

2018 HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD (HPAB) ANNUAL REPORT

Members: Victor Bary, Anna Bauer (as of June), Kinney Clark, Thomas Connolly, William King, Linda Livelli (as of March), Michael Mason, Maureen McDougall, Pria McNeil (until June), Ronald Meeks, Teresa Montani, Julie Murphy, Nancy Price, Stephen Price, Loretta Smith, Maureen Strazdon (Chair). Township Committee liaison Jean-Albert Maisonneuve (until June), and Mary O'Connor (as of June).

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

At the first 2018 meeting, the Board decided on priorities for the year. They were: designating Sunny Acres as a Historic District, filing for NJ HPO Certificates of Eligibility, working on the Historic Element for the Cranford Master Plan, and aiding the DMC in getting Cranford designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG). Furthering public awareness of historic preservation by continuing to offer plaques for significant buildings and publicizing the inventory of Cranford's historical resources were also included, as was continuing to provide advice to the Township on historic preservation.

In August the Township adopted an ordinance designating Sunny Acres as Cranford's First Historic District. The designation recognizes Sunny Acres as the first development entirely planned and executed by Sears Roebuck, celebrates its architectural significance, its sense of community, and its contribution to the economic and social development of Cranford. Following the guidelines in the HPAB ordinance, HPAB worked with member Loretta Smith and the Sunny Acres Civic and Improvement Association to hold a public hearing, send letters and FAQs to residents, present to the Planning Board, and prepare the proposal that was submitted to the Township Committee. Activities around the designation included a presentation by member Vic Bary in January on Sunny Acres' history, the joint awarding with the Cranford Historical Society of the Annual Preservation Award in April, and a library exhibit in August. HPAB is working on design guidelines that will assist Sunny Acres residents in making appropriate changes to their houses, though there are no restrictions on what can be done to a house in the District.

HPAB applications resulted in a Certification of Eligibility from the NJ State Historic Preservation Office for the Masonic Building on the corner of Alden St and North Union Ave in April, and one for Sunny Acres which was received in November. An application for the Sperry Observatory is in progress. A Certification of Eligibility is a formal finding that a property or area is eligible to be designated as historic by the State and verifies its historical significance.

One of HPAB's charges is to act as an advisor to the Township, and so HPAB has begun to draft a revision of the Historic Element of the Cranford Master Plan. The *Phase I Cranford Historic Resources Survey: Review of Existing Documentation, Baseline Inventory, and Survey Updates*, completed by HPAB member Kinney Clark in 2016, will be used as a basis for the Element. A webmap/storymap that allows drill-downs and more information on each resource was added to the electronic version of the *Resources Survey* and is available on HPAB's website, PreserveCranford.com, and a link to the report is now also on the Cranford website on the HPAB page. Further, HPAB is supporting the DMC in getting Cranford designated a Certified Local Government (CLG). HPAB member Tom Connolly, is also a member of the DMC and has represented HPAB. In 2019 HPAB will be working with the DMC on developing design guidelines.

To further support the Township Committee, HPAB commented on the historic impact of variance requests and made a statement at the Zoning Board meeting in June on the 106 Eastman Street variance request. HPAB sent comments on the North Avenue Redevelopment Plan to the Township Committee in January and posted them on Facebook. HPAB also sent information on Droschers Dam to the Town engineer and the Township Committee and commented to Hunter Consulting on desilting near Droscher and Hansel Dams. HPAB commented on a cell tower at Springfield Ave and Princeton Rd to Rescom in February, and the cell tower at UCC to Trileaf Consulting, and both comments were forwarded to the Township Committee. HPAB sent Annual and Financial reports to the Township Committee in February, and members attended Township Committee Workshop Meetings throughout the year.

In 2017 HPAB designed and produced a green oval bronze plaque stating "This Historically Significant Building Contributes to the Character of Cranford". Plaques were offered to 54 owners of buildings identified in HPAB's *Resources Survey*. Thus far 22 plaques have been purchased for public and private buildings. A plaque has been designed for all houses in Sunny Acres, identifying them as significant, and they will be offered in 2019.

HPAB continues to sell maps of Cranford that are color-coded with the years houses were built, and copies of the *Cranford's History and Architecture – A Journey Through Time* DVD which was completed by member Bill King in 2015. Maps and DVDs are available on the HPAB website and at the Artist Framer. The maps and the DVD help raise awareness of preservation and the monies raised fund HPAB projects.

To help communicate HPAB's mission, information about Cranford history and HPAB activities were posted on the HPAB website and on HPAB's Facebook page which started the year with 750 likes, and ended with 806 likes. Articles about HPAB activities and positions appeared in *Cranford Monthly*, *Westfield Leader*, *Suburban News*, *TapIntoCranford*, and on Cranford Radio. HPAB presented a copy of the Cranford architecture and history DVD to each Cranford school library in April. Also in April, at the request of the First Presbyterian Church, HPAB provided a letter in support of a grant application by the church. HPAB created a booklet highlighting Cranford's historic sites that was used in the Paint Out in September. The first Character of Cranford article was posted on Facebook by Linda Livelli in October, and there are plans to continue the series next year. Maureen Strazdon gave a presentation to the College Women's Club of Cranford in November on "Know Thy Neighbor(hoods)".