

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING, JULY 2, 2020  
MINUTES

A special meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened via Zoom and was livestreamed through the Stroudsburg Borough Facebook page at 5:00 P.M. on July 2, 2020 with the following members present: Anthony Lanfrank, Council President; Matt Abell, Vice-President of Council; Erica McCabe, Council President Pro-Tem; Jim Evanisko, Council Member; Victoria Devries, Council Member; and Boyd Weiss, Council Member. Council Member James Smith was not present. Also present were: Brian Ace, Jr., Borough Manager; Tarah Probst, Mayor; Joseph McDonald, Jr., Borough Solicitor; Mary Pat Quinn, Executive Assistant; Ken Sandri, H.A.R.B. Member; Ted Hoyt, H.A.R.B. Member; and Dan Lichty, H.A.R.B. Member. Todd Weitzmann, Esq. was present.

The following individuals were present to represent the County of Monroe: the Honorable Margherita Patti-Worthington, President Judge; the Honorable Jonathan Mark, Judge; Sharon Laverdure, Chairman of the Monroe County Commissioners; John Christy, Monroe County Commissioner; Timothy McManus, Esq., Monroe County Solicitor; Rick Macia, Architect; Andre Voss, Project Manager, CGL (design architects); Rob Fisch, Project Principal, CGL; Christopher Gehm, Project Executive, WH Lane; Ting Tsai, CGL; and Dominika Barszcz, CGL.

**Review and discuss the Historical Architectural Review Board Application of the County of Monroe for an addition and renovations to the Monroe County Courthouse at 610 Monroe Street**

Mr. Lanfrank stated that the sole purpose of the meeting was to discuss the County's application for the expansion of the courthouse. No other matters would be discussed, and formal action would not be taken at this meeting. The Borough Council will be checking to see if it meets the standards of Borough Code when building or expanding in the Historic District. The courthouse project is a huge project that everyone wants to see done and fit in with the historic charm of Stroudsburg. Mr. Lanfrank advised that he reviewed the architects' notes, HARB's notes and video, and the architecture of the historic courthouse. He asked what standards were used to determine if this project was appropriate or not. If Brief 14 of the National Preservation Standards was used, he suggested that the new addition does not compliment the original courthouse. Mr. Lanfrank questioned whether HARB would have approved a similar building on Main Street according to the HARB Ordinance in the Borough Code.

There are seven main character defining features of the historic courthouse architectural style that follow a Richardsonian Romanesque Architecture. They are 1) rounded arched windows; 2) a tower with a hipped roof; 3) pitched rough stone exterior; 4) a formal entryway with columns, double doors, iron railings; 5) groupings of banked windows; 6) parapet gables; and 7) a tall chimney. He asked which, if any, of the seven characteristics have been incorporated in to the new addition.

He suggested that if the entryway of the expansion complemented the courthouse it would go a long way for example, by adding arched windows and a formalized entryway to the entrance of

the building that compliments the courthouse as well as a tower above the clock, which would also compliment the courthouse. A cosmetic change of tan cast stone, like what was used at the ESU Dormitories, might be considered for the facade of the first story on the new building keeping the yellow-tan brick on the second and third stories. A reddish, brown pointing mortar for the first floor to tie in the color of the courthouse. The first story of the building being a cast stone like the courthouse has a symbolic historical meaning, too. The cast stone nature of the facade on the expansion points to the physical foundation of our County's historic past. These changes would meet the intent of Preservation Brief 14 as well as the HARB Ordinance of the Borough Code. He welcomed working with the County to add some of these features into the expansion project.

Mr. Abell noted that if the Borough Council does not accept HARB's recommendation for approval of the proposed Courthouse Expansion design, then the Council is required by the Borough Code to reference specific areas of the design that do not comply with the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Suggestions would need to be offered by Council on design changes that would warrant approval by Council. He offered the following comments and referred to the architect's elevation and 3D renderings on pages 29 through 44 of the County's HARB application:

Ordinance 901, 214.1.B.2 On the new addition, the windows on all three stories to the left of the main entrance are "banked" windows of five, which are not found on any other structures in the district nearby. The little rectangular windows between the facade "bump-outs" on Sixth and Sarah Streets break up the "uniform height" of windows recommended by the ordinance and gives it the unfortunate appearance of a prison as viewed from Sixth and Sarah Streets. The huge expanse of glass at the main entrance is not at all complementary to nearby historic structures, though it could perhaps be considered a "non-functioning accent window" according to the ordinance.

Recommended changes: Replace the "banked" windows left of the main entrance with individual rectangular windows of the same sizes as shown throughout the rest of the project. Replace the small rectangular windows on Sixth and Sarah Streets with windows of the same height as those on the "bumped-out" facades; the width of these windows could remain narrow if desired, so long as the top and bottom of the windows lined up with the other windows to establish a uniform height.

Ordinance 901, 214.1.B.3 The little rectangular windows between the facade "bump-outs" on Sixth and Sarah Streets are oddly situated, with some windows located uniformly between the bump-outs, and other windows oddly cut off at the edge of the bump-out. This breaks up the "rhythm of solids to voids" recommended by the ordinance and is a design choice not reflected at all in nearby historic structures. Tripled architectural elements, which are one of the defining characteristics of the Richardsonian Romanesque style of our historic courthouse, are not echoed at all in the new addition -- in fact, doubled and quadrupled elements define the proposed addition instead, along both the Sixth and Sarah Street elevations.

Recommended changes: Situate all the windows between facade "bump-outs" so that they are distributed equally across the building and not cut off at the edge of the bump-out; this will

establish a clearer pattern of solids to voids and better respect historic design standards. Regarding the north elevation from Sarah Street, replace the twin facade bump-outs with a single bump-out in the center of the new addition to emulate the massing of the original courthouse structure, with all other elements of the new addition organized into thirds around this central feature.

Ordinance 901, 214.1.B.12 The proposed expansion brings the building mass closer to Monroe Street than the original courthouse, allowing for less green space and looming over the view from Sixth Street toward the historic courthouse. In particular, the one-story portion of the addition that wraps around from Sixth Street to Monroe encroaches on the pedestrian space in a way that the original historic structure, at the opposite corner, does not.

Recommended changes: To complement and reflect the design of the original courthouse's iconic tower, the proposed addition should not have any elements located in front of, or in the same plane as, the clock tower mass.

Ordinance 901, 214.1.B.23 The iconic hooded windows on the original courthouse are not reflected at all in the new design. On the new addition, the windows on all three stories to the left of the main entrance are "banked" windows of five, which don't relate to any other element on the addition nor to the original courthouse. The smaller rectangular windows between the façade "bump-outs" are much smaller than typical residential windows nearby. The large expanse of glass at the main entrance is thoroughly contemporary, without taking any cues from accent windows in nearby historic structures.

Recommended changes: Replace all rectangular windows within façade bump-outs with hooded windows similar to that found on all three stories of the historic courthouse. Consider replacing the large expanse of aluminum-framed window glazing at the main entry with a series of tall, arched windows to pay tribute to the large, iconic windows of our historic courthouse. As suggested previously under Section 901, 214.1.B.2, replace "banked" windows left of the main entrance with individual rectangular windows, and replace small rectangular windows on Sixth and Sarah Streets with windows of the same height as those on "bumped-out" facades to establish a uniform height.

Mr. Abell stated that there are good examples of arched windows in modern architectural projects. The suggestion that a redesign would delay the project several months causing higher escalation which raises costs is not the Borough Council's intention. The County and its architectural firm need to involve and reflect the community in the design process.

Solicitor McManus asked Rick Macia, L.P.A. to review the supplemental information. Mr. Macia provided a supplemental presentation outlining the design approach and more specific illustrations of his firm's approach to comply with the HARB Ordinance. Also provided were "Frequently Asked Questions" that intended to address some questions that have been raised about the project.

Mr. Evanisko supported the comments made by Mr. Abell. He noted that the proposed clock would only be visible directly across Monroe Street. He expressed concern about the loss of the

park area and the openness of the proposed plaza. He suggested some sort of covering so that it could be used by the town for events. Also discussed was possibly lighting the tower downward and the windows.

Mr. Weiss thanked Mr. Abell for the time and effort he put in to his comments. He supported many of Mr. Abell's recommendations.

Mayor Probst supported Mr. Abell's recommendations.

Ms. McCabe supported Mr. Abell's recommendations.

Ms. DeVries stated that she would like to see arched windows, and she supported Mr. Abell's recommendations.

Commissioner Laverdure advised that the County and the architects have done everything possible to prepare for this presentation.

Commissioner Christy suggested that there could be arched, ornamental windows in the front of the building to pay homage to the arches of the existing, historic courthouse. They could see what could be done with the other windows in the proposed structure, but the arches may not look good on all of the windows. He asked the Borough Council to provide direction.

President Judge Worthington advised that the discussion about the need for a courthouse expansion began in 2008; the design discussions with CGL architects have occurred during the past few years. She appreciated what the Council is doing for the Borough. The architects and the County were very mindful of the HARB Ordinance, and she believes that the project meets the requirements of the Ordinance. HARB did approve the project with three dissenting votes; the County is aware of the reasons from two of the dissenters. She spoke in favor of the glass facade from a security standpoint.

Judge Mark asked for clarification of the Ordinance, specifically related to comments in the chat about the proposed building and how it may or may not fit with the designs of residential housing in the immediate neighborhood. He understood that the Ordinance covers all areas within the Historic District.

Solicitor McDonald confirmed that this is a district-wide matter not just adjoining or nearby properties. He referred to a memo dated June 30, 2020 that was sent to him and Council by Earl "Ted" Hoyt, who is a member of HARB. The Borough Council raised some questions about the guidelines that area applied by HARB for a Certificate of Appropriateness recommendation. Mr. Hoyt reached out to Cory Kegerise at Pennsylvania's State Historic Preservation Office for some insight. Mr. Kegerise did not render a decision about this project, but he did offer some background as to the framework of the review. Solicitor McDonald suggested that Council review the information as a resource. Solicitor McManus asked for a copy of that information.

Mr. Sandri expressed his concern that the design does not reflect or compliment the character defining features of the Courthouse. He noted the arch or segmented arch is a particular character

defining characteristic. It is present throughout the historic courthouse; however, it is not found in the proposed addition. The arch could be incorporated into the bump-out bay window openings on facades on Monroe Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Street; the two windows on the second and third floors could be combined into one larger arched window. As for the front glass curtain wall which will light the interior spaces, large glass openings like that can use an arch to form the top of the glass wall opening. A metal framework could be used to span a 20- to 30- foot opening.

Solicitor McManus stated that the County will digest what was discussed at the meeting, and although he has no direction from them yet, there may be a need to table a decision by Council at their next meeting on July 7, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 P.M. on a motion made by Mr. Abell, seconded by Ms. DeVries. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)