

**ANCRAM PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
October 5th, 2017**

Board Members Present: Dennis Sigler (Acting Chair), Terry Boyles, Bob Roche, Erin Robertson, James Stickles, Ann Rader, Palmer Irving (alt),

Board Member(s) Absent: John Ingram, Joe Crocco,

Others Present: Sara McWilliams (Columbia Habitat for Humanity), Perter Cerri (Columbia Habitat), Dennis Wedlick (Barlis Wedlick), Dan Russell (Crawford & Assoc.), Darren Mosher (Crawford & Assoc.), Michel Hamilton (Homework Architects) Gerry Faltz (AEDC) Chris Petron (Barlis Wedlick), Roy Sloane (resident), Judith Fram (resident), Maria Estrella (Mountain Top Farm Events), Bonnie Hundt (ZBA), Job Yaabian (Mountain Top), Dashiell Yaabian (Mountain Top), Emilie Sommerhoff (Mountain Top), Art Bassin (Town of Ancram), Catherine Walker (Barlis Wedlick), Murdock Morrison, William Lutz (resident)

On October 5, 2017 the monthly meeting of the Town of Ancram Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 PM by the Acting Chair, Dennis Sigler.

The previous meeting minutes were reviewed by the Board. Bob Roche motioned to approve the minutes from August 3rd, 2017. The motion was seconded by Terry Boyles. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Will be addressed following public hearings

Conflicts Check: The Chair, Dennis Sigler, asked the board members if there were any matters on the agenda, which would require the members to abstain, there were none.

Agenda Items:

Old Business:

Four Partners, 169 Crest Lane, Ancramdale, NY

Dennis Wedlick presented the Planning Board with new maps the maps show the modification of the proposal from 4 lots to 3 lots, include the PERC tests, and a notation that the wells will be cut and capped as per the recommendation of the ZBA. The curb cuts were approved by the County Highway Department so they cannot be moved as per the Zoning Board of Appeals recommendation from their public hearing on the variance.

James Stickle motioned to open the public hearing on the Four Partners' Subdivision Application. The motion was seconded by Erin Robertson. Motion carried.

Roy Sloane, Resident

Roy Sloane read from a prepared statement, which is attached as **Exhibit A**. He was concerned that the subdivision would impact Ancramdale's ability to obtain the Historic District Designation. He also referenced a *New York Time's* article, attached as **Exhibit B**, on the financial impacts of historic district designation.

Bill Lutz, Resident

Bill Lutz noted that one of the wells was not on the proposed parcels to be given to Habitat for Humanity but rather the parcel to be retained. Therefore, any conditions, imposed by the Planning Board, concerning the wells, should address both wells.

Dennis Wedlick

Noted the change from 4 lots to 3 lots in the subdivision proposal had come about as a result of the review and that there were meetings open to the public at the firehouse. Further, he noted that the materials were not within scope of subdivision review.

Judith Frances

Judith said she liked to believe here and Roy were "Good neighbors" in the past they gave land for highway garage. She asserted her and Roy were not informed about the meeting the ZBA. Further, she stated that the historic district designation was important to residents as it could increase the value of homes and would allow homeowners tax credits and other financial incentives.

Dennis Wedlick

Dennis clarified that the subdivision done by Slotts & Martucci. This has been a long process and has involved residents and input from the Ancram Historic Group. During the reviews changes were made. The building will similar to historic buildings in the area from when the area was "Ancram Lead Mines" and would not impact on Ancramdale's efforts to get historic district designation. This subdivision and the building will have the least impact while still being practical and affordable for the Habitat families. He stated the existing structure is a "public hazard." Also, the review for the historic district looks at Non-contributing vs contributing properties. Further, this fits within the goals of the comprehensive plan to preserve the agricultural community.

Roy Sloane

Roy Sloane reasserted his concern with Ancramdale's ability to receive historic designation. Further, he stated that Dennis' remarks concerning similarity to the existing structures and impact on designation were "opinion." He read an email response from William Krattinger concerning the potential impact of the project.

Art Bassin, Supervisor

Art Bassin read another email from William Krattinger, attached as **Exhibit C**, to clarify Mr. Krattinger's position and to "allay their fears" Mr. Krattinger only had minor reservations. In early 2018 Mr. Krattinger would work on the application then it would be passed on the state.

Terry Boyles motioned to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by James Stickle. Motion carried.

James Stickle motioned to classify the subdivision as a minor subdivision. The motion was seconded by Terry Boyles. Motion carried.

Bob Roche motioned to make a Negative Declaration. The motion was seconded by James Stickle. Motion carried.

James Stickle motioned to approve the application with the condition: "The existing well(s) are to be abandoned, cut, filled in, and capped in a manner consistent with any applicable regulations and/or standard procedures for abandoning wells so as to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Town of Ancram residents." Terry Boyles seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Mountaintop Farm

The applicant, Maria Luisa Jaidi, sought a modification of the Special Use Permit condition, which required, in pertinent part "All functions must end at 10:00pm and conform to the Town of Ancram Noise Ordinance 1997" which was granted by the Planning Board on 6/4/2015. The applicant demonstrated The Town of Ancram Noise Ordinance, would allow other uses to operate until 11PM. Therefore, to avoid inequitable restrictions on the business operations James Stickle motioned to modify the Special Use Permit to be consistent with the Town of Ancram Noise Ordinance and allow operation until 11PM. Terry Boyles Seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Rima Grad

Mike Hamilton, of Homework Architects, presented the Lot Line Adjustment application on behalf of Rima Grad. The proposal seeks to eliminate the lot lines to create one parcel from the three existing parcels.

Erin Robertson motioned to grant Sketch Plan Approval. The motion was seconded by Terry Boyles. Motion carried.

James Stickle motioned to classify the application as a Lot line Adjustment. The motion was seconded by Bob Roche. Motion carried.

Terry Boyles motioned to declare the Planning Board Lead Agency for Environmental Review. The motion was seconded by Bob Roche. Motion carried.

Bob Roche motioned to make a Negative Declaration. The motion was seconded by Erin Robertson. Motion carried.

James Stickle motioned to approve the Lot Line Adjustment. The motion was seconded by Erin Robertson. Motion carried.

Terry Boyles motioned to refer the application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for an Area Variance due to the required 100' buffer from a waterbody. The motion was seconded by Bob Roche. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

The Planning Board received a letter from Hugh Clark regarding suggestions for Zoning Revisions because Hugh will reconvene the ZRC. John Ingram or Colleen Lutz had a running list. John Hoffman will update it and send it to Hugh.

Terry Boyles motioned to close the meeting. The motion was seconded by James Stickle. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
John Hoffman
Secretary, Planning Board.

Exhibit A

ROY W. SLOANE
35 COUNTY ROUTE 3, ANCRAMDAL, NY 12503

**Testimony Regarding the Proposed McDonald Property Sub-Division
and the Habitat for Humanity Affordable Housing Project**

Thank you for the opportunity to present some thoughts and a few suggestions regarding the proposed McDonald Property Sub-Division and the Habitat for Humanity Affordable Housing Project.

First, let me express my support for Habitat for Humanity affordable housing. I think the proposed design is thoughtful and consistent with the other properties in the hamlet. Personally, I would prefer to see materials that accomplish the same goals of resiliency and longevity, like handboard clapboard instead of vinyl and standing seam metal instead of shingle roofing because it would be more consistent with the other adjacent homes and buildings used nearby. A standing seam metal roof would be more appropriate and would last far longer than asphalt roofing and the cement board sheathing would look better and would have the same or better long lasting advantages of vinyl siding. I think the sponsors are also to be commended for addressing this societal problem of affordability.

That said, I would like to turn to the issue that has brought me here tonight—the pending designation of Ancramdale to the National Historic Register and my concern that moving forward with the Habitat project now— involving the demolition of an existing historic structure and the introduction of two new residences constructed with non-conforming materials will endanger that important and longstanding effort.

We were initially assured by Arr that the Habitat for Humanity project would not harm the prospects or delay designation, however he graciously agreed to reach out to Bill Krutinger at NYS Parks to ask specifically if the proposed house would negatively affect the historic district designation?

Here's Bill's response:

The description below suggests the house will not be built on vacant land, but instead on the site of another existing dwelling that will be removed (McDonald House). This concerns me from the perspective that there is a limited amount of historic building stock in Ancramdale. I would certainly be concerned about how this might affect the district's integrity so far as how it all holds together—this is not a rubber stamp process as you know, but instead something that will be reviewed and scrutinized at both the state and federal level. So I view that with some level of concern.

Buildings can of course be added; it's always hoped that this will be done in a manner that is compatible with the existing historic setting/context. District designation is by no means meant to keep new construction from happening—the idea is to do it judiciously and not at the expense of actual historic resources or the overall feel of the place.

He goes on to add:

I'd like to have this well along by next spring—very hard to give precise timing as, to reiterate, I've got 13 counties of work to manage and I must spread my services equally over all these areas. Not ideal by any stretch of the imagination. But we do desire to follow thru and close this out.

I know that the town has been supportive of the effort to designate Ancramdale, but do want to make some points regarding the benefits of historic designation that you may not have considered.

1) There are real financial benefits to listing on the National Historic Register that benefit all residents of the hamlet. In addition to a Federal 20% income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic commercial, as well as a New York State Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit for rehabilitation of historic residential struc-

tures, too.

These meaningful tax benefits would be lost if without designation.

3) More significantly, Historic Designation is proven to boost property values. A study by the NYC City Council found that since 1975, houses in historic districts increased in value by 10.2 percent a year, on average, compared with 9 percent in nearby neighborhoods, and after adjusting for inflation, 5.3 percent in historic districts, compared with 4.2 percent elsewhere. Outside historic districts, newer houses tended to command higher prices than older ones, but within historic districts, older houses were always worth more (see attached NYT's article, Sept, 3, 2004)

To put this into perspective for a property owner in Ancramdale – this difference, compounded over a ten year period, would mean that \$11,560 of value would be lost on each \$100,000 of assessed valuation if historic designation was not secured. That means that a home assessed at \$217,000 would, in effect, be making a personal "donation" of roughly \$25,000 in lost value if proceeding immediately with the Habitat project should result in the loss of National Register status. This might not seem like a lot, but it might be enough to pay for some college expenses, help with property improvements or help provide a more secure retirement. And, by the way, that benefit would include the new residents of the Habitat houses too.

I am concerned that these important financial considerations were not discussed at the public meeting at the fire house or any subsequent public meetings and that's why I wanted to bring this potential loss in value and potential tax credits to the attention of the members of the planning board tonight.

My guess is that many residents may have felt differently if they had known what is at risk if historic designation should be lost as a result of not considering all the implications and unintended consequences of the Habitat project. It is one thing to support affordable housing, but all should be aware that they could unintentionally making a sizable donation – roughly 10% of total value of their homes over ten years– in addition to giving up potential tax credits to make this new housing possible right now without taking the steps necessary to secure designation to the National Historic Register for designation. I sincerely doubt that any members of the public present would have agreed to personally "donate" \$10,000 or more over the next ten years to make these two homes a reality. That is a big lift for most I think and in my opinion, completely unnecessary.

I strongly feel that it is in the interest of town, the hamlet and all its residents that BOTH goals be accomplished and I see no compelling reason why they can not. There is no need to take any risk when a few simple steps could result in a Win/Win for all.

Here are my suggestions:

- 1) The Planning Board should make a motion to support historic designation for Ancramdale and to commit to taking every step needed to insure that chances for historic designation not be harmed, compromised or delayed by the Habitat project. Ancramdale is a remarkably intact, historically significant hamlet that is very deserving of being placed on the National Register.
- 2) Arrange a meeting with Bill Krattinger to do proper due diligence. Will the Habit for Humanity project as currently envisioned present any issues that would result in Ancramdale not being designated? I believe that it is essential and incumbent upon the board to make this critical determination before proceeding with any vote.
- 3) My hope is that would be no problem given the thoughtful, vernacular design proposed. However, if any issues do emerge, could these be mitigated by design or other material changes?
- 4) If, after discussion with Bill, any of the issues should turn out to be insuperable, I think the Planning Board should respectfully ask the Four Partners to temporarily withdraw their application or to simply table the vote until after designation. Bill has suggested that this could happen in the Spring of 2018, so waiting would have no material impact on the Habitat project other than a brief delay.

I believe that these steps would be in the interest of the Four Partners, all the residents of Ancramdale including the new owners of the Habitat houses. My sense is that the Four Partners are motivated entirely by a sense of civic spirit and duty and would never knowingly wish to harm their neighbor's future property values or reduce access to any possible governmental programs that could help their neighbors maintain their properties. Historic Designation is a benefit to all residents whereas the benefit of the Habitat affordable housing would be primarily be for the two new families. I believe that is the job of Planning Board to balance these two important civic goals and going the extra mile to make sure that both can be achieved— especially as there is no additional cost or significant downside. Finally, and perhaps more than the financial benefits I have discussed, Historic Designation reinforces a number of important civic values: community cohesion, pride and historical consciousness. Many people feel that community-building is the single most important benefit of historic designation. I urge the members of the members of the Planning Board to take any and all steps needed to insure that Ancramdale is placed on the National Historic Register before proceeding to approve anything on this project today.

Thank you,
Roy W. Sloane



N.Y. / REGION

Residential Real Estate; Historic Districts Found to Lift Values

By JOSH BARBANEL SEPT. 26, 2003

In historic districts across New York City, from Fort Greene in Brooklyn to Mount Morris Park in Harlem, homeowners are severely restricted in how much they can redevelop or alter their properties, so that the character of their areas will be preserved.

Those restrictions, while often called a burden on homeowners, appear to have paid off for them, according to a new study. The study, by the New York City Independent Budget Office, offers some limited statistical support for the argument that home values are enhanced by historic-district designation.

The study found that despite the limitations on property rights and the higher cost of meeting historic-designation requirements, the sale prices of one-, two- and three-family homes, per square foot, within historic districts were higher than in nearby neighborhoods in every year studied since 1975. And on average over the entire period, prices of homes in historic districts increased in value slightly faster.

These findings remained even after taking into account differences in house and yard sizes, distances from the subway, age of homes and the relative affluence of neighborhoods. Over all, the study found, the typical house, which sold for \$38,000 in 1975, sold in 2002 for \$397,000 outside a historic district and \$458,000 in one.

But the study also reported that during several intervals -- including the last few years -- houses outside historic districts increased in value at the same rate or slightly faster, or that they decreased more slowly than those in the districts.

While the study did not prove that historic designation caused the increase in values, its findings suggested that at least in the neighborhoods studied, the designation did not make things worse. "It is not likely that property owners are adversely affected" by historic-district designations, the report concluded. They "may actually benefit from being included in a historic district," the report said.

The study was begun in the late 1990's at the request of two City Council members, Kenneth K. Fisher of Brooklyn and Andrew S. Eristoff of Manhattan. Both have since left the Council. Mr. Fisher recalled this week that the Landmarks Preservation Commission was looking at that time to expand the number of historic districts in the city, and that some homeowners were worried that preservation would hurt their home resale values.

Alan Treffeisen, who wrote the report on the recent study, said that studies around the country have typically found that historic-district designations have had a "small but positive" effect on home resale values. Most of the studies, he noted, have been small and limited. The New York study, in contrast, analyzed 31,093 property sales, including 3,948 in historic districts from 1975 to 2002 in six Brooklyn community boards with historic districts.

It found that since 1975, houses in historic districts increased in value by 10.2 percent a year, on average, compared with 9 percent in nearby neighborhoods, or after adjusting for inflation, 5.3 percent in historic districts,

compared with 4.2 percent elsewhere. Outside historic districts, newer houses tended to command higher prices than older ones, while within historic districts older houses were worth more.

"There are individual homeowners who believe they will suffer an economic loss when a historic district is created," said Andrew Berman, executive director of the Greenwich Village Society for Historical Preservation. "This goes a long way to debunking that theory."

But Michael Slattery, a senior vice president at the Real Estate Board, an industry group, said the study had limited relevance to much of the New York real estate market, where properties are often valued by their development potential and designation as a historic district can reduce this potential.

In Fort Greene and Park Slope, Brooklyn, the relationship between historic-district status and house prices has changed over time, along with the neighborhoods, according to brokers and longtime residents. In the early years, the status was vital in building credibility and attracting people willing to invest money and time to restore vacant and damaged buildings.

Later, as prices rose within historic districts, surrounding areas were also in demand, and the boundaries blurred in buyers' minds. In Park Slope, Marc Garstein, president of Warren Lewis Real Estate, said that houses in the historic district cost more than those nearby, but that those in some of the adjoining neighborhoods are rising faster. Today, he said, buyers pay more attention to school district lines than historic district lines.

In Fort Greene, Howard Pitsch, who is chairman of the Fort Greene Association and has been restoring a 150-year-old frame house for the last two decades, tirelessly gives tours of the neighborhood, pressing for a major expansion of the historic district to encompass streets that he said are architecturally indistinguishable from many streets inside the current district. Adding to the urgency is the fact that just outside the boundary of the district, an

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Residential Real Estate: Historic Districts Found to Lift Values - The New York Times

11-story condo and medical office building, approved under the current zoning, is now rising on a long-vacant corner lot. He said that development could not have been built had the site been within the boundaries of a historic district.

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Exhibit C

Fwd: Ancramdale

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Fwd: Ancramdale

From: Arthur Bassin

Sent: Thu, Oct 5, 2017 at 8:41 am

To: planningboard, dencinjo@fairpoint.net, jlh5@njtc.edu

Here is the email from Bill Krattinger of the NYS Historic Preservation Office I read tonight in case you need it for the minutes.

From: 'Krattinger, William (PARKS)' <William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov>
Date: October 5, 2017 at 1:44:11 PM EDT
To: 'abassin@aol.com' <ABASSIN@AOL.COM>
Subject: RE: Ancramdale

I think you can allay their fears by indicating that we've discussed the issue and that while I may have minor reservations I am continuing to work on the district nomination and that this will not dissuade me from completing the documentation and moving along the road to designation: finish the documentation, public meeting in first part of 2018, then on to the State Review Board.

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