

**BOROUGH OF MENDHAM
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JULY 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.

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Encin – Absent

Mr. Mullany – Absent

Ms. Rodrigues – Present

Mr. Van Arsdale – Present

Ms. Cass - Alternate #1: – Present

Ms. Romano - Alternate #2: - Absent

Also Present: Mr. Testa, Commission Attorney

MINUTES:

Mr. Van Arsdale asked for comments on the minutes of the regular meeting of June 25, 2026. Ms. Cass made a motion to approve the minutes as written, and Mr. Van Arsdale seconded.

Roll Call:

In favor: Mr. Van Arsdale and Ms. Cass

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. There being none, the public session was closed.

APPLICATIONS

- a) **11-26 Stronghold Development**
1 Hampton Rd
Block 1904 Lot 4

Overview

The board approved the proposed renovation at **1 Hampton Rd by Stronghold Development**, presented by Calvin Construction.

Approved Scope and Design Decisions

- **Condition of the existing house** — the property was bought in disrepair after what Mr. Novello described as a hoarding situation. The interior has already been cleaned out, hazardous material removed, and minor repairs done; the crew is ready to start and was waiting on final approval.
- **Preserved front character** — the members approved the front elevation as-is: existing roof line and eaves, the porch and its original brick, and existing window placement, with the off-center front door re-centered as a three-foot wood door without sidelights.
- **Two-story rear extension** — built on the existing rear foundation, so the building footprint is unchanged; the second story of the rear closet/garage element conforms to the setback.

- **Setback and the existing garage** — the garage sits within the setback as a pre-existing nonconforming condition, so anything built above it must conform. That is why the rear element is only a partial closet/small garage, carried up just far enough to stay within the setback requirements.
- **Two-foot second-floor expansion** — a standard two-foot cantilever at the rear adds interior space, yielding a four-bedroom home with a larger kitchen below and the master bedroom at the back.
- **Rear windows and entrance** — the rear gains a new entrance, with the failing one-story rear section torn off and rebuilt as a larger kitchen carrying a window over the sink. The new second floor takes windows similar to the front, sized for egress, with the master bedroom at the very back of the house.
- **Exterior restoration and materials** — Series 400 two-over-two windows with SDL detailing at the front, asphalt shingles matching the existing roof throughout (with a possible metal upgrade over the front porch still undecided), the mahogany front porch deck sanded and refinished with its tongue-and-groove pine ceiling, and a mahogany-look composite rear deck.
- **Full interior renovation** — a complete gut with new electrical, plumbing, framing, insulation, and sheetrock.

Board Questions and Responses

- **Is the footprint changing?** Mr. Van Arsdale asked directly; Mr. Novello confirmed the footprint stays the same, with the addition going straight out the back on the existing foundation.
- **How much will the elevation change?** Mr. Novello said the front elevation will not change at all — windows go back in the same openings, and only the re-centered front door reads differently from the street.
- **Does the front of the house stay the same?** Ms. Cass asked whether the drawings showed only the extension; Mr. Novello confirmed the roof line is untouched, with the eaves maintained, repainted, and restored, and matched on the rear for consistency.
- **What about the rear windows and the shed roof over the cantilever?** Mr. Van Arsdale asked; Mr. Novello described the new rear entrance, kitchen and egress windows, and a two-foot standard cantilever with a couple of corbels and matching asphalt shingles.
- **Which decking material?** Mr. Van Arsdale asked about the rear deck; Mr. Novello proposed a vintage mahogany-look composite, distinct from the original mahogany front porch deck he is sanding and refining.
- **Are the window light cuts consistent, and all Series 400?** Mr. Van Arsdale confirmed both; Mr. Novello described centered grilles top and bottom, SDL at the front and possibly a finer-line product elsewhere.

Decision

- The application was approved: **Ms. Rodriguez** moved to approve, **Ms. Cass** seconded, and Ms. Rodriguez, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Cass each voted in favor.
- The members approved the scope above in full, with no conditions or objections attached; the front porch roofing material was the only detail left open, and the board did not require it to be settled before approving.
- **Front porch roofing — unresolved.** No final material was decided. Asphalt shingles are what the plan shows and what will be used everywhere else ("everything else would be asphalt 100%"), but Mr. Novello said he may upgrade the porch to metal because it would look nicer, and he and the architect had been "kicking that around."

Mr. Van Arsdale noted the porch roof is at a low pitch (about four in twelve) and would be somewhat visible and favored making it dressier. The board did not treat the choice as material to the approval and attached no condition to it, so the applicant may proceed with either asphalt or a metal upgrade over the porch.

Action Items

- Mail or email the approval letter to the applicant, Gary Novello of Calvin Construction, within the next couple of days so construction can begin. (@Lisa Smith)

Outline**Application**

- Calvin Construction presented renovation plans for the 1120-six Stormful Development application.
- Gary Novello represented Calvin Construction and reviewed the submitted drawings, blueprints, site plans, and photos.
- Mr. Novello cited Calvin Construction's prior work at Seven Hampton, up the street, as the reference point for the window detailing and composite decking proposed here.

Renovation Plan

- Preserve the existing building footprint and front elevation — all new construction is concentrated at the rear, on the existing foundation.
- Add a two-story rear extension, gaining roughly two feet of second-floor area through a standard cantilever; the second story over the pre-existing, setback-encroaching garage is kept limited so it conforms.
- Complete a full interior gut renovation to create a four-bedroom home, with an enlarged first-floor kitchen and a window over the sink, a new rear entrance, and egress-sized second-floor bedroom windows with the master at the back.

Exterior Details

- Maintain the existing roof line, eaves, porch, brick, and window alignment.
- Center the front door and use a three-foot wood door without sidelights.
- Install Series 400 windows with divided-light detailing.
- Use a two-foot rear cantilever and a mahogany-look composite rear deck.
- Match the existing "mushroom wave" eave detail on the rear of the house so the front and rear read consistently.
- The front porch roof sits at a low pitch, roughly four in twelve, which is what raised the option of a metal upgrade over asphalt.
- The two-foot cantilever will be a standard build with a couple of corbels, with no more elaborate structure planned.

Approval

- The application was approved on a motion by Ms. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Cass, with affirmative votes from Ms. Rodriguez, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Cass.
- The front porch roofing material was left unresolved — asphalt as drawn, or a metal upgrade at the applicant's discretion — and was not made a condition of approval.

Motion was made by Ms. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Cass, to approve the application as submitted.

Roll Call:

In favor: Ms. Rodriguez, Mr. Van Arsdale, and Ms. Cass
Opposed: None

Abstentions: None

The motion carried.

DISCUSSION/MISCELLANEOUS

- i) Request for Formal Determination – Historic Significance of the Sisters of Christian Charity Motherhouse

Overview

Friends of Mendham presented research supporting the historic significance and potential register eligibility of the Mallinckrodt Convent property and the broader Sisters of Christian Charity campus. No decision was made on endorsing the application.

Presentation Findings

- Ms. Newman described the property's Cromwell-era country estate, Italian gardens, caretaker buildings, and association with nationally significant architects Carrère and Hastings.
- The former convent, built in 1932 and designed by Robert Riley, may also qualify under architectural and historical criteria.
- The property has been vacant since 2018, and parts may be at risk of demolition or substantial alteration.

Review Status

- **Friends of Mendham** requested a letter from the Historic Preservation Commission chair supporting the preliminary eligibility application submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office.
- The commission indicated that it must review the complete application, supporting reports, and referenced Somerset Hills survey before considering any authorization.
- What specific development plans will ultimately affect the historic buildings and gardens? When will the State Historic Preservation Office respond?
- The meeting ended without a formal determination or resolution on the requested letter.

Action Items

- Email the commission the complete SHPO/DEP preliminary eligibility application, including any report that differs from the previously submitted June 15 report.
- Provide the commission with a copy of the Somerset Hills Country Place Era Resources survey or multiple property documentation report referenced in the eligibility application.

Outline

Request for Support

- Friends of Mendham presented a preliminary eligibility application for the Malincroft property and Sisters of Christian Charity campus.
- The requested support was limited to register eligibility and was not intended to address zoning, regulatory review, or pending development applications.

Historic Research

- Frederick Cromwell assembled more than 200 acres and built the original residence around 1892.
- The campus retains historic buildings, gardens, roads, landscape features, and views associated with the country estate.

- The former convent was built in 1932 in the Italian Renaissance Revival style; a rear wing was added in 1955.

Property Context

- The original Cromwell house is now known as Villa Pauline and is distinct from the former motherhouse convent.
- The former convent has been vacant since 2018.
- Earlier development materials indicated that some buildings could be demolished or renovated, but current detailed plans have not been submitted.

Commission Response

- Commissioners requested the complete application, updated report if applicable, and the Somerset Hills country-place survey.
- The chair did not issue an immediate decision on the proposed support letter.
- The meeting concluded without a formal determination.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no additional business, Ms. Rodrigues made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Cass a voice vote, all were in favor. adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa J. Smith

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Land Use Coordinator