

**BOROUGH OF FAIR HAVEN**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
748 River Road, Fair Haven, NJ 07704

**Regular Meeting Minutes -November 30, 2021 – 7:00 pm**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mr. Pavluk, Commission Chair, with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act statement (below).

**Roll Call**

Present: Art Pavluk, Hillary Mullen, Joseph Schluter, Michelle Mandia, Steven Smith, and Carrie Nitka

Absent: Jay Anderson, Patricia Drummond

Also in attendance: Councilwoman Koch, Council Liaison; and from the Facilities Committee – Theresa Casagrande, Business Administrator; Councilman Chris Rodriguez; Councilman Michael McCue; Andy Trocchia; Daniel Busch; Robert Gasperini; Rich Gardella, Borough Engineer; Mayor Josh Halpern; Laura Berwind, Borough Architect of the Goldstein Partnership

Mr. Pavluk introduced the agenda item of: Discussion and Recap of Bicentennial Hall Renovations.

Ms. Casagrande explained that because of the renovations associated with the Police building, there will no longer be community meeting space at the Police building. Meeting space is needed for active and passive recreation. The Facilities Committee has been looking at available spaces and will be working with the schools for active recreation. Bicentennial Hall is under consideration as a passive meeting space which would potentially include the Governing Body, Planning Board, Zoning Board, and other municipal committees/commissions. To allow for these meetings at Bicentennial Hall, ADA changes are needed including parking and the entrance to the building. Based on this need, grants were applied for through a Community Development and Block Grant from Monmouth County, which is federally funded. Ms. Berswind is the architect for this project. Grant funds of \$184,000 were approved. The State's historic organization is involved because of the historic nature of the building and grant requirements.

Ms. Berswind presented the plans that were submitted for the grant and explained what was approved. She showed a new ramp and entrance where the public will enter on the side of the building. The vestibule will remain. The historic dais and choir loft will remain where they are, and it is planned there will be an interpretive statement with the history of the building. A raised dais will be placed on the opposite side of the room, raised 6-8 inches, to maximize seating. Based on the floor plan, a maximum of 100 people will be able to attend a meeting. The door on the opposite side will be removed. A replacement emergency exit will be installed. The front of the building will remain the same.

Ms. Berswind showed a three-D modeling of the building.

Mr. Pavluk expressed concern over the placement of the dais and the change to the entrance. He stated that the current configuration of Bicentennial Hall does not have the general support of the Historic Preservation Commission. He asked about consideration of a temporary dais on the South side of the building. He also asked about the flexibility of the current design given the approval of the grant.

Ms. Berswind then reviewed the evolution of the plans and ensuring ADA compliance. She showed how the measurements in the confined space will not allow for ADA compliance and forced the re-orientation of the meeting space.

Mr. Pavluk asked about the East/West orientation of the dais.

Ms. Berswind showed diagrams with limited seating associated in an East/West orientation. This would allow for approximately 45 seats.

Mr. Pavluk asked about the purpose of the vestibule. Ms. Berswind explained the purpose of the vestibule.

Ms. Casagrande spoke of the entrance and the standard for one public entrance for all people. She spoke to meeting set up with temporary tables. There are many meetings each week and having multiple setups should be considered.

Mr. Pavluk asked about a semipermanent structure for the dais. Ms. Berswind said that the proposed computer access flooring is semi-permanent and can be disassembled.

Mr. Pavluk asked about eliminating equipment that is part of the semipermanent set up and not raising the floor. Ms. Berswind said that the wiring will be in the floor.

Mr. Pavluk asked about other design attempts.

Ms. Casagrande referenced how the Council Chambers are currently configured. She mentioned that a technology consultant has not been engaged for the design.

Ms. Berswind said that the progress of work has changed as the project has evolved. The proposed dais will seat 8 people. They came to the current option because of preserving the space of the nave and choir loft.

Mr. Pavluk asked if resubmission of the application would be necessary to change the current plan.

Ms. Berswind said that the application would need to be resubmitted.

Mr. Schluter stated that he thought a semi-permanent structure was to be placed in front of the choir loft, as of the June 2021 meeting. He does not like the proposed plan. He feels the dais should not be in front of the front doors of Bicentennial Hall. His concern is the input at the June meeting by the Historic Preservation Commission was disregarded.

Ms. Casagrande re-iterated that the access to the building was for all people.

Mr. Pavluk expressed concern that additional designs were not considered.

Ms. Casagrande said that State historic organization was concerned about protecting the building – doors, choir loft and altar.

Mr. Pavluk asked about a less rounded dais.

Ms. Mandia asked about eliminating the vestibule.

Ms. Berswind said that wouldn't improve the measurements.

Mr. Gardella spoke of the East/West configuration as a change of flow. He suggested that this would be non-traditional and feels the front table configuration will be inadequate.

Mr. Pavluk asked about not having a fixed dais and if the room could be reconfigured to its initial form.

Ms. Casagrande expressed concern about setup and worry about protecting equipment.

Ms. Mandia spoke of conference center setups and the need to protect electronics. She asked what meetings would take place at Bicentennial Hall.

Ms. Casagrande said it would be Borough meetings and maybe the Senior group.

Mr. Gardella also stated that wear and tear in the building will be increased by setting up and breaking down tables. He expressed concern about a temporary set-up.

Mr. Pavluk again re-iterated that he'd prefer a dais structure that can be removed.

Ms. Mandia asked if the dais would have wood panels to match what is there.

Ms. Berswind said that the wood panels would match the mahogany color that is in the building.

Mr. Pavluk asked if the dais could be semi-permanent in the current location.

Ms. Berswind said that the current plan is semi-permanent and can be removed to get the building back to its original form.

Councilman Rodriguez stated that it was clear that the dais is not intended to be moved.

Mr. Gasperini asked about temporary risers used at concerts. He wants to preserve the building and get the most use of the building. He hopes there is a middle ground.

Ms. Berswind confirmed it is the same type of flooring planned.

Mr. Pavluk asked about cables, microphones and what will be contained in the elevation of the dais.

Ms. Berswind reminded that raising the speakers on the dais 6-8 inches is needed for projection of the speakers to the public.

Councilman Rodriguez stated that when he attended an event with 100 people at Bicentennial Hall, and it was possible to hear the speakers.

Mr. Schluter suggested raised seats.

Ms. Berswind said that a raised seat wouldn't meet ADA requirements.

Mr. Pavluk asked about next steps and asked for copies of the plan for the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Ms. Casagrande explained that deadlines were tight, and construction of the building must be complete within a year of the approved construction plans for the grant.

Mr. Pavluk asked if the Historic Preservation Commission did not approve the plan, will the Borough then go back to revise the plans with resubmission being required.

Ms. Casagrande confirmed this was the case.

Mr. Pavluk again asked for the plans that were presented and thanked everyone that attended the meeting.

The meeting was opened to the public.

Tracy Cole, 123 Grange Avenue, had a few concerns. She asked about the technology plan and the hybrid nature of Borough meetings.

Ms. Berswind said that construction drawings have not been completed, and audio/video plans with a wireless intent is planned. Acoustic sound panels, speakers and cameras will need to be designed.

Ms. Cole suggested that the acoustics are not great in the building.

Ms. Berswind spoke of panels dressed in cloth that would match the wall color.

Ms. Casagrande stated that Ms. Berger, who is on the Facilities Committee, has expertise in this area.

Ms. Cole thinks that the long-term use of the building needs to be considered and that flexibility of use is key. She does not like the permanent dais. She prefers the design of the space stay nimble for multiple uses.

Susan O'Brien was brought into the meeting. She asked why the dais is curved and agrees with Ms. Mandia that a straight dais seems more practical. She also was of the impression that the dais would be on the long wall. She also expressed concern that the Historic Preservation Commission was not brought in at the beginning of the project. She agrees with Mr. Pavluk about using the basement for equipment and expressed concern over not considering wireless connections. Lastly, she thinks the dais should be larger to accommodate the Planning Board which has nine members and two alternates. She is not in favor of this project. Ms. O'Brien also asked about the change in meeting date for the next Historic Preservation Agreement.

Mr. Pavluk confirmed the next meeting date is December 7, 2021.

Ms. Cole was brought back into the meeting. She asked about lifts to elevate the speakers.

Ms. Berswind said that you can't require that a person shift to a different chair. She said a lift would be an extensive installation.

Ms. Cole mentioned that the current dais is not ADA compliant.

Ms. Berswind stated that any new construction must be ADA compliant.

Ms. Casagrande mentioned that government meetings could stay in the current Council Chambers.

Ms. Cole mentioned parking and asked if bicycle parking was included as part of the project.

Mr. Gardella stated that this could be incorporated.

Mr. Pavluk opened the meeting for comments.

Councilman Rodriguez asked to comment. He thinks that a less permanent dais is most appropriate and doesn't believe the dais needs to be raised. He feels there is more work to be done on the design of the project.

Mr. Pavluk made a motion to adjourn that was carried by voice vote at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Papa  
Historical Preservation Commission  
Secretary

### **Public Announcement of Compliance**

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT, PUBLIC MEETINGS MAY BE HELD IN PERSON OR BY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT TO INCLUDE STREAMING SERVICES AND OTHER ONLINE MEETING PLATFORMS (NJSA 10:4-8(b)).

THIS MEETING IS BEING PRESENTED THROUGH THE ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM AND BEING BROADCAST FROM BOROUGH HALL, 748 RIVER ROAD, FAIR HAVEN, NJ. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR THIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING OF NOVEMBER 30, 2021 IS AVAILABLE BY CALL IN PHONE NUMBER OR THROUGH WEB CONFERENCE (ZOOM). MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WILL BE ON MUTE UNTIL THE PORTION FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS, WHICH WILL BE ANNOUNCED. AT THAT TIME THE PUBLIC HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO QUESTION/COMMENT BY PHONE OR THROUGH ZOOM BY THE "RAISE HAND" BUTTON AND WILL BE CALLED ON AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME.

THIS MEETING WAS PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 23, 2021 AND INCLUDED IN A SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS SENT TO THE ASBURY PARK PRESS, THE TWO RIVER TIMES, THE HUB AND THE STAR LEDGER ON JANUARY 28, 2021, POSTED ON THE BOROUGH WEBSITE, THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND HAS REMAINED CONTINUOUSLY POSTED AS REQUIRED UNDER THE STATUTE.

ON NOVEMBER 19, 2021, NOTICE OF A MEETING DATE CHANGE FROM NOVEMBER 23, 2021 TO NOVEMBER 30, 2021 WAS SENT TO THE ASBURY PARK PRESS AND TWO RIVER TIMES, POSTED ON THE BOROUGH WEBSITE AND THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND INCLUDED IN CONSTANT CONTACT AND HAS REMAINED POSTED AS REQUIRED UNDER THE STATUTE.

WITH ADEQUATE NOTICE HAVING BEEN GIVEN, THE SECRETARY IS DIRECTED TO INCLUDE THIS STATEMENT IN THE MINUTES OF THIS MEETING.