

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD (HPAB) ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Members of HPAB for 2016 were Kinney Clark, Bill King, Maureen McDougall, Pria McNeil (student member), Ron Meeks, Teresa Montani, Loretta Smith, and Maureen Strazdon (chair). Associate members were Vic Bary, Michael Mason, Julie Murphy, Nancy Price, and Stephen Price. Carolyn Youngs, a long-time, valued member of the Board, has moved out of the area and so resigned in August. Shirley Gazsi was an Associate member from January to July. Patrick Giblin served as Township Committee Liaison.

HPAB met every month, except for September, usually on the fourth Thursday at the Community Center.

At the January meeting the Board decided that an inventory of Cranford's historical resources for use by the Zoning and Planning Boards would be the main priority for HPAB in 2016. Continuing to market the "Cranford's History and Architecture – A Journey Through Time" DVD, and working on communications with the Township Committee and the public to raise interest and knowledge of Cranford's character would also be focuses.

The most important of HPAB's priorities was to compile an Inventory of Historical Resources in Cranford, the survey being one of the charges to HPAB in the Township Code. HPAB member Kinney Clark wrote a 980-page report with maps and supporting materials detailing the significant houses, buildings, districts, monuments, etc. throughout town as identified in various surveys done by various organizations. The Inventory follows the US Department of Interior guidelines, including background on the history and development of Cranford as well as the inventory. Highlights of the Inventory were presented to the Township Committee on October 24, and will be integrated into the Master Plan for use by the Zoning and Planning Boards. Copies are being distributed to Township officials and committees, and made available to the public. HPAB will work on Phase II of the report in 2017, and will request funds from the Township for a consultant to help with the compilation.

Sales of the "Cranford's History and Architecture – A Journey Through Time" DVD which was completed in December, 2015 were brisk. Over 200 copies have been sold and the project has broken even financially. Copies of the DVD were donated to the Library and sent to various NJ Departments and to FEMA as part of their funding agreement. Almost 100 people attended a free showing of the "History" at the Community Center on May 9. The DVD is available in several stores in downtown Cranford and online on the HPAB website, preservecranford.com, using PayPal.

To raise money for various activities, in addition to the sales of the DVDs, HPAB continues to offer a map of Cranford that is color-coded with the years houses were built. The map continues to be popular and is available downtown and on the HPAB website. A report of HPAB's finances and fundraising was sent to the Township.

In June a representative of the Army Corps of Engineers presented information on the Rahway River Flood Risk Management Project and asked for HPAB's input, and the Inventory document was sent to the Corps. HPAB also commented on a letter from the State on flooding, and will continue to provide support as requested. HPAB also met with a representative of a firm working with the state of NJ about flood elevation guidelines.

On November 22 HPAB attended a Township Committee presentation sponsored by the DMC on Certified Local Governments. HPAB will work to provide support to get Cranford certified.

On November 2, HPAB was honored by the Chamber of Commerce with their Pride in Cranford Award. HPAB was cited for "commitment to safeguarding treasures of the past for the benefit of future generations", particularly in saving the Flint Faience fireplace from the Roosevelt School, producing the "History" DVD, sponsoring an Ordinance to establish a procedure to designate historic sites and districts, and designating the Crane-Phillips House and the Droescher's Mill as Cranford Historical Sites.

To further awareness of preservation with the citizens of Cranford, information about Cranford history and HPAB activities were posted on the HPAB website and on HPAB's Facebook page (which had 594 likes as of the end of the year). Member Vic Bary gave a very-well attended talk on "Researching the History of Your Home" at the Community Center on April 6. Articles about HPAB activities and the Town's history appeared in the *Suburban News*, *Westfield Leader*, *TAPIntoCranford.com*, *Cranford.Patch.com*, *nj.com*, and *Cranford Monthly*.

To further awareness of preservation and support the Township Committee, members of HPAB attended several Township Committee Workshop meetings and provided comment on various topics, especially the Master Plan and the demolition of the Trolley Building. HPAB reviews all variances submitted to the Zoning Board and comments on the historic impact of the project.

HPAB continues to coordinate with the Historical Society on our related missions. Articles written by HPAB members appear in "The Mill Wheel", the Society's newsletter. The two organizations jointly presented the Residential Preservation Award to Jim and Julie Murphy and the Commercial Award to Just-4-Pooches in March.