motion was made by Mr. Sahol second by Ms. Shah to carry the application to a date to be determined. All were in favor, motion carried.

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK

A motion was made by Ms. Shah second by Mr. Sahol to open the meeting for public comment. Hearing none, a motion was made by Mr. Sahol second by Ms. Shah to close public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Sahol seconded by Ms. Shah to adjourn. All were in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Aggie Napoleon, Secretary