

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
OF THE VILLAGE OF THOMASTON
January 4 , 2022**

The Landmarks Preservation Commission met on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 via videoconference at 7:30 p.m. In accordance with applicable law, the meeting was recorded, and the recording and a transcription are to be posted on the Village website.

Present: Donald Stern, Chair, Leila Mattson, Deputy Chair, Miriam Chatinover, Gary Noren, Karen Siegel; Village Administrator Denise M. Knowland; Village Attorney A. Thomas Levin.

Absent: None

Chairman Stern opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Stern read the following statement:

“Due to public health and safety concerns related to COVID-19, and pursuant to New York State law, this meeting of the Landmarks Preservation is not being held in person. The meeting will be recorded and a transcription will be provided at a later date, and the recording and transcription will be placed on the Village website and in the Village records.”

Presentation from Expert retained by the Commission

Maria A. Audin, MA and William Jason Flatt, MA PE, on behalf of Archeology & Historic Resources Services, LLC (AHRS), the consultant previously retained by the Commission, presented a summary of their report, a copy of which report had been posted on the Village website prior to the meeting.

Presentations from Experts not retained by the Commission

The following experts solicited by members of the public each made a presentation, using materials that had been posted to the Village website shortly before the meeting.

Ann Walker, an architectural historian, preservationist and author, 797 Valley Road, New Canaan, CT 06840, who had been retained by several residents of the Village and the surrounding community

Nancy Solomon of Long Island Traditions, 382 Main Street, Port Washington, NY 11050 and former preservation consultant for the Village of Great Neck Plaza.

Julie Georgopoulos, RA – resident of the Village of Thomaston

Simeon Bankoff, - Preservation Activist – consultant retained by residents of Great Neck and residents of the Village.

Andrew Cronson – resident of Manhasset who had undertaken historical and architectural research (Mr. Cronson actually made his presentation during the Public Comment period later in the meeting, at the invitation of Chair Stern).

Comments from Owner’s Representative

Stephen Limmer, Esq. of McLaughlin & Stern, LLP, 1122 Franklin Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530 spoke on behalf of the owner of 124 S. Middle Neck Road, Thomaston, NY 11021. Mr. Limmer requested that the decision of the Commission be adjourned 120 days to allow the property owner time to respond to the comments stated at this meeting and to determine the economic impact of landmarking the subject property. (Chairman Stern indicated that he was no relation of the “Stern” in Mr. Limmer’s firm and had no connection with that firm).

Public Comment on the request to designate 124 S. Middle Neck Road as a landmark

Mr. Stern made some general remarks, summarized as follows. He repeated his understanding, also expressed during the November 30 meeting, and based on advice from legal counsel, that the Commission had two questions to decide: (a) whether the subject building fits within the definition of “Landmark” in the Village Code, and (b) if so, whether the Commission should use its authority to designate the building as a Landmark subject to the provisions of the Village Code. He noted that the Village Code stated that the Commission “may” designate a building as Landmark if the Commission finds that it fits within the definition of “Landmark” in the Village Code, but is not required to do so, and he discussed some factors that could be relevant to the decision to “designate.” He invited public comment on all factors that could be relevant to the decision to “designate.”

Mr. Stern noted the following: (i) a large number of emails and other correspondence received by the Village on the subject of landmarking this building have previously been posted on the Village website, along with a table identifying each such email or other communication, (ii) the Commission had received a petition in support of landmarking, signed electronically by more than 200 residents of the greater Thomaston area (including, for example, residents of Great Neck Plaza), and Mr. Stern read the text of the petition, and (iii) the Commission had received a request from Lea Caplan, a Village resident, to inform the Commission of her concern that the decision to landmark could potentially lead to owner neglect and another empty storefront in town or a dilapidated building.

Chairman Stern then invited comments from the public.

The following members of the public spoke in favor of landmark designation (names are in order of speaking; if a name appears more than once, it means that the named person spoke more than once):

Ronald Brinn, Nina Gordon, Aaron Halpern, Alka Jain, Andrew Cronson, Carol Frank, Dr. Robert Martin, Lynn Zysman, Jeffrey Schwartz, Aaron Egelman, Wenjie Chen, Nicole Nahmias, Steve Zhang, Weibin Jiang; Nancy Sherman, Wendy Halpern, April, Jay Chagrin, Donna, Mami Leifert, Aaron Halpern, George Abrahams; Louise, Anish Jain, Helen Gavaris, Irwin Levy, Nina Gordon, Wendy Halpern, Andrew Cronson, Ellen Mones, Nancy Sherman, Ronald Brinn, Alka Jain, and Ronald Brinn.

The following members of the public spoke in opposition of landmark designation:

Mr. Stephen Limmer on behalf of the owner of the subject property.

The public comment period was concluded at 10:03 p.m.

Chairman Stern announced that the Commission will make its determination within 60 days in accordance with the Village Code. A report containing this determination will be prepared and presented at the next public meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the date of which is yet to be determined (notice of such future meeting will be given in accordance with applicable requirements).

Adjournment

At 10:05 p.m., there being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Donald Stern, seconded by Gary Noren and approved.

The vote on this resolution was:	Donald Stern:	Aye	Leila Mattson:	Aye
	Gary Noren:	Aye	Karen Siegel:	Aye
	Miriam Chatinover:	No vote (audio not working)		

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Knowland
Village Administrator