

**BOROUGH OF MENDHAM  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 20, 2026  
REGULAR MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE:**

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 7:30 PM and the open public meetings statement was read into the record.

**OATHS OF OFFICE:**

Nancy Rodrigues– Regular Class C Member expiring 12/31/29

**ATTENDANCE:**

Mr. Encin – Present

Mr. Van Arsdale – Present

Mr. Tosso – Present

Ms. Cass - Alternate #1: – Absent

Mr. Mullany – Present

Ms. Romano - Alternate #2: - Present

Ms. Rodrigues – Present

**MINUTES:**

Mr. Van Arsdale asked for comments on the minutes of the regular meeting of January 21, 2026. Mr. Mullany made a motion to approve the minutes as written, and Mr. Tosso seconded.

**Roll Call:**

In favor: Mr. Encin, Mr. Tosso, Mr. Mullany, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Romano

Opposed: None

Abstention: Ms. Rodrigues

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Van Arsdale opened the meeting to the public for questions and comments on items not included on the agenda.

Ms. Wragg- 425 Bernardsville Rd. and Ms. Ju, members of the community group Friends of Mendham, addressed the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) regarding the historic significance of the old mother house, also known as Battlefront Convent. They presented research highlighting the building's architectural and cultural importance, referring to a 2010 FCC Section 106 review that deemed it eligible for listing under Criterion C. They emphasized the need for the HPC to consider the property's historical value in future planning decisions and requested the commission's review and guidance to secure official recognition for the mother house.

Mr. Gorman – 415 Bernardsville Rd. shared two historical anecdotes. The first involved sisters in the 1920s who, while searching for property, encountered a man on a white horse who directed them to continue down the road. After he disappeared, they believed it was St. Joseph. The second story revealed that the Sisters of Christian Charity had trained the current pope, as discovered in photo archives by the Minim sisters. These stories, while not architectural, are considered historically significant.

There being no further comments, the public session was closed.

## **APPLICATIONS:**

### **04-26 MASH**

**1 Heritage Manor Dr.**

**Block 801 Lot 25**

**Present: Eagle Scout Mulcahy – Applicant**

**Mr. D’Urso - Applicant**

Eagle Scout Mulcahy presented his Eagle Project to create a new sign for Mendham Area Senior Housing. The proposed sign will replace the old one, featuring safety improvements, vibrant colors, and a new layout. The sign will be constructed by a Sign Company, with dimensions of 4’ vertical and 3’ horizontal. The project includes removing weeds and replacing them with landscaping. Concerns were raised about the font consistency and the need for a phone number. The final design will feature a white border with blue lettering. Mr. D’Urso noted that this project aims to enhance visibility and safety.

### **Action Items**

- Coordinate with the professional sign maker and Scout to update the Mendham Area Senior Housing sign design so that it has a white border/frame and blue lettering, consistent with the cardiology sign example, as approved by the planning board.
- Implement the agreed safety improvements at the Mendham Area Senior Housing driveway entrance by removing approximately six feet of bushes to provide better clear sight lines for pedestrians and vehicles.

### **Outline**

#### **Introduction and Project Overview**

- Mr. D’Urso introduces himself as the President of the Board of Trustees of MASH and Eagle Scout Mulcahy, who is working on his Eagle Project.
- Eagle Scout Mulcahy explains his project: fixing the old sign at the Mendham Area Senior Housing with a new acrylic sign featuring safety improvements.
- The new sign will be closer to Main Street, visible from a greater distance, and will have vibrant colors and cut-out letters.
- The existing brush and weeds around the current sign will be removed and replaced with landscape.

#### **Design Details and Font Discussion**

- Mr. D’Urso and Mr. Mullany discuss the design, including the size of the sign and the use of a cardiology sign as inspiration.
- Mr. Mullany raises concerns about the different fonts used in the application and the need for consistency.
- Mr. D’Urso explains that a professional sign maker, Mr. Brooks, will assist the scout, and all letters will be dimensional with a three-dimensional aspect.
- Mr. Mullany suggests including a phone number on the sign, and Mr. D’Urso agrees, noting the importance for people contacting the organization.

#### **Community Feedback and Suggestions**

- Ms. Romano raises concerns about the acronym "MASH" and suggests including periods after the letters to avoid confusion.
- Mr. Mullany suggests organizing the sign differently to make it easier to read and include contact information.
- Tom Brooks introduces the Sears and Roebuck font used in National Park signage and discusses the different font sizes available.
- Mr. D'Urso explains the limitations of the scouts' project and the need to use a font that can be routed and painted by the scouts.

**Design Adjustments and Final Recommendations**

- Mr. Encin suggests making the sign more historically consistent and considers the use of different fonts and colors.
- Mr. D'Urso and Mr. Encin discuss the possibility of using a white background with blue lettering to create a more refined look.
- Mr. Encin suggests moving the logo to the right side of the sign to create a more balanced design.
- Mr. D'Urso agrees to consider the suggestions and make adjustments to the design to meet the community's feedback.

Motion was made by Mr. Mullany, seconded by Mr. Tosso, to approve the application with the following condition(s):

1. Sign will have a white border and blue lettering.

**Roll Call:**

In favor: Mr. Encin, Mr. Tosso, Mr. Mullany, Ms. Rodrigues, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Romano

Opposed: None

Abstentions: None

**The motion carried.**

**06-26 Pastime Club**

**3 Hilltop Rd**

**Block 1902 Lot 22**

**Present: Mr. Duggan – Trusty of Pastime**

**Mr. Hydro- Creo Construction**

Mr. Mullany and Mr. Tosso recused themselves.

## Overview

The Siding Project Approval Meeting discussed replacing the building's old siding with whisper gray AZEK products, upgrading trim, and installing water management systems. A shed roof will be added at the front entryway and a second-floor esthetic element to funnel water. The main roof, previously handled by the contractor, will be galvanized. The pastime lettering and historical appearance will be maintained. Concerns were raised about the narrowness of the shutters, suggesting wider shutters or adding holdbacks and S hooks to the existing ones. After discussion, a motion was made and approved to add holdbacks and S hooks to the shutters, maintaining the project's budget.

- Add holdbacks and S-hooks to the existing shutters so they appear as authentic, historic-style shutters rather than flat vinyl panels, as required by the Historic Preservation Commission's approval condition.

### Siding Project Overview and Initial Details

- Mr. Hydro explains the siding project, including the removal of old siding and replacement with a full-exact system.
- The building will be painted in a color called whisper gray, and all trim on windows and doors will be upgraded.
- Water management will be implemented at the front entryway, including adding a shed roof to divert water away from leaks.
- The new siding, trim, and metal roof will be 100% rot-resistant and galvanized.

### Historical Preservation and Lettering

- Mr. Van Arsdale inquires about the main roof, and Mr. Hydro clarifies that the asphalt roofing was handled years ago, and the new roofing will be galvanized and molded in black.
- Mr. Van Arsdale asks about the pastime lettering on the facade, and Mr. Hydro confirms it will be put back, and an exact panel will be built behind the baseball shield at the front door.
- The building's historical appearance will be maintained, and AZEK is chosen for its ability to create and maintain historical looks.
- Mr. Hydro introduces the newest product from AZEK, which maintains a cedar mill look and will bring back the wood tone to the building.

### Discussion on Window and Shutter Details

- Ms. Romano asks about the triangle roof part and the elimination of a window, and Mr. Hydro clarifies that no windows are being removed.
- The upper gables will stay white, and a more historic local boarding batten will be used.

- Mr. Encin suggests using a composite shutter that looks like wood to maintain consistency with other details.
- Mr. Encin emphasizes the importance of the shutter's appearance, suggesting a wider shutter to make it look more like a historic shutter.

### **Concerns About Shutter Width and Budget**

- Mr. Encin explains that the shutter's width makes a significant difference in its appearance, and a wider shutter would be more consistent with the building's details.
- Mr. Hydro questions the necessity of changing the shutters, given the budget constraints and the premium nature of ASAC products.
- Mr. Encin suggests looking into Sun Belt's composite shutters, which are more authentic-looking and durable.
- Mr. Duggan supports keeping the shutters as they are, emphasizing the budget constraints and the club's approval of the project's cost.

### **Final Decision on Shutter Details**

- Mr. Encin reiterates the importance of the shutter's appearance and suggests adding holdbacks and S hooks to the existing shutters to improve their look.
- Mr. Hydro agrees to consider fabricating holdbacks and S hooks to attach to the existing shutters, which would be more cost-effective.

Motion was made by Ms. Romano, seconded by Mr. Van Arsdale, to approve the application with the following condition(s):

1. Holdbacks or S hooks will be added to the existing shutters.

### **Roll Call:**

**In favor:** Mr. Encin, Ms. Rodrigues, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Romano

**Opposed:** None

**Abstentions:** Mr. Tosso and Mr. Mullany

**The motion carried.**

**07-26 Aysun Malta**

**13 East Main St**

**Block 1501 Lot 5**

**Present: Ms. Malta- Applicant**

Ms. Malta explains her proposed sign application for a sign at 13 East Main St. There's a discussion regarding the sign's design, including the colors and the absence of a defined border. The sign's text and logo are consistent with another sign, but the background color is reversed.

### **Application Review and Approval Process**

- Ms. Malta mentions being in business at 13 East Street in Mendham Borough and wishes to seek approval for the proposed signage.
- Ms. Malta discusses the signage details, mentioning a sign that is currently blank and recently approved by the landlord.

### **Details of the Proposed Signage**

- Ms. Malta describes the proposed sign, noting that it has the same text as the existing sign but with different colors: black background with white lettering.
- Mr. Van Arsdale points out that the new sign does not have a defined border, unlike the existing sign.
- Mr. Encin confirms that the text and logo on the new sign are identical to the existing sign, except for the color scheme.
- Ms. Malta confirms that the new sign is the same size as the existing one.

Motion was made by Mr. Encin, seconded by Mr. Mullany, to approve the application as submitted.

### **Roll Call:**

In favor: Mr. Encin, Mr. Tosso, Mr. Mullany, Ms. Rodrigues, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Romano  
 Opposed: None  
 Abstentions: None

### **The motion carried.**

### **09-26 Black Horse**

**1 West Main St**

**Block 301 Lot 1**

**Present: Mr. Howard- Owner Representative, VP Construction**

**Mr. Felice - Divisional Vice President**

**Mr. Tarquinio - Architect**

The Architectural Review Meeting focused on the renovation of the Black Horse Tavern. Key points included the need to address historical integrity while ensuring practical functionality. The proposed design includes a new entry from the left side, a main foyer staircase, and an elevator for accessibility. The second floor will be reconfigured, and a small rear addition will house new bathrooms and mechanical equipment. Concerns were raised about the grandness of the west-facing side, particularly the round window at the top. Suggestions included simplifying the staircase and alternating windows and doors on the second floor. The board emphasized the importance of maintaining historical character while making the building practical for its new use. The Architectural Review Meeting discussed the design of a house with a vaulted space and operable double-hung windows, which was deemed impractical. The addition at the back includes two double-hung windows and a bulkhead. The team debated scaling and detailing, particularly for upper windows and chimneys. They plan to engage

actively in lighting and materials. The project requires a variance and will take a year to plan and build. The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, with applications due 10 days prior. The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Mullaney and seconded by Ms. Rodriguez.

### **Action Items**

- Review and revise the porch railing/baluster detail so that the balusters are narrower and more consistent with the existing historic profile.
- Revise the Black Horse Tavern exterior scheme to address CHPC feedback: simplify fenestration patterns on the front and side elevations, adjust the top-window shape over the event space, refine the second-floor porch window-versus-door layout, scale back decorative detailing on the rear and side additions while maintaining accessibility features, and retain chimney massing consistent with historic character.
- Ensure that proposed exterior signage and related materials (such as metal finish, trim, and similar details) align with historic-preservation guidelines and Commission expectations.

### **Outline**

#### **Introduction and Participant Roles**

- Mr. Tarquinio introduces himself as the architect and principal student from New Jersey.
- Mr. Van Arsdale and Mr. Howard discuss the application and previous comments received.
- Mr. Felice explains the evolution of the plans since the last meeting, addressing issues like the rear building ramp and truck collisions.

#### **Design Intent and Building History**

- Mr. Tarquinio expresses excitement about the design and its historical significance.
- The building was originally a farmhouse, stagecoach stop, inn, and restaurant, now proposed to be a prominent event space.
- Mr. Tarquinio describes the existing building conditions, including a kitchen fire in 2024 and the need for considerable repair.
- The proposed design includes a new entry from the left side, a main entry foyer, and an elevator for accessibility.

#### **Proposed Plans and Changes**

- Mr. Tarquinio details the proposed first-floor plan, including a new entry foyer and vertical circulation.
- The second floor will be reconfigured to provide better ceiling heights and space for events.
- The basement will be lowered, and a small addition will be made for a lift and mechanical equipment.
- The proposed elevations aim to maintain historical fenestration patterns, with new windows and columns consistent with the existing architecture.

### **Elevations and Materials**

- Mr. Tarquinio discusses the proposed elevations, comparing them to the existing ones.
- The new design includes a new stair into the building, a covered porch, and consistent column placement.
- The materials proposed include James Hardie siding with a 5” exposure, Anderson 400 windows, and Sun Belt shutters.
- The roofing will remain the existing shingles, and gutters will be paste out gutters replacing the Yankee gutters.

### **Signage and Lighting**

- Mr. Tarquinio outlines the proposed signage, including site signs, sconces, and a ceiling mount light for the new covered porch.
- The lighting will be subdued, with integrated steps providing overhead lighting.
- The equipment information includes small condensers, a kitchen exhaust hood, and a generator.
- The lighting locations are detailed, with lights facing towards the building and steps.

### **Historical Context and Architectural Standards**

- Mr. Connolly discusses the Black Horse Tavern's significance as a key contributing resource within the Mendham Historic District.
- The building must comply with Secretary of Interior standards, and all alterations must preserve the existing fenestration patterns and porch configuration.
- New elements should be simplified to distinguish from the original building, and character-defining features should be retained.
- The chimneys and built-in gutters are considered important features to be preserved.

### **Discussion on Design Elements**

- The board members discuss the need for a thoughtful plan that balances historical integrity and practical functionality.
- The board members express concerns about the grandness of the proposed design on the west-facing side.
- Suggestions include simplifying the staircase and reducing the size of the round window at the top.
- The board members emphasize the importance of maintaining the building's historical character while making it functional for its new use.

### **Feedback on Specific Design Features**

- The board members provide feedback on the proposed design, focusing on the windows, staircase, and overall scale.
- Suggestions include alternating windows and doors on the second floor and simplifying the staircase.

- The board members discuss the importance of maintaining the building's historical character while making it functional for its new use.
- The architects express willingness to make adjustments based on the board's feedback.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

- The board members and architects agree to work together to refine the design based on the feedback provided.
- The architects will consider the board's suggestions and come back with revised plans.
- The meeting concludes with a commitment to continue the collaboration to ensure the building's historical integrity and practical functionality.

### **Discussion on Vaulted Space and Window Design**

- Mr. Tarquinio expresses concerns about the impracticality of operable double-hung windows and shutters in a vaulted space.
- Mr. Encin mentions the addition on the backside of the house, which includes two double-hung windows and a bulkhead.
- Mr. Felice acknowledges the challenge of the design due to the land size and scale.

### **Exploring Scaling and Lighting Solutions**

- Mr. Howard suggests using a larger scale format to mask elements while maintaining natural light.
- Mr. Howard believes that playing with shapes can enhance the visual appeal from both ends of the space.
- Mr. Felice discusses the need to scale down upper windows, porch windows, and door layouts.
- Mr. Connelly emphasizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of chimneys and other additions.

### **Commitment to Active Engagement and Planning**

- Mr. Van Arsdale inquires about additional needs and assumptions regarding the design.
- Mr. Encin reiterates the team's commitment to active engagement in lighting and materials.
- Mr. Howard mentions the need for monthly board meetings to keep the project moving.
- Mr. Encin highlights the goal of completing the project within a year, including planning and construction.

### **Variance and Timing Considerations**

- Mr. Felice anticipates the need for a variance for the backside addition.
- Mr. Howard notes that the timing of the project will be affected by the summer schedule, potentially delaying the process.

Application carried to the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no additional business, Mr. Mullany made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Rodrigues seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor. adjourned the meeting at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Lisa J. Smith*  
Lisa J. Smith  
Land Use Coordinator