

HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
NEW HOPE BOROUGH
BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

NEW HOPE BOROUGH COMMUNITY ROOM
123 NEW STREET
NEW HOPE, PENNSYLVANIA 18938

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022
COMMENCING AT 6:30 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

KEITH VOSS - CHAIRMAN
RICHARD O'BRIEN - BUILDING INSPECTOR
KEVIN KESTER - MEMBER

ALSO PRESENT:

JoAnn Connell - HARB Administrator
David Kimmerly - Bucks County Planning Commission

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CHAIRMAN VOSS: I am Keith Voss, Chair of HARB.

MR. O'BRIEN: My name is Rich O'Brien with Keystone Municipal Services. We serve as building inspectors for New Hope Borough.

MR. KESTER: I am Kevin Kester, member of the HARB. I am a landscape architect and I work for Van Cleef Engineering.

CHAIRMAN VOSS: Thank you. Our first review is formal review for 28 South Main Street.

MS. GUEST: My name is Colleen Guest, G-U-E-S-T. I am here in place of Liz Barrett who is the owner of the property but she is unable to be here this evening. She is out of state.

She recently purchased the property and as is illustrated, the wrought iron gate or fence, which is not a part of the original structure, she is requesting be removed. It impedes the traffic on the sidewalk and also access to the renters within the commercial property.

MR. O'BRIEN: Just to clarify, the piece of the cast iron fence is the smaller fence in the front or is it the whole larger archway fence?

MS. GUEST: So the structure itself, the

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fence which abuts into the normal path of the sidewalk, which is the same for all of the other establishments to both the north and to the south of the property but the same wrought iron -- the intent is to leave the pillars on the porch, the wrought iron pillars on the porch along with the work on the roof of the portico above the entryway would be there to maintain the aesthetic purpose.

It is just there the fence abuts you know or juts out into the sidewalk, forcing traffic -- the traffic flow to go into a single file in order to pass each other's way and especially with things like snow, the telephone pole, other things that cause it to be jammed up.

If you're talking to someone and you're walking along you can walk right into the fence. It hits you about mid-thigh height so it is --

MR. O'BRIEN: But the pillars and archway and that will remain, correct?

MS. GUEST: Correct. So the aesthetics of what are attached to the entryway would remain. It is just the fence. Again that is removed from the property, it is a good almost ten feet to the front and reduces the access of that sidewalk in front of the -- that structure by about 50 percent.

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1 MR. KESTER: Are -- those pillars are
 2 behind the fence?
 3 MS. GUEST: The pillars are behind the
 4 fence, correct.
 5 MR. KESTER: Do you know about how many
 6 feet?
 7 MS. GUEST: The pillars I think about three
 8 and a half, four feet. It is about --- I have video, I
 9 don't know if you need to see it. The traffic walking in
 10 either direction where they all have to single file down
 11 to get in front of that area.
 12 MR. O'BRIEN: It looks like the brick
 13 sidewalk actually extends beyond the fence now.
 14 MS. GUEST: It does. There is a portion of
 15 the fence that -- I didn't realize -- I have more pictures
 16 but I didn't realize what I would be up against today.
 17 The brick fence goes all the way up to the
 18 end of the porch to the front of the building. There is a
 19 dirt landscape area where the plantings or lack of
 20 plantings were pulled. That is along there as well but
 21 yes, the idea would be to maintain that brick, just
 22 pulling out the fence.
 23 If there were any areas that needed to
 24 fill, there is a driveway along the north end of the
 25

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1 original, it is suggested that it be maintained. Again
 2 aesthetically it maintains the wrought iron of the front
 3 porch remains, the entire -- like just minus the fence --
 4 MS. CONNELL: I have gotten some
 5 information from Council that we are going to have to
 6 remove your mask when you are speaking.
 7 MS. GUEST: I am happy to.
 8 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Do you want to start that
 9 train of thought again?
 10 MS. GUEST: Sure. As we was suggested, I
 11 guess the opposition would be that it is generally
 12 recommended to maintain it since it is -- although not
 13 part of the original structure, it is noted within the
 14 historic relevance of the building.
 15 It does -- probably at the time it was
 16 added perhaps New Hope didn't see the activity that it
 17 currently does today with the pedestrians. We have a
 18 safety issue with impeding traffic.
 19 It prohibits the accessibility of moving in
 20 or out of that building by just general traffic to those
 21 -- to the patrons or the -- for the patrons also who might
 22 be visiting those two establishments located in that
 23 building, the commercial space in that building.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Can you clarify the
 25

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1 structure and in the back, if she were required she could
 2 pull up bricks so they would match up exactly to wear and
 3 the consistency of the brick.
 4 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I just wanted to point out
 5 we did have a preliminary review, would you like to
 6 address any of it more specifically? It was shared with
 7 you as well, right?
 8 MR. KIMMERLY: Did you read the preliminary
 9 review for this?
 10 MS. GUEST: I did.
 11 MR. KIMMERLY: So the fence is not original
 12 to the building but it has its own and taken on its own
 13 architectural significance because it was added fairly
 14 early, sometime after 1850. So for that reason and
 15 because specifically mentions in the design guidelines,
 16 the general recommendation is that it should not be
 17 removed.
 18 MS. GUEST: Okay. So what does that mean
 19 general recommendation? General recommendation.
 20 MR. KIMMERLY: It is a recommendation that
 21 is made to the Architectural Review Board, it is their
 22 decision.
 23 MS. GUEST: I see. Okay. So I guess the
 24 general recommendation is although it is not part of the
 25

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1 prohibits accessibility comments?
 2 MS. GUEST: It prohibits did you say?
 3 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I am just repeating your
 4 words. You said it prohibits.
 5 MS. GUEST: It impedes the accessibility.
 6 The fence has two what may have been gates at one point
 7 with 32 and 34 inch openings with a post in the middle of
 8 them that -- so you have to either channel to get in the
 9 structure through these two smaller openings to go on to
 10 the porch and up.
 11 If you're a visitor to the town and you're
 12 walking along the sidewalk, if you're turning and talking,
 13 you can step into the structure or into the fence. If
 14 you're paying attention, you're going to have to form a
 15 single file line to move traffic both north and south.
 16 MR. KESTER: You have two doors and you
 17 have got this opening between the two doors. Are there
 18 two separate tenants in the building?
 19 MS. GUEST: There are.
 20 MR. KESTER: So you come through this
 21 center section and you have to split off?
 22 MS. GUEST: Yeah. I actually have a photo
 23 of it as well. There is a center -- the fence is along
 24 and there is a center column that I imagine at one point
 25

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1
2 there might have been gates to that fence. There are no
3 longer gates but there are two openings with a center post
4 and then there is four or five feet in front of that are
5 the porch for both entrances but two different doors that
6 are banked with the four different wrought iron pillars.
7
8 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So have you considered the
9 possibility of removing or moving the segments that would
10 have formed the original gates, moving them to the center
11 thereby connecting them to the center post and opening up
12 a separate doorway to each of the two entrances?

12 MS. GUEST: So where the post is closing
13 that in the front of the building?

14 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Correct, not losing the
15 amount of fencing that is there but just change where the
16 opening is from the center to what you are saying is the
17 original -- likely original gates through the fence so as
18 reinstating the gates.

19 MS. GUEST: To put the gates back -- first
20 of all, I am not the owner. I don't know what other
21 considerations have been even thought of other than the
22 fact that it is seen as an impediment to both traffic and
23 any patrons who might visit those two establishments.

24 I think adding gates I think would further
25 complicate that. Maybe I am just not understanding your

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1
2 is what has happened with this fence. It wasn't added
3 20 years ago so okay we just take it down. It was added
4 likely, you know minimum 70 years ago up to a possible
5 120 years.

6 MS. GUEST: Right.

7 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So as a result it is now
8 taken on part of the history of the house. Some of the
9 things that I think we might be willing to consider or I
10 would be willing to consider, would be is it possible to
11 -- could the fence be moved back a foot, thereby
12 preventing the issues with traffic flow?

13 I mean I have walked the street in front of
14 this back and forth and I have never felt impeded but I
15 don't know, that is just my experience with it. I have
16 walked into this building when it was -- in its former
17 commercial use and I didn't have trouble finding the
18 entrances.

19 But I can imagine how with two separate
20 entities inside there might be a desire to somehow make
21 those -- make the doorways themselves more accessible,
22 more obviously accessible from the sidewalk. And all of
23 that would require the possibility of moving the fence or
24 separating it and reconfiguring it so that it still
25 maintains the intent that was given it at its original

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1
2 question.
3
4 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So in other words not
5 adding or removing metal all together but moving the
6 metal. So what would have formed the gate opening in that
7 -- if the metal that is currently there, the fencing that
8 is currently there were to be removed, thereby recognizing
9 the original entrances and moving that metal, that part of
10 the fence to the center and filling in the now open
11 center, so building up against the post.

12 So my idea is is it possible to not lose
13 these pieces of historic architecture, just moving them so
14 that accessibility to the building has been improved?

15 MS. GUEST: Certainly. I think that could
16 be a consideration. It is not just not a consideration
17 that I am able to speak to as far as revising and/or
18 moving the pieces at this point. I was just I -- I am
19 here to represent the request of removal.

20 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I think the difficulty
21 that I face and when I see this is one of the things that
22 is shared with us in the guidelines, both the local ones
23 we have developed and the national guidelines from the
24 Department of Interior these are based on, has suggested
25 that architectural elements added over time will gain --
will add to the history of the building and I think that

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1
2 history, its original implementation.
3
4 You know, I have difficulty recommending
5 approval of this change as it is being presented right
6 now. That is why I am trying to offer other
7 considerations that might be worth reviewing.
8 Reflecting.

9 MS. GUEST: Okay. I mean I can't speak to
10 them but I can certainly take them back to the owner.

11 For another try, I do think that it is
12 important -- I am sure you're not new to New Hope, right?
13 As I lived in the community for 16 years so we come to
14 know these structures, right? But we rely on a lot of
15 visitors and not people who are always familiar with our
16 town, right? And so -- and the vendors are the folks that
17 are in that commercial space relying on the traffic of all
18 of these visitors for their business, right?

19 And so I think we also have to take them
20 into consideration that they might not have that
21 familiarity and they are not going to be walking along
22 with ten feet of sidewalk and all of a sudden down to four
23 feet of sidewalk so --

24 MR. O'BRIEN: I think you may want to
25 consider relocating the fence back to the end of where the
brick sidewalk is and possibly realigning the openings so

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1 they are in line with the two doors.
 2 I think that is the point you were getting
 3 at where -- take those sections and put them in the middle
 4 and realign those openings so you have two openings in
 5 line with access to the building.
 6 MS. GUEST: I think even taking the center
 7 column out, as far as where -- my personal opinion, not
 8 being the owner but would make a difference to the access
 9 -- just accessing from the sidewalk to the front porch.
 10 There is that center pole that forces you to either walk
 11 through a 30 some inch space on either side. But you know
 12 it doesn't speak to the total -- to what it does to the
 13 traffic on the sidewalk but it is certainly I think would
 14 at least help access to the entranceways.
 15 MR. KESTER: No questions. But I agree
 16 that maybe just moving the fence back to where the columns
 17 -- up to where the wrought iron columns were. I wouldn't
 18 even have a problem with removing those two sections that
 19 go to the door and just pushing the rest of the fence back
 20 to it --
 21 MS. GUEST: Do you only have this view of
 22 this?
 23 MR. KESTER: We have a straight-on view.
 24 MS. GUEST: Okay. Good.
 25

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1 MR. KESTER: Actually it would be --
 2 MS. GUEST: Am I allowed to walk up without
 3 a mask on?
 4 MR. KESTER: Sure. So the dark planting
 5 bed comes out almost to --
 6 MS. GUEST: I think it is a little bit
 7 deceptive. There is almost ten feet from the edge of this
 8 to where this -- this fence is and there is probably --
 9 maybe four feet of bed and then the rest --
 10 MR. KESTER: It is brick. So the brick
 11 does go all the way to -- back to where these two columns
 12 --
 13 MS. GUEST: I would say there maybe is
 14 36 inches or so. I think I measured actually between the
 15 tightest space between this post, this far post and there
 16 and I think it was like 50 some inches from that post to
 17 there so --
 18 CHAIRMAN VOSS: The way I am looking at
 19 this right now, I will see what every one else believes,
 20 but I would not be in favor of the proposal as currently
 21 made. I am hoping to give you some ideas of what would
 22 make me at least satisfied and I think we have heard some
 23 serious suggestions.
 24 So what I was pointing out is I currently
 25

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1 would not be in favor of removal of the -- of this portion
 2 of the building's history. But I can imagine that there
 3 would be a proposal that I would be acceptable -- that
 4 would be acceptable to me and that would involve
 5 undoubtedly moving the fence away from the curb at some
 6 appropriate amount.
 7 I don't know necessarily -- I wouldn't
 8 necessarily put a stipulation of all the way back to the
 9 other -- the trellis or whatever you want to call that,
 10 the columns. But I think there are solutions. I just
 11 don't think what is being proposed is acceptable to --
 12 MS. GUEST: May I ask a question? Is it
 13 best to approach the review board in this situation with
 14 one option that gets -- says yes or no or is it better to
 15 come -- can multiple options; an A, B or C option be
 16 presented?
 17 MR. O'BRIEN: That technically is up to
 18 the Applicant. Right now your application specifically
 19 requests removal of the fence.
 20 MS. GUEST: Okay.
 21 MR. O'BRIEN: I think we have given you
 22 some ideas on something that we would feel would be
 23 acceptable. And my suggestion to the Applicant may be to
 24 go back and rethink what you have and come back with maybe
 25

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1 two or three different proposals.
 2 MS. GUEST: Okay. But that proposal can be
 3 presented as one -- for her timeline, I just want to be
 4 able to report back to her that it was declined at this
 5 point in time for the complete removal but it is best that
 6 you present a couple different options with potentially
 7 removing a couple pieces with some movement, revisions of
 8 some sort at different levels and an A, B and C option.
 9 Is she able to present those options as one
 10 request I guess?
 11 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Yes.
 12 MS. GUEST: Okay.
 13 MR. KESTER: Good question.
 14 MS. GUEST: Just for the efficiency of you
 15 and for her.
 16 MS. CONNELL: That post, was that used for
 17 horses or is that part of a fence -- part of the fence? A
 18 horse tie from years back?
 19 MR. KIMMERLY: That held the gates. That
 20 is where the gates would have latched.
 21 MS. CONNELL: Okay. Thank you.
 22 MR. KIMMERLY: Can I make a couple other
 23 suggestions? I think your idea, you mentioned the center
 24 post, just simply removing that. I think that is a great
 25

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1 option as well. And it can stay on the property, have it
 2 moved back somewhere so that it is out of the way but keep
 3 it on the property.
 4 And also too -- when you look at each of
 5 the sides, the two ends there, it looks like part of a
 6 gate that doesn't look right, it doesn't look correct. I
 7 don't see why those couldn't be removed.
 8 MS. GUEST: Okay. So these gates?
 9 MR. KIMMERLY: Yes.
 10 MS. GUEST: The side gate?
 11 MR. KIMMERLY: Remove the side gates and I
 12 think there is a piece of wooden fence on the other side,
 13 remove those so that way pedestrian traffic can flow on
 14 each side of the fence.
 15 MS. GUEST: Okay. Only -- so that is an
 16 option?
 17 MR. KIMMERLY: Yes.
 18 MS. GUEST: But I guess I will just have to
 19 present her some -- with some of the options. It is her
 20 property. I do -- perhaps moving it back allows for the
 21 pedestrian pieces of this. Removing the end pieces -- I
 22 think those pieces -- because I think they were serving as
 23 gates for the two drives, the little small drives. I
 24 think that is what that look was supposed to be there.
 25

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1 MS. GUEST: It doesn't --
 2 CHAIRMAN VOSS: It doesn't have to be
 3 preserved.
 4 MS. GUEST: It is the wrought iron fence
 5 that is all consistent looking -- for the consistent look
 6 that you are addressing?
 7 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Correct. I just want to
 8 make sure as she considers the options, this is what needs
 9 to be considered I think.
 10 MS. GUEST: Okay. I appreciate it. And
 11 the big piece is anything that is removed really needs to
 12 be moved, not just removed?
 13 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Correct. Except -- if I
 14 am correct, except for the gates.
 15 MS. GUEST: I understand that. But any of
 16 the -- any of the structures --
 17 CHAIRMAN VOSS: The wrought iron should be
 18 reused somewhere.
 19 MS. GUEST: And that is an important piece
 20 too that it can't just be removed, it has to be moved and
 21 utilized somewhere else on the property?
 22 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Yes.
 23 MS. GUEST: Okay.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So we can either have a
 25

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1 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I think the -- since we
 2 don't want to lose any historical elements and so that is
 3 why Dave is mentioning if the posts were to be not removed
 4 but moved, perhaps moved back closer to the building or --
 5 we want everything to be reused on the property. So when
 6 it is moved back, it is being reused.
 7 If it moves back and we lose those gates
 8 because they weren't necessarily appropriate, then we
 9 don't need those gates to reappear somewhere else.
 10 Does that make sense?
 11 MS. GUEST: If the post is moved back you
 12 don't need the gates?
 13 CHAIRMAN VOSS: No. If the post is moved,
 14 we don't want it taken out and just tossed, we would like
 15 it reused on the property. In contrast, if I am hearing
 16 Dave correctly, the gates are not appropriate so having
 17 moved the fence -- if the fence were to move back for
 18 example, those gates wouldn't have to be saved. So you
 19 just collapse the fence on that side and if the need --
 20 something farther back that is wooden or again sort of --
 21 I don't know.
 22 MS. GUEST: There is a wooden picket fence
 23 on this side.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So all I am saying --
 25

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1 vote or just withdraw the application and reapply.
 2 MS. GUEST: Okay. Is there a difference?
 3 I didn't know there was necessarily a vote.
 4 CHAIRMAN VOSS: It is a recommendation that
 5 we are making so we can either just -- I don't want to
 6 table it because the application will change.
 7 We will table it for you then. And then
 8 you can modify the application, come back with whatever
 9 set of options you would like.
 10 MS. GUEST: Very good.
 11 MS. CONNELL: The next meeting is March 1st
 12 and the latest you can submit is February 8th.
 13 MS. GUEST: Okay. Thank you.
 14 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Thank you.
 15 Next we have a formal review for 68 West
 16 Mechanic Street.
 17 MR. MAXWELL: Hello. My name is James
 18 Maxwell, I am the contractor for 68 West Mechanic Street.
 19 We already had a review for the full project, this is just
 20 a change in color for the windows.
 21 Initially the windows were going to be
 22 white but we were going to match sort of the existing
 23 color but the Applicant or the owner would like black to
 24 match the rest of the aesthetics of the house.
 25

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- 1 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Is there any intention in
2 the future of changing the -- sort of the base color of
3 the rest of the house? I believe it is gray, if I recall.
4 MR. MAXWELL: No. The intention is to keep
5 the color scheme, it is just the windows. I kind of did a
6 little bit of a color rendition, colored it in further
7 down the application, tried to show the difference between
8 the windows and the trim. The front door now existing is
9 black and the shutters are black.
10 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So the intention -- how
11 much of the window surround is going to be in the current
12 -- off white.
13 MR. MAXWELL: I don't know if you guys have
14 this, but I kind of colored it.
15 MR. O'BRIEN: We have all of that
16 information.
17 MR. MAXWELL: You can just see it is just
18 the window frame and the trim.
19 MR. O'BRIEN: Including the mullions,
20 correct?
21 MR. MAXWELL: Yes, that is part of it.
22 MR. O'BRIEN: And the door and shutters are
23 staying black, right?
24 MR. MAXWELL: Yes.
25

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- 1 CHAIRMAN VOSS: It seemed awfully heavy to
2 me but when I walked by and tried to envision it, sort of
3 in person against the current colors it seemed a little
4 heavy.
5 The diagrams you gave me unfortunately
6 didn't counter that feel but I don't know that I want to
7 necessarily stop a color choice that you have and you
8 thought carefully about.
9 MR. KESTER: I agree, I think the black
10 seems heavy and the off-white seems to work the way it is
11 now but I don't really have a problem with you changing
12 the color.
13 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Any other?
14 MR. O'BRIEN: No.
15 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Nor I.
16 Do we have a motion then?
17 MR. O'BRIEN: Motion to approve the
18 application to change the color of the window trim and
19 mullions to black for the window as proposed within the
20 application.
21 CHAIRMAN VOSS: And just a reminder, this
22 is -- the motion is to approve a recommendation to Borough
23 Council?
24 MR. O'BRIEN: Yes, sir.
25

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- 1 MR. KESTER: Second.
2 CHAIRMAN VOSS: All those in favor?
3 MR. KESTER: Aye.
4 MR. O'BRIEN: Aye.
5 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Aye. Thank you.
6 Now we have a concept review for I believe
7 it is 49 Old Mill Road.
8 MR. SINGER: Hi, I am Dave Singer. I am
9 the architect for 49 Old Mill Road.
10 We were before the before the Board last
11 year to have the approval of the patio roof and currently
12 we have a garage here which is a later construction than
13 the original house but is part of the streetscape. It is
14 in bad shape.
15 The walls are cinder block, they are
16 saturated and it is out of square as you can see by the
17 site plan. So the owner wants -- I feel the owner should
18 rebuild the whole structure.
19 I wanted to get some direction as to how we
20 address the roof initially because we have a very steep
21 slope here. The idea was lets try a green roof. And I
22 think it is easily done, we can drain the back and -- I
23 have done these before and then I would get a local
24 artisan, work with the welder over in Lambertville, Dennis
25

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- 1 very closely, Dennis Sutton, and we would come up with a
2 -- sort of a nice wrought iron railing to make the edge.
3 Or if the Board prefers and this is where I
4 am really seeking direction, we can just go back with --
5 similar to what is already there. So I presented some
6 schematic ideas. I think main -- I would like to update
7 the facade with a local stone rather than wood, which is
8 -- it really doesn't age well.
9 And also in terms of the -- sort of the
10 plan with the entry, you can see by the photo they squeeze
11 the front door in the front here it is -- just kind of it
12 feels very uncomfortable to have the door in front. I
13 would like to move it to the side and redo the stairway
14 just for safety and I think for aesthetics. I think it
15 will look much nicer.
16 Even if you would rather have a wood
17 product out here, I think ultimately it will just fail
18 sooner. I think if we can sort of try and get a stone
19 that is very close to what is or already there at the
20 original house, I think it will give an overall nice
21 impression.
22 I did give you a copy -- I apologize it is
23 a poor copy of that garage door but something along the
24 line -- it could be mahogany, we can paint it white. I
25

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1 think the darker wood would look a lot nicer there on the
2 street but I am looking for direction, you know from the
3 Board.

4 This is the -- so this is the concept for
5 the green roof and then this is the concept for the
6 A-roof. We would bring back the diamond window that is
7 there, the turn square. But I would like to keep sort of
8 this stairway on the side, that is very important to the
9 functioning of the garage and safety. And once again the
10 door can change.

11 And right now this is all just schematic, I
12 am just -- I don't want to have to redraw it a bunch of
13 times. I would like to get the Board's direction, the
14 preferences and then we will just proceed. Then we will
15 come back with formal review, we will have colors and
16 material but these are the concepts that -- the two sort
17 of ideas.

18 I have done this similar garage with a
19 green roof on the Setauket, Long Island for a client.
20 That was a different type of building, it was a '50s
21 vacation home. It was looking north of Connecticut on the
22 North Shore and we did -- it was a two car garage and
23 attached to the house so -- and it was set in, it was
24 falling apart. We rebuilt it and did a green roof.
25

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1 a liquid waterproofing or sheet waterproofing, then some
2 sort of drain system that relieves water pressure back.
3 Usually it is an egg crate with a -- like a plastic egg
4 crate shape with a filter fabric on it so the water will
5 hit that, drain out into your pipe and relieves the water
6 pressure and protects the building.
7

8 MR. KESTER: Is the Applicant leaning more
9 towards one option or the other?

10 MR. SINGER: Path of least resistance. So
11 I am back to you.

12 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Is there currently a
13 staircase?

14 MR. SINGER: There is a small stair right
15 here, just the very back and then we are on the grade and
16 so what I did was I picked a point here in between that
17 grade elevation is 94 and 95 to sort of get us at a point
18 where someone coming maybe from the back or the front door
19 can get more easily to the garage.

20 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So it won't be any more
21 noticeable than what is currently there?

22 MR. SINGER: No.

23 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I know I saw in your
24 application one of the concerns is -- it is a concern I
25 would have, if you change the structure then you have to

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1 So I have designed definitely the structure
2 here to be 200 pounds, 250 pounds a square foot because we
3 have soil and we are going to have a foot of soil up
4 there, you know trees, shrubs, just sort of a nice garden
5 area. And then we worked with the Board to come up with a
6 nice railing, wrought iron, custom, something nice you
7 know because it is not really part of -- it is part of the
8 historic fabric but it is not a historic building, it was
9 added later.

10 So I don't know how open the Board is to
11 sort of updating and doing something that is a little more
12 modern for just the utility building.

13 MR. KESTER: The existing structure is
14 concrete block and it is failing?

15 MR. SINGER: It is cinder block actually.
16 If it was concrete block it might have a chance, but yeah
17 the cinder block is really -- I don't know if you can tell
18 from the photos I gave you but it is really saturated and
19 it is not square.

20 I would like to get back there, put in
21 concrete block and back drain it and we would have like a
22 four section pipe come out the side and drain onto grade.
23 It will be underground and get some sort of water relief
24 system back here, either a Mira drain, coat the wall with
25

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1 go for a variance because it is no longer grandfathered in
2 because it is sitting right on the --

3 MR. SINGER: That is the dilemma, right?
4 If I can say on the application, yeah we will keep this
5 wall over here, those walls won't be in the field, you
6 will spin it that -- because that wall is a piece of crap,
7 get rid of it. I would rather just be a little more up
8 front about it.

9 That being said, zoning-wise it doesn't
10 need any zoning regulations. It is in the side yard and
11 the front yard, it is an outbuilding in the front yard so
12 no zoning regulations in violation of it.

13 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I understand. We have the
14 property next door.

15 MR. SINGER: It is just that in order to
16 have any type of useful garage we would like to rebuild it
17 in place. Honestly -- and I can play all of the sort of
18 games, we will keep this wall knowing that he will come
19 out and say that wall isn't any good, you can't keep it.
20 But you know for the sake of appearances, I can do that.
21 It is just a note on the drawing.

22 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I was just asking because
23 that seems like there is too much of a change then it
24 would be -- that is not our decision.
25

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1 MR. SINGER: Just stay within this
 2 footprint, squared --
 3 CHAIRMAN VOSS: You will make it a little
 4 squared, that is all?
 5 MR. SINGER: So a couple inches here,
 6 couple inches there. It is really a one car garage.
 7 MR. O'BRIEN: JoAnn, has the zoning officer
 8 looked at this application yet?
 9 MS. CONNELL: No, because it is concept.
 10 MR. O'BRIEN: Okay.
 11 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So I do think before the
 12 formal review we would have to know how your hands might
 13 be tied if at all.
 14 Having said all of that, there are a few
 15 things I would share based on -- I would -- one, when you
 16 proposed -- you know when you said wood versus stone. I
 17 would actually do neither and consider plaster. It is --
 18 actually probably it takes care of the moisture problem
 19 that wood might experience but it --
 20 MR. SINGER: So keep it all masonry, do
 21 plaster?
 22 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Because it currently has a
 23 masonry appearance so why not continue with that. It just
 24 seems like again take advantage of replacing in kind
 25

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1 almost. Where you shore up the structure of course is the
 2 back wall on -- the structure on the back wall, I am sure
 3 you will be --
 4 MR. SINGER: As far as stuff we will not
 5 see but as far as what is exposed, if the Board prefers
 6 plaster to the stone that is fine. I think the stone
 7 probably would last longer. I think the plaster -- once
 8 again we have an issue where if it hits the ground so
 9 water can get up behind it and we are going to use --
 10 maybe I will use stainless steel mesh on the wall.
 11 But still there is the long-term rot from
 12 behind, you know will be gone. I don't think it will be
 13 that much of a problem. If the Board prefers that, that
 14 is fine. It is all I am looking for.
 15 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I think -- just the reason
 16 I mention that is because it seems -- just seems to put it
 17 in stone I don't know that -- I mean it would -- it would
 18 look like an artificial add-on because the building that
 19 is there is -- undoubtedly uses a different stone and the
 20 plaster was removed from that one so you can see the stone
 21 so it won't match at this point.
 22 And so I think that is why I am sort of
 23 thinking that if it were plaster or wood or a cement
 24 board, those are the kinds of things that I would like to
 25

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1 see so we don't have the conflict with the master house.
 2 MR. SINGER: Right. Yeah, I think plaster
 3 is fine. One inch plaster on there on a metal flat,
 4 stainless steel flat.
 5 Is there any type of finish you think or
 6 are you thinking ahead of time like a rough finish or a
 7 smooth?
 8 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I like the idea of feeling
 9 that it is a rough finish that is sitting over stone
 10 because that is what -- it has a little more authentic
 11 look. We are not trying to fake history but having it too
 12 clean right next to the other building --
 13 MR. SINGER: I don't think it is faking
 14 history. We are just sort of -- when we have a utility
 15 building it was built later, they built that out of wood,
 16 they put a wood front on because it was cheaper probably.
 17 And they put the door in front because it was cheaper
 18 probably than digging out and doing a whole stair on the
 19 side. I am sure it was all economic considerations.
 20 But you know we are here to sort of address
 21 how we want to -- your community to look so I don't think
 22 of it as fake. It will be in the future -- 20 years from
 23 now they will say they faked it.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: What I meant by fake is if
 25

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1 the corners are too sharp, if the --
 2 MR. SINGER: Yeah. But I just look at it
 3 as what is the best in our best judgment. What is the
 4 best way to give it the look and we are operating at our
 5 current time and place and we are all subject to those
 6 temporal rules.
 7 So I am just looking for -- for my own
 8 benefit because I am busy, I don't have to redraw it a
 9 whole bunch of times. You're busy, would rather get it
 10 sort of laid out. This is what the Board prefers and I
 11 think the client, they really just want a functional
 12 garage so they are -- they understand sort of what has to
 13 happen.
 14 MR. O'BRIEN: To get back to your initial
 15 question, the A-roof versus the garden roof. I don't
 16 think the garden roof fits in at all. I think the A-roof
 17 on a utility building is more apropos for that.
 18 Your first conversation I think is going to
 19 have to be with the zoning officer because once you raze
 20 something, then what you put back has to meet the current
 21 requirements.
 22 MR. SINGER: We have issues because of the
 23 steep slope.
 24 MR. O'BRIEN: I understand that but once
 25

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1 you demolish that you may be at a variance of the Zoning
 2 Hearing Board.
 3
 4 MR. SINGER: So you think so. Okay. Okay.
 5 MR. O'BRIEN: So that should be your first
 6 conversation is the zoning officer.
 7 MR. SINGER: Okay.
 8 MR. KESTER: I agree with the A-frame as
 9 opposed to the garden top and the garden roof.
 10 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I don't have any specific
 11 recommendations for -- about the door. Some of the
 12 pictures that were drawn, I like what they looked like so
 13 I don't know that we have any statement saying you ought
 14 to do this or ought to do that.
 15 MR. SINGER: We are getting ahead of
 16 ourselves there. Once -- I mean I am sure the zoning
 17 officer will -- I don't know if they can administratively
 18 approve something like this or not or if they are willing
 19 to.
 20 MR. O'BRIEN: Again in communities where I
 21 have personally served as the zoning officer, I would take
 22 it to the Zoning Hearing Board and put it there.
 23 MR. SINGER: Okay.
 24 MR. O'BRIEN: But I am not the zoning
 25 officer here, you deal with them.

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1 MR. SINGER: There is a local preference
 2 for the zoning. Okay. But I did want to have a
 3 conversation here just to get sort of the shape of it. I
 4 don't want to present with two different ideas, what are
 5 you doing. I have to start somewhere.
 6 MR. O'BRIEN: The door on the side works
 7 better from the construction standpoint because you will
 8 need the portal framing details for the garage door and
 9 you won't have room for that if you put the door in the
 10 front again.
 11 MR. SINGER: I know that. Although with
 12 masonry it has less of an issue because we can reinforce
 13 it. It won't be a wood frame so we will put some vertical
 14 rods in the corners and the solid and have the frame on
 15 it. I am not that worried about that.
 16 All of -- everything will be reinforced to
 17 withstand the dirt so we don't have really any wind
 18 issues. It is really water and water intrusion and water
 19 pressure against the walls we have to focus on. But it
 20 solves the frame problem as well at the same time.
 21 Okay. Good. Excellent. Thank you very
 22 much for your --
 23 MS. CONNELL: May I add something? If you
 24 want to contact our officer, you can do what is called a

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1 zoning review. There is a fee but she can give you a
 2 complete zoning review, certainly the requirements.
 3 MR. SINGER: She was copied on it.
 4 MS. CONNELL: Well if you want to do the
 5 zoning review, she will be in tomorrow and there are
 6 certain requirements for the submission that I can have
 7 you talk directly to her if that will help you,
 8 Mr. Singer.
 9 MR. SINGER: Yeah, that would help. What
 10 is a good time to call tomorrow?
 11 MS. CONNELL: Ten o'clock is good. I will
 12 make sure I remember that. Actually make it eleven to be
 13 on the safe side.
 14 MR. SINGER: Maybe the afternoon.
 15 MS. CONNELL: That is fine.
 16 MR. SINGER: Thank you very much.
 17 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Our final application is a
 18 formal review for 181 West Bridge Street.
 19 MR. VanLUVANEE: Good evening. I am John
 20 VanLuvanee, I am an attorney with Eastburn & Gray and I
 21 represent the Applicant. I will try to speak up. Can we
 22 ask for a five minute recess so we can get set up? We
 23 have some audio/visual materials we would like to display.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: That seems fine.
 25

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1 - - -
 2 (Recess)
 3 - - -
 4 MR. VanLUVANEE: We are ready when you are
 5 ready.
 6 CHAIRMAN VOSS: All right.
 7 MR. VanLUVANEE: This application as you
 8 indicated, relates to the -- what is known as the Cintra
 9 Mansion. We started this up by making an application for
 10 a demolition permit which was reviewed by the Borough and
 11 that was -- my application was submitted on October 27th.
 12 We have a letter from the Borough dated
 13 November 8th, 2021 from Mr. Lupinetti of Keystone denying
 14 the application appropriately and referring it to HARB,
 15 which we recognized to be the next step.
 16 We then filed the HARB application, I
 17 assume you see on January 10th and we received the Bucks
 18 County Planning Commission review memorandum on
 19 January 27th. That is the background.
 20 We prepared our presentation tonight.
 21 There are two people -- two primary presenters that would
 22 -- I would like to introduce to you one at a time. First
 23 is J. Robert Hillier who is both principal in Rebecca
 24 River Road, the owner of the property and also a
 25

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2 world-renowned architect and person with a great deal of
3 experience with historic resources.

4 And Mr. Hillier will introduce himself and
5 he has a presentation that he would like you to review
6 with him and -- relating to the application.

7 One of the things that I think you will
8 learn as a result of Mr. Hillier's presentation is that he
9 bought this property with the intent to restore it. And
10 as a result of the investigation subsequent to that and
11 over the years, including the structural engineer analysis
12 that he has done most recently, he has unfortunately
13 reached the conclusion that he doesn't have an
14 alternative, that it can't be restored.

15 That opinion will be supported by our
16 second witness, Anthony Naccarato of O'Donnell & Naccarato
17 Structural Engineering firm.

18 You have the resumes now of Mr. Hillier and
19 Mr. Naccarato and I will ask them both to talk more or
20 less a narrative form because we are not going question
21 and answer. We are not making a court record per se but
22 we do want to make sure we have an accurate and complete
23 record so when you make your recommendation to Council you
24 have -- Council will see hopefully the same record that
25 you have seen and have the same opportunity when we appear

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2 There are specific questions -- you have
3 questions that relate to -- specifically to the issues
4 relating to the regulations or commentary, I may call
5 Mr. Primavera to help us through that and enlighten all of
6 us. He has more experience than everybody in the room
7 combined on dealing with projects like this.

8 So with that, I would like to introduce --
9 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Can we confirm that the
10 camera is viewing this appropriately?

11 MR. DECKER: It is only sound.

12 CHAIRMAN VOSS: It is only sound.

13 MR. VanLUVANEE: At the conclusion I do
14 have a complete copy of record which I will give to JoAnn
15 so I can always send it to -- an electronic format for the
16 next step along the way. But that -- just the record will
17 contain just the information that we have reviewed today
18 and which will cover in the end of the presentation, after
19 Mr. Hillier and Mr. Naccarato speak and we have some
20 questions, we are getting into the subject of mitigation.

21 And we will touch on some of the mitigation that we are
22 willing to -- Mr. Hillier is willing to agree to provided
23 he has a recommendation with respect to the demolition.

24 So with that, I will turn the microphone
25 over to people that are more qualified than I am.

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2 before Council to make that type of presentation that we
3 are making today.

4 We also have with us today, although he
5 will not be one of my principal speakers, Peter Primavera
6 who is from Peter Primavera Partners. He has a lengthy
7 history in professional experience in anthropology,
8 archaeology, historic preservation and cultural resource
9 management.

10 He has been a consultant to all of us
11 frankly, providing us with the relevant regulations, the
12 relevant standards all of which we hope to address today.

13 I think when you hear -- when you are
14 finished with our presentation you will see that we
15 probably addressed all of the issues raised by
16 Mr. Kimmerly in his review memorandum. I assume you are
17 the principal author of the review. But we will have the
18 -- be available to answer any questions that you have at
19 the conclusion of the presentation.

20 If you don't mind, and it is your meeting,
21 but if you don't mind I would like you to listen through
22 the presentations, if you could, and then ask questions at
23 the conclusion, recognizing that Mr. Hillier is not going
24 to touch as much on structural engineering as
25 Mr. Naccarato is.

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2 MR. HILLIER: Good evening. The place is
3 very echoey. My name is Bob Hillier and I have had a New
4 Hope mailing address for 35 years at this point. And we,
5 my wife and I, live right on the river about two miles
6 north of the village.

7 I bought this property because I have done
8 a lot of restoration development in Princeton where my
9 office is and we have also done, which I will show you, a
10 lot of preservation around the country and around the
11 world.

12 And my intention was to buy Cintra, fix it
13 up and in fact we were going to donate and still are
14 intending to donate to the library an acre and a half
15 site, a new building for them and that was part of our
16 whole application.

17 And what I have done here is outlined for
18 you a history of the project which starts with the
19 purchase which was in 2010. And you can see here that we
20 went to a zoning and to HARB and then to the Council and
21 received approval in 2013. And during that time we did a
22 lot of extensive design of the property and then while we
23 were going for the conditions of approval of which DOT,
24 Pennsylvania's DOT was a major hurdle for us to get across
25 because the road that it is on.

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1 And then we had to get bonding and also
2 work out the water and sewer and supplies and develop the
3 homeowner's documents because it was going to be a
4 condominium.

5 During that time we did more construction
6 documents of how the renovations would go as a design.
7 And then after that we then were confronted -- and during
8 that time we were paying down the debt that we had
9 incurred in buying the property.

10 The whole point of paying down that debt
11 was that when you went for financing -- we are talking
12 about a project around ten to twelve million dollars,
13 while with that kind of thing you need 20 percent down.
14 And between the work that we were putting into the design
15 and the purchase of the property and paying it off, we
16 were at that point going to have enough equity to get the
17 financing for the whole project.

18 At that time we were then approached by a
19 firm called Realliance(sic) and they came in with a very
20 nice offer to takeover the project. And they developed a
21 whole different design and brought it into the town and
22 got a full approval.

23 About the same time as they got their
24 approval, the western wall of the building collapsed in a
25

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1 windstorm and that got them upset and they -- basically
2 their investor walked away and they abandoned the project.

3 So having -- as a designer disagreed with
4 what they had done as a design, I will talk about that
5 later. We then decided to take up the project ourselves
6 and do it and so that is what we have been doing here.

7 And in doing that, we had a second wall
8 failure on the eastern side and that -- at that point we
9 thought we better get some engineering expertise in here
10 on bearing capacity of the walls and that is when we
11 brought in MacIntosh as the engineer and we reported to
12 town Council his findings. And a lot of the people in the
13 audience said we just hired an engineer that will be very
14 self-serving because you hired him and he was just doing
15 what we were paying him to do. He took offense to that.

16 We decided to get an even better structural
17 engineer with much more restoration experience to come in
18 and that is when we went to Tony Naccarato, who is here
19 tonight to talk to us.

20 And so what I will do right now is take you
21 through our experience very quickly. This isn't a
22 commercial, just to show you that we brought the
23 credentials to do this kind of work.

24 It is our intention from the beginning to
25

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1 do the work and if you want, we will show you what we
2 intend to do eventually if you will let us tear the
3 building down and replicate it. So that is our intention
4 because that does meet the spirit of your historic code.

5 What you see here is a model that was done
6 from the original presentation. This model is ten years
7 old. Here's the mansion with a fire stair built on the
8 back, here's the barn which is a wonderful building. A
9 couple of outbuildings and I understand they were going to
10 build condominiums along here.

11 And this is the new library which we
12 designed with the library. And we still have with them an
13 agreement that once we have approval and get permits, this
14 land will go to the library. It is an acre and a half and
15 that is a 14,000 square foot library.

16 Let me begin by just showing you a little
17 bit of our history. Probably the most important project
18 we have done is the restoration of the Supreme Court
19 building interior, a complete modernization
20 technologically and architecturally of the outside. That
21 is the library of the Supreme Court building.

22 Next slide. We also were asked to do the
23 restoration of the Virginia State Capitol building done by
24 Thomas Jefferson. What a lot of people don't realize is
25

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1 that Thomas Jefferson built the building, the government,
2 and then he went to be the Ambassador to France.

3 And what happened was the people said there
4 is not enough storage in this building so they built
5 another story underneath it before they built this temple
6 building and when he came back from Paris there was this
7 beautiful building standing on top of a 14-foot high brick
8 wall. And so he said lets build a hill around it and that
9 is how that building ended up on that hill.

10 Next slide. We were then hired to take the
11 land down from the hill and create a new entrance and
12 underneath the hill now is a museum and a conference
13 center completely buried and that is the new entrance from
14 the street level to the state capitol.

15 And in here you can see the state senate
16 built room and all of these rooms were completely restored
17 and actually the movie Lincoln was filmed in this
18 building. This is Lincoln's summer cottage just outside
19 of Washington, which we restored.

20 Next slide. And this is a building in
21 Princeton designed by an architect in Boston and a very
22 famous architectural firm, McKim, Mead and White. And go
23 back. And it was built on the Princeton campus for
24 President McCosh. It was then moved off of the campus to
25

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1 Prospect Street and it became one of the eating pubs in
2 Princeton, and then it was moved again to a lot on Nassau
3 Street in the center of Princeton.

4 And at that point we picked it up, it was
5 in disrepair and we picked it up and we got the original
6 McKim, Mead and White drawings and actually followed them
7 in its restoration.

8 I draw your attention to a couple things,
9 you notice there are no columns at the Porte-cochere
10 because they had completely rotted away and we picked up
11 the building and moved it another 26 feet. So it had been
12 moved three times at this point. It is a wood frame
13 building so it was relatively easy to move. And notice
14 the stairway window which is the window that the building
15 had when we bought it.

16 Next slide. And for \$9,000 that is the
17 building that -- the window McKim, Mead and White
18 originally intended and we got that window made exactly
19 according to the drawings. And the columns, which you now
20 see are columns, and they are all cast aluminum so they
21 are not going to rot away.

22 So that is a restoration replication, if
23 you will of the original building. Completely new
24 shingles, completely new roof and has two condominiums in
25

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1 accepted it and we worked with the National -- this is an
2 actual listing on the National Historic Register of
3 Buildings.

4 The windows are absolutely accurate
5 replications of what was originally there when it was --
6 went from a school to a nursing home. When it was a
7 nursing home they dropped all of the ceilings to eight
8 feet and plywood up the upper half of the windows.

9 We went to New Hampshire and the biggest
10 contract we had on this was to get those windows
11 replicated with Thermopane. That is one of the apartments
12 that you can see there. There is 34.

13 The next slide is the back of the building.
14 This was our one addition to the back was this little
15 porte cochere and a driveway with a fountain and a little
16 garden off here to the side on the right side and up on
17 top you can see three dormers.

18 The attic of this building was a great
19 timber attic and it was so wonderful that we put two story
20 apartments up above and we got permission from the Park
21 Service to put those three dormers in to have those
22 apartments.

23 And next slide is an important one. This
24 flanks two streets, Quarry Street and MacLean Street, and
25

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1 it and behind it. The reason we moved it so we can build
2 12 townhouses behind it, which you can see over on the
3 right behind it.

4 Next slide. The one building that has been
5 completely destroyed and we had to build from scratch
6 again was the Frank Lloyd Wright building. Being from New
7 Hope you all appreciate it, inside was an \$800,000
8 collection of George Nakashima work and it went up in
9 smoke too.

10 So the house burned to the ground,
11 Nakashima's collection disappeared and they hired us to
12 redesign and rebuild the building from scratch. And I
13 took this picture yesterday because we didn't have a
14 decent picture of it.

15 And finally this was the Witherspoon School
16 for Colored Children in Princeton, New Jersey on Quarry
17 Street. This building was built in 1906 and when
18 Princeton integrated its schools it was the first town in
19 New Jersey to integrate its schools so this became a
20 middle school for the Princeton School System and we
21 bought it about 16 years ago and converted it into 34
22 apartments, condominium apartments.

23 And we put it on the National Register as
24 the first school to be integrated in New Jersey and they
25

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1 on each of the streets we did a history of the building
2 and we named it The Waxwood because at the time they
3 integrated it, Dr. Waxwood was the principal of the school
4 and he was essential in doing a good integration of the
5 two -- of the several schools in Princeton. And so we did
6 this history of that whole transition and a whole history
7 of the school.

8 And if we were to receive your permission
9 to do something in taking down Cintra, we would do this
10 same kind of thing as a mitigation in terms of the history
11 and I will talk more about that later on as we go along.

12 Now a little bit going back to the chart.
13 This is our original approval for Cintra and you can see
14 there is a stair tower on the back of the building and
15 then there is the barn over in the lower right. This
16 pointer isn't quite working as well as it should. I have
17 a better idea.

18 This is the barn. This is the mansion.
19 This was a fire stair and elevator tower and then there
20 were three clusters of housing and this is the plot for
21 the library.

22 Next slide. And this was what we call
23 phase two which was the actual construction of the
24 library. And we were putting in parking here and here for
25

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2 the library and a driveway that went around.

3 Next slide. What I talked to you about

4 this was the Realliance (sic) period and these are the
5 periods which we had the two failures which I will talk to
6 you about and Tony Naccarato will come up and talk more
7 about it.

8 Next slide. This is the currently approved
9 Realliance (sic) plan and one of the problems that I had
10 with their design was that everything you see here cross
11 hatched, those were carports. And my sense of having a
12 wonderful parklike setting and then putting carports in
13 the middle, which would be full of kayaks and bicycles and
14 all kinds of things that you don't really want to see
15 which people store in carports.

16 And so we have come along and done two
17 things; number one, we have -- in our proposed restoration
18 we have gotten rid of this tower and have been able to
19 make the entire building ADA accessible and keep the --
20 stick to the original footprint of the building.

21 And there are two cottages, this was a
22 kitchen, this was an ice house. And those are -- those
23 would be just small single family -- single bedroom units
24 and then we have clusters. The total is 29 units within
25 the project.

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2 here. And our intention, if we are allowed to build a new

3 Cintra, would be to completely imitate that porch and also
4 on the back you will see in a moment.

5 Next slide. That is that shot. Now in
6 1917 -- this is a picture and you can see the pebble dash
7 has failed and there has been patching already here. And
8 what is really important in terms of what you will see,
9 patching at this corner of the house here. That is new
10 stucco put in place of the pebble dash.

11 Next slide. And that is it today and you
12 can see here all of the different plastering that was
13 done. And when we got approval from -- the first time
14 from HARB, there was a discussion amongst you gentlemen or
15 your predecessors actually, of should we leave the exposed
16 stone or should we just re-plaster the whole thing. And
17 they argued that for about a half an hour and finally
18 decided to re-stucco the entire building, which was our
19 intention.

20 What has happened is this crack here has
21 been here for about 20 years. We have one picture that
22 shows this about 20 years ago. But this wall here started
23 to fall away and that is when we got upset and decided we
24 better bring in some structural engineers.

25 The first engineer Macintosh said this

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2 This is our new proposed plan that we are
3 doing and the important thing here is the pathways are
4 different to make the ADA accessible and we have gotten
5 rid of the carports.

6 Next slide. This is what the building
7 looks like today. What you are going to learn today is
8 that of the original building was called the pebble dash
9 stucco. They put the stucco on and then they threw
10 pebbles on it. That is why it is called pebble dash.

11 And over the years and you can see it here,
12 the pebble dash failed and they put in other stucco and
13 that stucco has failed. As a result, water has been able
14 to get -- this is over 200 years, water has been able to
15 get into the walls and destroy the stone and the stone is
16 argillite and argillite cannot stand water. And we will
17 show you today what it means when argillite is put against
18 water.

19 Next slide. This is a shot sometime in the
20 1870s or 1880s of what the real house really looked like
21 when it was built. You notice it has a wonderful porch on
22 the front with a balcony that went all the way around the
23 top.

24 Go back one slide. That is the balcony
25 today. So there was a porch that went all the way around

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2 building is in danger of collapsing, and Naccarato got
3 into it and he is even more expert in it and more vocal
4 about how dangerous this building is.

5 Next slide. This is the pebble dash
6 stucco, this is a repair job that was done and that is
7 that crack that opened up and you can see it is two inches
8 open and this crack up here as I said has been there for
9 20 years.

10 Next slide. This is settlement because of
11 the stone foundation. So you see the windows and the
12 differential from the settlement here.

13 Next slide. And up above the top of the
14 building in the attic you can see the strains here as the
15 building is starting to settle and collapse. But it is
16 not that it is settling in the ground, it is that the
17 walls themselves are settling as they are falling apart.

18 Next slide. This is a picture taken in
19 1917 and this is a beautiful porch that was on the back
20 and look at the lattice work. And if we are allowed to
21 rebuild this, that is -- our intention is to imitate all
22 of this lattice work.

23 Next slide. This is another picture of the
24 same thing and this is a point at which 1930s they added
25 bathrooms here on top of this porch.

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1 Next slide. This is 1983 when they decided
2 to do a sunken garden here and they -- you can see what
3 they were doing there, they were putting the foundation in
4 jeopardy. You can see here already there is more
5 re-plastering going over the pebble dash. And you can't
6 see it here, but the same thing was happening right here
7 where the tree is hiding it right now.

8 Next slide. This is what -- the first
9 failure here which was in 2019. This is the western side,
10 the windstorm and all of a sudden this all happened over
11 one night. And you can see that in the construction of
12 this and putting the bathrooms -- there is the bathroom,
13 all of the bathroom tile there. In putting the bathrooms
14 there they put a strain there and the walls couldn't take
15 it and we had -- yes, we had heavy winds, we didn't have
16 any rain or snow or freezing and this whole thing
17 collapsed. We rebuilt it.

18 Next slide. This is the eastern side. The
19 porch used to be here. This was the door going into the
20 bathrooms and this is the other part where you see the
21 plaster. See the plaster. This whole thing collapsed.
22 That is the wooden header right there over a window
23 completely rotted because of the moisture getting into the
24 building because it -- number one, the stone carried the
25

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1 And our firm not only specializes in the
2 design of new buildings or additions to existing buildings
3 but we also have a practice and had a practice for almost
4 our entire history, nearly 40 years, of what we call
5 facade restoration or garage restoration, parking garages
6 in particular. Basically putting structures back together
7 that have been exposed to degradation, mostly as a result
8 of water but in the cases of garages, water and deicing
9 salts.

10 So my colleague Benjamin Bruening is here
11 today. Benjamin is the individual who worked with me and
12 worked with the team to visit the property.

13 We were asked several months ago to --
14 probably multiple months ago at this point, to go out to
15 the property, which I did and I walked it and I saw
16 everything that Bob described and we went in and walked
17 around very carefully. This is not a building that one
18 should walk around in honestly. There are many areas of
19 concern in terms of the stability of the framing and the
20 flooring but we did our best and we were careful.

21 The building was then revisited by Ben who
22 spent a fair amount of time really taking a hard look at
23 the masonry here, the stone that comprises this building.
24

25 As Bob mentioned, the stone is argillite

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1 water. And number two, the plastering -- this plastering
2 was not done properly.

3 Next slide. I will turn it over to Tony
4 right now. But this is the stone argillite and it just --
5 all it does is takes water on and as it takes water on it
6 deteriorates. Tony.

7 MR. VanLUVANEE: You have a copy of Mr.
8 Naccarato's resume. I will ask him as he starts to give
9 you a little bit of his background including some of the
10 projects he has been associated with and some of his
11 experience with historic buildings, evaluating them as far
12 as the feasibility for reconstruction.

13 And also his opinions as to this particular
14 building, focusing on how it was constructed, what his
15 observations were and whether there is any way that this
16 building possibly could be reconstructed. Okay.

17 MR. NACCARATO: Good evening, everyone.
18 Thank you. Thank you, John. I am a registered
19 professional structural engineer in the State of
20 Pennsylvania. I am the president of an 85 person
21 consulting structural engineering firm O'Donnell &
22 Naccarato headquartered in Philadelphia with offices in
23 Northern New Jersey and New York and in central Indiana.
24 I have been practicing for almost 34 years.
25

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1 stone which is a sandstone. It is what we call a
2 sedimentary stone and it is not a particularly well used
3 or often used material for load-bearing construction.
4 That doesn't mean it hasn't been used, it has. And in
5 fact there are a fair number of western Pennsylvania,
6 mid-state, even in this area uses for barns. Okay.

7 Stone was fairly prevalent, it was fairly
8 inexpensive and it was utilized for the most part for more
9 rudimentary buildings. It was certainly never intended to
10 be an exposed exterior material like a brick or a granite
11 or even a limestone material.

12 What we found here is a material that has
13 suffered tremendous degradation, tremendous amount of
14 water infiltration over you know, its many, many years of
15 existence. Clearly this degradation started many, many
16 years before Mr. Hillier purchased it and it was really on
17 its way down or -- I shouldn't say that way, on its way to
18 a point of no return from a standpoint of salvaging it
19 many, many years ago probably when the stucco began to
20 deteriorate and when it was repaired.

21 Who knows how soon it was repaired, how
22 well it was repaired, what the joints were between those
23 repairs, et cetera, et cetera. And my sense is that there
24 has been ongoing water infiltration at this building as I
25

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1
2 said for decades and decades. This material is just not
3 resilient enough to become wet like this and to dry in a
4 way like brick masonry does.

5 Brick -- we know brick masonry is the
6 waterproofing for a brick. What we have to be careful
7 with brick is broken mortar joints, rusting and whatnot
8 and at window lintels that cause openings and freeze, thaw
9 and those sorts of things.

10 But the reality is that this building in my
11 professional opinion and work with our firm has done,
12 really just exceeded its usefulness as a material to
13 support load and that is why we have seen these dramatic
14 failures under really very, very minimal environmental
15 conditions. For a strong gust of wind to blow a building
16 down, the building has to be in serious disrepair or has
17 degraded seriously and very concerning to us.

18 Very concerning because not only is it in a
19 bad state as it sits but you know, if there were any real
20 opportunity to repair this building it would literally
21 require I believe a complete removal of the stone and
22 replacement. I wouldn't imagine that any significant
23 percentage of this stone would be reusable at this point.

24 I did bring a couple of bags here to show
25 folks that this stone literally crumbles when grabbed.

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1
2 You can go out and grab a piece, grab it with your hands
3 and you can pull it a part and that is not what a
4 load-bearing element should be. There is also obviously a
5 mortar to show you some of what you can do to this. It
6 just literally disintegrates.

7 And the feeling is that we can go over a
8 hundred percent of this building facade and do this you
9 know, everywhere. So what you have now is you have a
10 building as it sits, in my opinion structurally unsound
11 and that any retrofit, any repair would be wholesale. It
12 would require 100 percent removal, 100 percent
13 replacement.

14 And frankly the process of doing that would
15 be very, very potentially dangerous to the individuals
16 that would be performing that work in terms of, you know
17 collapse without warning. And you know, the expense would
18 be you know quite exorbitant to perform that sort of a
19 wholesale reconstruction.

20 Obviously would not replace it even with
21 this material, it would be foolhardy to do that. You
22 would be replacing it with a suspect material, a material
23 that is -- just isn't the right material for this sort of
24 application. So to be able to say that you would replace
25 it in kind I think would be -- would really not be prudent

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1
2 in my opinion.

3 So you have our report. Our feeling is
4 that the building in its current condition is unsafe. You
5 know, God forbid trespassers got into it and -- not saying
6 that they should be there but it happens, and it is
7 dangerous for them and certainly would be in our opinion
8 very, very dangerous to attempt in any way to try to put
9 this building back together and it would be extremely cost
10 prohibitive.

11 MR. HILLIER: Do you want to explain these
12 other two pictures?

13 MR. NACCARATO: I actually -- if it was
14 okay, Ben was on site and like I said we are a team and I
15 -- again I think it would be great for you to hear from
16 our individual, our employee. Ben is also a structural
17 engineer.

18 MR. VanLUVANEE: I know you're not going
19 any where.

20 MR. NACCARATO: No.

21 MR. VanLUVANEE: One question I did want to
22 ask you. I think the answer is obvious but in the
23 Planning Commission review they do mention possibility of
24 moving the building. You said you can't reconstruct it.
25 If you can't reconstruct it, you can't move it; is that

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1
2 right?

3 MR. NACCARATO: A building constructed in
4 this manner, moving the building like this is nearly
5 impossible. If it were in pristine condition it would be
6 impossible. As it is not a wood frame building where you
7 have wood with plywood sheathing and you have headers and
8 you have all kinds of things that are positively attaching
9 the walls and giving them a strength in and of themselves.

10 These walls are designed as gravity -- what
11 we call gravity-bearing walls. The mortar is essentially
12 filling up the voids between the stones because they are
13 not perfectly right, they are not perfectly squared with
14 each other. It is not like mortar today that actually has
15 some tensile strength and some shear strength. This
16 mortar was -- it was not great mortar to begin with and it
17 is in terrible shape today.

18 Again the manner to try to move this thing,
19 it would fall apart I think within a few feet off of its
20 foundation.

21 MR. HILLIER: You wanted to explain that
22 picture?

23 MR. VanLUVANEE: First of all just for the
24 record, Ben, would you introduce yourself and tell the
25 Board a little bit about your qualifications.

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1 MR. BRUENING: Benjamin Bruening,
 2 B-R-U-E-N-I-N-G, structural engineer, professional
 3 engineer licensed in Pennsylvania as well. And I do a lot
 4 of restoration work.
 5 And what we have here is an example of
 6 embedded wood, timber framing inside the wall. Since the
 7 wall has been saturated, the timber has subsequently been
 8 saturated and I was able to push a multi-tool into timber
 9 framing at a number of locations with no resistance.
 10 This one is a beam pocket so in a
 11 load-bearing masonry wall the floor framing and the actual
 12 exterior wall are one in the same. So when the wall --
 13 exterior wall gets saturated in a way it is not supposed
 14 to, that eventually leaks into the wood and you have rot
 15 and deterioration which then creates an issue for the
 16 floor framing itself. The two are not separate.
 17 So a lot of the collapse has been the
 18 result of deteriorated timber frame within the wall,
 19 particularly failed timber lintels. That was the cause of
 20 the collapse that we have seen elsewhere in the building
 21 and also a localized area of beam framing where the beam
 22 pocket had -- the wood in the pocket is completely
 23 deteriorated and the beams gave way and there was a
 24 partial collapse of the floor.
 25

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1 And all of the timber lintels that I
 2 observed were in similar condition. And there was a good
 3 percentage, I believe the report said about 50 percent of
 4 the beams that I observed, beam pockets were in a similar
 5 condition where you could shove any tool right through
 6 them and it is a representative of complete loss of
 7 structural integrity.
 8 MR. VanLUVANEE: Can you explain this one
 9 as well?
 10 MR. BRUENING: This is an example of a beam
 11 pocket as well. You can just visually see the
 12 deterioration there as well without sticking a tool in it
 13 and coming out of the page and pocketing the window is one
 14 of the pieces of the floor framing so that is a primary
 15 structural member going across the main floor, that added
 16 support point is really compromised.
 17 MR. VanLUVANEE: Any other questions?
 18 Thank you very much. Gentlemen, at this point -- and
 19 again all of our people will be here for questions.
 20 Mr. Hillier had mentioned mitigation if he
 21 is entitled to -- had mentioned mitigation that he would
 22 be willing to undertake in the event the demolition permit
 23 is actually ultimately granted.
 24 We prepared a list of the mitigation
 25

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1 measures. These are all things that he is willing to do.
 2 And of course he has already told you what he would like
 3 to do by way of replicating the building. Not
 4 reconstructing it, but replicating it.
 5 MR. HILLIER: We have pictures and drawings
 6 of that if you would like to see them. We would propose
 7 a roadside plaque noting the building and on the sidewalk
 8 in front of the house we would put a plaque like you saw
 9 at the Waxwood defining the history of the building.
 10 We would prepare a historical documentation
 11 which would be technical drawings, photos and an accurate
 12 written history of the building. And we would salvage
 13 what materials we can and that you wanted to and reuse
 14 them on the site or donate them to any historical group in
 15 New Hope.
 16 And we would update the Cintra portion on
 17 the National Register nomination which at this point is
 18 sketchy. There are four times where the Cintra is
 19 mentioned but it is not really mentioned in a historic
 20 sense so we would spend the time to write the right piece
 21 of the Cintra history to go in the national registration.
 22 And we would do a history presentation and possibly a
 23 booklet that could be at the high school or any of the
 24 schools in New Hope and so that there would be a permanent
 25

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1 history of the building in addition to the plaques which
 2 -- the plaques would be important I think for the house
 3 itself.
 4 Now I would just like to take you quickly
 5 through our intentions because as I said at the beginning,
 6 we bought this place to restore it. We had no idea and I
 7 am embarrassed by this, we had no idea that the stone
 8 walls were in terrible condition.
 9 Next slide. This is the front of the
 10 building as we would propose it. We would do it all with
 11 pebble dash. We would imitate the original roof. And one
 12 of the pictures, I don't know if you noticed, this central
 13 roof was actually a copper standing seam roof and we would
 14 do that there. I just noticed that in the pictures last
 15 week when I was going through them.
 16 This is the porch and you can see the porch
 17 covered that whole area at the front, the door and the
 18 window. At one point this porch was strictly decoration
 19 with three windows. They at one point turned this into a
 20 door and what we are proposing because this is one unit
 21 and this is another unit, two condos, we would put a door
 22 in each unit with access to that front balcony.
 23 Next slide. I have already shown you this
 24 that we are following the original footprint of the
 25

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1 building. And for the handicapped access, this ramps
2 down and goes underneath here so you can get into this
3 unit here on the lower floor and this one here on the
4 ground floor from a handicap standpoint.

5 And if you want to get up into the main
6 mansion where there are two units, there will be a space
7 for an ADA lift at that point. There are elevators in the
8 units -- in the two units that are in the upper part of
9 the house.

10 Next slide. And this is the back of the
11 house with -- excuse me, go back. That is the front
12 elevation of the house. The other one was the
13 perspective, this is an actual elevation of what it would
14 look like. The shutters are exactly as they have been
15 and the windows are exactly as they have been except they
16 would be with Thermopane.

17 Next slide. And this is the back elevation
18 with the -- there is a unit down here and a unit down here
19 and then this is one condo and this is another condo. And
20 on the top here is a dormer which are a bedroom and a
21 bedroom which are the secondary bedrooms for these units
22 here.

23 Per the National Park Service on a historic
24 restoration, they don't want the house to change its
25

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1 approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness that will
2 permit the demolition of the building.

3 If you accept these mitigation proposals,
4 those are certainly conditions that Mr. Hillier will
5 accept. If we get past that step then I know he intends
6 to proceed with the project, which the center piece of
7 which will be the rebuilding but that is a little bit
8 beyond the scope of demolition and I think beyond --
9 perhaps beyond the scope of this Board.

10 Now if there are questions, we have
11 obviously the witnesses to answer. If you have specific
12 questions with respect -- for example to the piece where
13 we are proposing to rewrite the Cintra portion of the
14 National Registry nomination, Mr. Primavera can explain
15 that process, if it is something you want to hear about.
16 He has written many, many nominations and certainly is
17 qualified to speak to that issue if that is a concern of
18 yours at the present time.

19 But thank you for your attention. I
20 appreciate the opportunity to go all the way through the
21 presentation before we get to questions.

22 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Thank you. Let's start
23 with questions from the Board and then we can open it for
24 public comment.
25

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1 appearance from the right of way but you're allowed to do
2 things on the back of the house so this would be a copper
3 standing seam dormer keeping with the copper gutters which
4 would be replaced.

5 That is it. So that is just an inkling of
6 what we would like to do. And go back to that last slide.
7 I just want to point out the lattice work that you saw on
8 the one picture, we would be imitating that also.

9 Okay. So that is our presentation. I
10 thank you for your attention and I just wanted to repeat
11 our going into the property it was to do the good things
12 that we have done with other properties and we just had no
13 idea that this stone was in the terrible condition that it
14 is in.

15 MR. VanLUVANEE: Thank you. Just wanted to
16 summarize that the application before you obviously is the
17 demolition permit. We don't have a building plan in front
18 of you. He can't proceed with any plans until he knows
19 that he can demolish this building. Obviously that is an
20 issue.

21 The slides he showed you at the end are the
22 next step but we needed to take the first step.
23 Reconstruction is not an option. If you agree with that
24 and the -- we are asking for a recommendation that -- for
25

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1 MR. O'BRIEN: I just have a few questions
2 for Mr. Hillier.

3 In 2010 when you purchased the property you
4 stated that the cracks in the existing stucco work had
5 already been there, they were in excess of 20 years old
6 you testified to; correct?

7 MR. HILLIER: Excuse me, I didn't hear the
8 middle of that sentence.

9 MR. O'BRIEN: The cracks that were there in
10 the stucco work were in excess of 20 years old when you
11 purchased the property?

12 MR. HILLIER: Yes.

13 MR. O'BRIEN: In 2010 when you purchased
14 the property did you make any efforts to secure those and
15 stop any further infiltration of water?

16 MR. HILLIER: That crack no, we didn't but
17 we were -- we spent over \$185,000 repairing this building.

18 MR. O'BRIEN: I understand but my question
19 is when you purchased the property there were already
20 cracks in the stucco work and already water infiltration
21 in the building.

22 Did you take any steps at that time to stop
23 that from happening?

24 MR. HILLIER: No, we didn't. Not active
25

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1
2 steps at that point because frankly I see a lot of cracked
3 stucco buildings where we haven't had that kind of a
4 problem. So my fault, it didn't occur to me that there
5 was water getting in there to stone that couldn't take the
6 water.

7 MR. O'BRIEN: Okay. Thank you.

8 MR. KESTER: You were also unaware at that
9 time that this argillite was a bad stone to be using?

10 MR. HILLIER: I did not know that the
11 building had been designed to be built like a barn. And
12 what it didn't even have, which is interesting, you know
13 when they built barns they called the corner man the key
14 mason because he made the corners and you built the
15 corners up straight and then they put rubble in between
16 the corners.

17 This one is all rubble and what they have
18 on the corners is very decorative which would we replace
19 and replicate. They have a very decorative brick, one
20 course of brick going up the corners which is where that
21 two inch crack happened.

22 And that crack to your question, that crack
23 was not there when we bought it. That happened because of
24 the failure of the wall and that is why we put the bracing
25 up on it.

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1 MR. O'BRIEN: Okay. But again back to my
2 point; when you purchased it, at that point in time you
3 didn't do any remediation to the existing structure to
4 stop further deterioration?

5 MR. HILLIER: No, because we didn't think
6 it was that serious.

7 MR. O'BRIEN: Okay. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So I have a couple of
9 questions. When the wall failed, at that point did you
10 look at the stone that made up the wall and recognize what
11 you were then facing?

12 MR. HILLIER: At that point we repaired the
13 wall and rebuilt it. The two places where it collapsed,
14 we rebuilt those two places. You go over there today, you
15 would see that it was rebuilt and plastered.

16 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Okay.

17 MR. HILLIER: But it was rebuilt with CMU,
18 concrete masonry units, it wasn't rebuilt with the stone.

19 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Right. The reason I am
20 asking is I looked at the minutes from the workshop with
21 the Council and I believe they are -- one of the comments
22 was you were unaware of what stone made up the interior of
23 the walls, you could see it from the outside but you
24 didn't know if the inside was a good stone or a weakened
25

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1
2 stone on the inside.

3 And it just looked like when the wall came
4 down you had the ability to look at the entire cross
5 section of the wall and I was just curious what that told
6 you at that time.

7 MR. HILLIER: That was the point which we
8 brought in the first engineer who was Leonard Busch out of
9 Trenton to figure out how to brace the walls and fix it.
10 And that is what we did and that is why inside the
11 building is internal shoring to hold up the floors because
12 of those rotting beams that were -- those beams were
13 hidden by the plaster and wood flooring and we had no idea
14 that there was dry rot going on in those.

15 But that dry rot -- they are white oak
16 beams and dry rot doesn't happen in the ten years we have
17 owned it, it was going on for years before that. But we
18 didn't know that because it was all plaster and beautiful
19 inside, all of the finishes were intact because it was an
20 antique store at the time.

21 CHAIRMAN VOSS: That is why I was asking
22 when the wall fell you had the opportunity to see the
23 construction of the wall, you could see beyond the plaster
24 because it broke away and you could look into the layers
25 of the wall.

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1 MR. HILLIER: At that point we still didn't
2 think that we had a serious problem.

3 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Okay. The other
4 outbuildings on the property, how are they constructed?

5 MR. HILLIER: Excuse me.

6 CHAIRMAN VOSS: The other outbuildings on
7 the property, how are they constructed?

8 MR. HILLIER: They are constructed with
9 stone. And they have been altered extensively over the
10 years, windows taken out and windows put in, et cetera.
11 But our intention is to rebuild them the way they are.

12 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I was wondering are they
13 the same material? Are they in equal danger of collapse?
14 The same stone?

15 MR. HILLIER: That is a good question.
16 They may be. I don't know the answer to that question.
17 We have been worried more about the mansion frankly.

18 CHAIRMAN VOSS: The reason I ask is not
19 because of my concern for those buildings, I am just
20 wondering if they show the same degradation that -- it
21 seems like those are one story, they would be easier to
22 see flaws.

23 MR. HILLIER: Yeah. The ice house is --
24 has shown degradation of the roof. The roof has a
25

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2 terrible sag in it. Our intention is we would have to
3 rebuild that anyway, that roof.

4 CHAIRMAN VOSS: It is the walls I am more
5 interested in if it is the same stone construction.

6 MR. HILLIER: It is the same thick
7 construction. I am not sure that it has the penetration
8 problems that the main house has.

9 CHAIRMAN VOSS: That is what I was looking
10 for.

11 MR. HILLIER: Yeah.

12 MR. KESTER: But your plan is to
13 reconstruct those, not knock them down? The other
14 outbuildings, your intention is not to knock them down?

15 MR. HILLIER: No. No. And the barn we
16 intend to restore also.

17 CHAIRMAN VOSS: That is not part of this
18 proposal.

19 MR. KESTER: I know, I am just curious.

20 I would like to thank you for explaining
21 what you are going to do with the building in the future
22 because I was very interested in that.

23 MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

24 MR. KESTER: Kind of operating it --

25 MR. HILLIER: You know, my feeling is that

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2 argillite, also mined out of Pennsylvania and it is more
3 like marble. It is hard, very hard. Very hard to break.

4 MR. KESTER: But this argillite is not
5 quite like the fieldstone that we are used to seeing in
6 many of the meeting house buildings in --

7 MR. NACCARATO: No way. From a composition
8 standpoint you're talking about an igneous rock or even a
9 metamorphic rock. This is a pure sedimentary rock so it
10 means its been -- have been set over time.

11 The weight in and of itself have created
12 the stone but it is not -- I got to be honest, this is the
13 first building I have come across in my 34 year history --

14 34 year career that utilized this material as a
15 load-bearing element other than again a barn, something
16 that -- like a farmer may have put together, right? And I
17 got some stone, hey I got some wood, I will build a barn.

18 And I bet you over the years many of those have had issues
19 in terms of partial collapses and whatnot. They are -- it
20 is just not the right material. It is just unfortunately
21 not the right material.

22 MR. O'BRIEN: If I can ask Mr. Naccarato a
23 question.

24 In your professional opinion, if the
25 building was remediated in 2010 when it was purchased and

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2 three years from now if you let us go, people will drive
3 by and say that is the Cintra Mansion and it is a
4 beautiful addition to New Hope.

5 And they are not going to know about this
6 meeting and all of these difficulties, they are just going
7 to say there is a mansion that has been around since --
8 modeled after one built in 1806.

9 CHAIRMAN VOSS: You mentioned other
10 historic buildings -- well other buildings, maybe not
11 historic, I assume they are, use the same fill stone, same
12 walls.

13 Do they experience the same problems? I
14 mean are they -- do we know whether -- you mentioned -- I
15 understand barns are different so they might not have the
16 same weight necessarily applied --

17 MR. HILLIER: To be honest with you, this
18 is the first stone building we have ever taken and
19 restored or tried to restore. Every other building has
20 either been brick or poured concrete or L-wood frame.

21 So this was our first experience with stone
22 obviously. And it is interesting, this is argillite which
23 as Tony said is a sandstone basically and water will
24 destroy it. But there is Argeton argillite which all of
25 the dorms at Princeton were built out of Argeton

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2 stopped any water infiltration behind the stucco that
3 would have affected the rock at that time, would it be
4 your professional opinion that the building would still be
5 in need of demolition today.

6 MR. NACCARATO: Yes. I believe that most
7 of the degradation of this material occurred well before
8 2010. This building, as Mr. Hillier said, had stucco that
9 had come off. Who knows how long it was off before it was
10 repaired. How well it was repaired. Window headers that
11 may not have been properly coated with material.

12 There were kind of a combination of --

13 MR. O'BRIEN: A myriad --

14 MR. NACCARATO: A myriad -- very good word
15 -- of issues that compounded, and you know people might
16 say well if you put a tarp over the building it would have
17 been fine and I disagree with it.

18 MR. O'BRIEN: So it is your professional
19 opinion that even if the building was at the time of
20 purchase in 2010 remediated to stop any further
21 infiltration of water, that the damage that was already
22 done would still affect the building to the state it is in
23 today?

24 MR. NACCARATO: It would still be a
25 building that is what I would consider to be questionable

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1 structural integrity and still have the potential for
 2 collapse without warning, you know because of stone that
 3 was deteriorated that no one could see. That sort of
 4 thing. That is my opinion.
 5
 6 MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you.
 7
 8 CHAIRMAN VOSS: You mentioned the -- one
 9 of the projects that you worked on, I will call it the
 10 Lincoln House, I don't remember --
 11
 12 MR. HILLIER: Lincoln summer house.
 13
 14 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Lincoln summer house. If
 15 this were the Lincoln summer house made of the material
 16 that it is made of, if that is what they had used at that
 17 time, what aspects of it would be worth saving?
 18
 19 MR. HILLIER: You mean if you were to tear
 20 it down?
 21
 22 CHAIRMAN VOSS: If we knew that it was
 23 that particular piece of history attached to it, Abraham
 24 Lincoln, what would the impact of that have on the ability
 25 to preserve some portion or all portions of this?
 26
 27 MR. HILLIER: That one was so thoroughly
 28 restored to look the way it looked when Lincoln was there,
 29 it wasn't -- we did not reuse a lot of that house. It was
 30 on an Army base and it was kind of a forgotten piece of
 31 architecture.

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1 After we did the Supreme Court building,
 2 the architect of the Capitol asked us to do the exterior
 3 of that building. And a lot of the woodwork that you see
 4 on the porch, that was all brand new.
 5
 6 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I guess what I am looking
 7 at -- I mean one of the things that -- in our HARB
 8 Ordinance that we are tasked to consider is financial
 9 hardship, costs associated with it.
 10
 11 I haven't heard any dollar amounts
 12 mentioned from you yet so I will -- I won't mention an
 13 infinite supply of money. What would be -- say what would
 14 be -- given unlimited funds and resources, what would be
 15 worth saving in this building? Where would you put your
 16 effort if you knew you had to save all or parts of it?
 17
 18 MR. HILLIER: Saving all or saving parts of
 19 it, we are willing to go through there with you and
 20 anybody else in town and pick out parts on the inside that
 21 if they want to be saved, they can be saved.
 22
 23 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So you're saying it is
 24 only things on the inside, nothing on the outside?
 25
 26 MR. HILLIER: There are some cabinet work
 27 in there that is glass front cabinets but they are hand
 28 tool and still useable. So there are things inside that
 29 -- that could be used and could be placed in any place in

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1 other structures or saved. We are perfectly happy to
 2 donate everything that could be saved.
 3
 4 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I guess I am wondering --
 5
 6 MR. HILLIER: The issue here is the basic
 7 structure which is the walls and the floors is not safe.
 8
 9 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I understand that but
 10 interestingly enough HARB is responsible for the exterior
 11 of the building, the views from the outside. And in fact
 12 if you wanted to change things on the inside, we could
 13 give recommendations but I am looking for specifically
 14 facade.
 15
 16 If you were tasked to preserve the facade
 17 of the building, how would that be done.
 18
 19 MR. HILLIER: We have looked at -- you
 20 asked about the cost. We are looking at seven figures, in
 21 two, three, five million dollars as a range and that
 22 becomes financially impossible obviously.
 23
 24 If you wanted to save parts of the stone --
 25 the stone doesn't last long. That is the problem. And so
 26 -- and the building is basically stone and a bunch of
 27 rotten windows which we are going to replicate and replace
 28 and the shutters also.
 29
 30 I mean frankly the shutters were -- we
 31 could save them. We could keep them and reuse them. They

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1 are four panel shutters and some of them could be saved
 2 and rebuilt. So that is the kind of thing if we could do
 3 that, we would do that.
 4
 5 CHAIRMAN VOSS: And the brick exposed -- I
 6 have seen the brick but was that intentionally exposed?
 7
 8 MR. HILLIER: Yes. Yes, it was.
 9
 10 MR. NACCARATO: I wanted to reiterate, I
 11 don't believe there is -- any of the stone is salvageable.
 12 I think if you saved a couple of two, three pieces of
 13 stone, you know could you make a memorial? Could you put
 14 it in a corner? I would never reuse this stone for
 15 structural purposes. I just do not as a structural
 16 engineer feel that that is appropriate. The brick.
 17
 18 MR. HILLIER: Could you use it in a
 19 retaining wall?
 20
 21 MR. NACCARATO: Probably not wide enough.
 22 It would be a gravity wall and probably more width than
 23 you have. Could it be a small wall, a seated wall? I am
 24 sure we can come up with some sort of --
 25
 26 MR. HILLIER: That we can do.
 27
 28 MR. NACCARATO: Not a you know, a ten foot
 29 difference in grade, a two foot difference in grade. But
 30 the one component -- again I hesitate here because we did
 31 not look at it specifically, but I believe the brick was

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2 not in a serious deteriorated condition and so perhaps
3 there is an opportunity to salvage the brick.
4 Whether the brick goes back in exactly the
5 same spot or not, I am not an architect. I am not here to
6 design a building. You asked about what exterior
7 materials do I feel or do we feel could be reused and I
8 would say the only material that I could see being reused
9 in the building -- in this case in a decorative manner
10 because again --
11 MR. HILLIER: That is all, it was
12 decorative.
13 MR. NACCARATO: I would believe we would
14 potentially look at the brick and see if that can be
15 partially, if not fully reused, every brick maybe
16 partially reused.
17 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I will not suggest that you
18 save the dormers, but what about the dormers? I am only
19 asking because they are not going to be -- they are not
20 collapsing with the wood -- sorry, the water penetration
21 into the stone. I am just -- I am just trying to --
22 MR. HILLIER: It is a good questions.
23 MR. NACCARATO: It is a good question and
24 it is -- would bear additional investigation.
25 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Okay.

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2 It is compromised. It has been compromised
3 for a very long time. It was built of materials that are
4 not really appropriate for this sort of construction and I
5 think what you are going to find is that when you tear at
6 it, 95 percent of it will be garbage and it is held
7 together you know sometimes with a little bit of love and
8 magic and a little wind comes and look what happens.
9 Yes, it would be rebuilt with modern
10 materials as you say, floor joists and loads.
11 MR. O'BRIEN: Restored, not rebuilt.
12 MR. NACCARATO: Reconstructed and the idea
13 would be to replace the stucco in its exact condition so
14 that it replicates what people see when they -- let's be
15 honest, nobody saw the stone. The stone was a structural
16 element which was never intended to be viewed.
17 So when we build today we build with modern
18 materials, we can make the outside look kind of any way we
19 want to depending on its surroundings and whatnot. And we
20 can use older materials, we can use modern materials.
21 There are a lot of things.
22 My sense would be that we would build it to
23 meet current code, which it certainly doesn't meet current
24 code in any way. It doesn't have positive connections to
25 it. It would not withstand probably even a minor quake at

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2 MR. HILLIER: If you were to let us do
3 this, we would come back to you with the new design in
4 detail and use every piece of the existing building
5 exterior that we could. That is why I mentioned the
6 shutters, I think some of the shutters are saveable.
7 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I suppose the other thing
8 and the word I keep hearing are the load-bearing nature of
9 the stone. Meaning if I were to rebuild this or renovate
10 or restore it I will say, why does the wall have to bear
11 load now?
12 Isn't it possible to use steel on the
13 inside to support all of the new floors, the new
14 everything that is inside and then have the current walls
15 shored up in whatever manner; you know concrete plaster --
16 a concrete plaster on the inside and outside in order to
17 shore up the stone interior that is not -- I am just
18 making up -- I don't know anything.
19 MR. NACCARATO: This stone is serving as a
20 gravity load-bearing support but it is -- it also needs to
21 withstand the wind loads and the seismic forces which are
22 lateral loads. I am not confident that this wall can do
23 anything. This is not a wall in a condition that you
24 would want to live in this building, if you would feel
25 safe living in this building.

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2 this point.
3 So there are many reasons why structurally
4 today you would not ever build a building like this. It
5 is just -- never. So we would replicate and build a new
6 structure that would be today's code and the exterior
7 could be non-load-bearing but would be attached and could
8 be designed by Bob and his folks to you know -- I don't
9 know if mimic is the right word, but to certainly engender
10 the spirit and the feeling of what that building looked
11 like when it was originally constructed.
12 MR. HILLIER: So what -- when we assumed
13 the stone wall was good and we were going to redo it, we
14 were going to rip all of that plaster off and put new
15 pebble dash on there. So what we are talking about is we
16 are gong to put the same pebble dash that we were going to
17 put on the building up today but on the steel structure
18 that you are talking about.
19 And the only difference is that stone which
20 as he said garbage, isn't going to be there. But
21 everything else in terms of the intent, the original
22 intent of the building is going to be there and that is
23 why I showed you over the years not only was the stucco
24 not properly maintained but a lot of the character of that
25 building was removed in those porches.

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 2 And what we are suggesting is we want to
 3 put all of that character back in and make it really an
 4 authentic restoration of the original building, which is
 5 frankly what we did with the Lincoln cottage. We took it
 6 back with new materials to what it was.
 7 MR. O'BRIEN: If you build the replica
 8 structure, which would be razing this existing structure,
 9 building a new replica structure on the actual site, would
 10 that be located at the same location?
 11 MR. HILLIER: Absolutely. The same
 12 footprint. That is why I was showing you that the new
 13 plan without that stair tower on the back, which was
 14 always a problem which we were doing for fire code but
 15 then we said if we can cut out some of the inside in there
 16 and put the elevators and the stairways inside and do it
 17 this way in terms of code, we would do it that way and get
 18 it back to the original footprint that lets us put that
 19 original porch back on.
 20 MR. O'BRIEN: Okay. Thank you.
 21 MR. KESTER: That was my question too
 22 actually about following the same footprint, using the
 23 same setbacks, the same flavor of the original building.
 24 The argillite is garbage. There is no sense trying to
 25 save that. I don't see a point in that. It was obvious

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 2 from the pictures the way it was crumbling apart and the
 3 reports that I read.
 4 MR. HILLIER: I had even hoped to use the
 5 stone for sitting walls and retaining walls but from what
 6 I am hearing, it is even scary to do that at this point.
 7 CHAIRMAN VOSS: We can come back --
 8 MR. O'BRIEN: Not that I can think of right
 9 now.
 10 Getting on a personal note, when people say
 11 that they don't build them like they used to, the answer
 12 is because we don't let them.
 13 MR. HILLIER: Okay. As a code enforcement.
 14 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Before I open up to public
 15 comment, Dave, did you want to -- maybe you can expand on
 16 or add details of any place to the preliminary review.
 17 MR. KIMMERLY: There is still a couple
 18 things in my memo that should be addressed and one is
 19 there is the demolition cost plus the cost of this
 20 reconstruction of this new Cintra. What is that number
 21 versus repairing and restoring the existing building?
 22 Because I believe this building could
 23 potentially be restored and repaired with the right amount
 24 of money which could be considerable. And it seems to me
 25 like there will be a considerable investment in the

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 2 demolition and the reconstruction that may very well be
 3 that amount of money to restore it as.
 4 MR. VanLUVANEE: We tried to answer that
 5 and I think Mr. Naccarato tried to address that. His
 6 point is that you can't preserve it, you can't reconstruct
 7 it using these materials and that is what preservation is.
 8 The building can't be preserved, it can be replicated.
 9 And from everybody passing by on the street
 10 it is going to look like the mansion looked a long time
 11 ago. It is just going to be a building that will stand
 12 another 200 or 300 years rather than falling down the last
 13 hundred years like the photographs indicate.
 14 So I think that is what we are talking
 15 about. I think when preservation isn't an option, then
 16 demolition can be an alternative. What we are talking
 17 about reconstruction really isn't preservation, that is --
 18 they are two different things.
 19 That is why we feel we have to get the
 20 demolition permit in hand in order to follow the plans and
 21 replicate the structure. We can't preserve it. You can't
 22 preserve these stones, they are falling apart. We can't
 23 use those materials again. It doesn't matter how much you
 24 want to spend, you couldn't do it. And Rich probably
 25 wouldn't approve the structure if he knew what it was

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 2 built out of. You probably couldn't get a permit to
 3 rebuild it.
 4 MR. KIMMERLY: I do acknowledge that this
 5 particular building, the corners in particular are a
 6 concern. They were not done originally correctly. There
 7 should have been large corner stones on the corners and
 8 that was not done correctly to begin with and that kind of
 9 sealed the fate of this building to what we have today.
 10 I do believe however that if those corner
 11 situations were rectified and then the remaining
 12 intervening stone retained and restored, re-pointed and
 13 then covered with the same material, that you could
 14 probably get another 200 years out of this building.
 15 And I would like the Borough to consider
 16 potentially hiring a third party to take a look at it.
 17 Just -- especially because we don't know that number. We
 18 don't know that demolition versus reconstruction -- I am
 19 sorry, demolition and reconstruction amount, that detail,
 20 versus what it would cost to repair and restore it or even
 21 if it is even feasible to repair and restore.
 22 MR. VanLUVANEE: That is why we offered an
 23 expert opinion that it is not feasible. That is the
 24 point.
 25 MR. KIMMERLY: And then moving on to the

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1 conditions of demolition and kind of the mitigation that
2 is here that is being suggested. A couple questions about
3 that and some things that HARB might want to consider
4 asking.

5 The historical documentation, the drawings,
6 the photos, the written history, where would that go? It
7 shouldn't get put on a shelf in Borough Hall, it should be
8 some type of a public display or something like that. If
9 ultimately the library ends up on the site, I think it
10 would be a fantastic idea to put the documentation on
11 display permanently within the new library.

12 Again there is a lot of details that would
13 have to be worked out on that. I think that would be
14 potentially a good location for that.

15 I am also curious about the Cintra portion
16 of the National Registry. I believe that when this
17 building is remodeled, reconstructed it will lose its
18 National Registry status, so to update the National
19 Registry is kind of a moot point. It doesn't need to be
20 done, it serves no purpose. I think that doing a good
21 history on it, a good history book on Cintra and again
22 having that publicly some place where people can access
23 it, would be a good mitigation.

24 Also you know in the Certificate of
25

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1 Carolina and Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

2 We are a historic preservation consulting
3 firm that has been in business since 1984. I am the
4 founder of that firm. The professionals on our staff are
5 archaeologists, historians, architectural historians and
6 most relevant to the discussion tonight, architectural
7 conservators.

8 And so as preservationists, and I consider
9 myself one, we first try to work through the Secretary of
10 Interior standards cited in your Ordinance and in that
11 process what you heard tonight by -- I am intimidated
12 following a worldwide famous, legendary architect and a
13 nationally prominent structural engineer and a little
14 nervous about even presenting after the two of you, which
15 I usually am not.

16 But we would follow the Secretary of
17 Interior standards. There are four standards as you know;
18 restoration, rehabilitation, preservation and
19 reconstruction.

20 We examined all of those in part and it is
21 reflected in the work we have done and the presentation
22 you see tonight. And unfortunately as Mr. Hillier has
23 said, a lot of this is news to him, that a lot of what we
24 found recently going through the standards in a
25

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1 Appropriateness ultimately you will have to put in there
2 the condition that the rebuild and the reconstruction will
3 be identical to how it looked on the exterior. And also
4 that the outbuildings will not be demolished, that they
5 will be retained and they will be restored accurately as
6 well.

7 So I think those are important points that
8 need to go into the Certificate of Appropriateness when it
9 is ultimately drawn up, if the demolition and
10 reconstruction is allowed to continue.

11 I believe that because you lack those
12 numbers that this should be continued and not decided on
13 this evening but that is your decision.

14 Okay. So I would like to hear some
15 information about how this National Registry nomination
16 update is going to occur and what the value of it is.

17 MR. VanLUVANEE: I will ask Mr. Primavera
18 to tell you. You have his resume which is lengthy but for
19 the benefit of the audience perhaps a couple seconds about
20 his experience and then specifically to address
21 Mr. Kimmerly's comments.

22 MR. PRIMAVERA: Peter Primavera, Peter
23 Primavera Partners, LLC. We have offices in New Jersey,
24 New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, Charleston, South
25

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1 disciplined way.

2 And to get to the question of restoration
3 or some sort of reconstruction, one of the things we have
4 to do formally and under the national historic
5 preservation guidelines which are spelled out in the
6 Secretary of Interior standards is you do an alternatives
7 analysis and one of the parts of the alternatives analysis
8 is you do a material conditions analysis.

9 And so to summarize quickly, what has been
10 said is -- we have advised with the team and in extensive
11 discussions with the team that you don't have mortar you
12 can use and you don't have stones you can use. I was on
13 the site this afternoon and that Ziplock bag you have in
14 front of you is when I went to the wall and pulled a piece
15 of the argillite and it crumbled in my hand. It crumbled
16 as I put it into that one gallon Ziplock bag. That is the
17 stone, not the mortar. That is the stone.

18 To Mr. Kimmerly's comments; the National
19 Registry nomination, I disagree with you. I think there
20 is a great value in correcting the National Registry
21 nomination because this HARB knows as well as anybody,
22 that that is a very old -- it is a 37-year old National
23 Registry nomination. It was done when people first
24 started writing National Registry nominations. It is 23
25

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2 pages and it justifies the -- tries to justify the
3 significance of the entire downtown and those four
4 outlining buildings in one document in 23 pages.
5 If you asked me to write a National
6 Registry nomination for Cintra alone --
7 MR. KIMMERLY: There is one.
8 MR. PRIMAVERA: Have you seen it? It is
9 not particularly good.
10 MR. KIMMERLY: No.
11 MR. PRIMAVERA: If you asked me to do it
12 today, the report would be -- the nomination would be a
13 hundred pages.
14 MR. KIMMERLY: I agree.
15 MR. PRIMAVERA: In doing an updated
16 National Registry nomination we are correcting the record
17 but we are also doing parts of the mitigation; writing the
18 history, documenting the building, interpreting the
19 history. Making it useful that the public, like teachers
20 in three schools across the street could use for time and
21 eternity to tell the story of Cintra.
22 That is why I suggested that we -- through
23 Mr. Hillier that we actually update that section of the
24 nomination. Frankly I don't care if it goes past the
25 town. You know, we don't have to go through the whole

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2 process registering it and go to the State and go to the
3 National Park Service, we can just update it to current
4 standards.
5 MR. KIMMERLY: Okay.
6 MR. PRIMAVERA: And it memorializes the
7 site and makes all of the information and it captures the
8 point of -- let me finish, please. It captures the point
9 of a mitigation, that is we have extracted the historical
10 significance and we told it, we preserved it.
11 MR. KIMMERLY: Thanks for that explanation.
12 So this National Registry nomination standard --
13 MS. CONNELL: You need to remove your mask.
14 MR. KIMMERLY: Sorry. So the National
15 Registry nomination, to update it, it would be more or
16 less something that would not be officially submitted to
17 the State Preservation Office, it just simply would be an
18 exercise in updating it and providing the same type of
19 documentation.
20 So my question then is why not just merge
21 that into this last mitigation measure and just simply do
22 a good history and a good architectural analysis?
23 MR. PRIMAVERA: You have the cart in front
24 of the horse.
25 What you do in doing a good National

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2 Registry nomination is you do a good history and so I am
3 going farther than what you're suggesting. What I am
4 suggesting to Mr. Hillier, by writing a nomination we are
5 not only rewriting a really good registry -- by the way
6 Cintra in Portugal is spelled with an "S" and not with a
7 "C", and things like that. I mean I make a joke but
8 things like that are wrong in the nomination.
9 I have pictures of the Cintra Palace that
10 is referred to in the documents. It is a Moorish 11th
11 century castle. To say this was inspired by that is
12 ridiculous. Nomination goes further, I have to write the
13 history but then with the history I have to measure the
14 drawings, I have the photographs.
15 That is what you do when you do a
16 nomination, right? You do the history. You write a
17 statement of significance which this does not have. It
18 does not have a statement of significance. That is the
19 final chapter of a National Registry nomination. We would
20 tell everybody why Cintra, the property, the estate, the
21 buildings were significant.
22 Were they significant for persons, place,
23 events or some other factors. Those are the four criteria
24 when you nominate buildings on the National Registry.
25 This building has several of those;

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2 architecture, history. We know the owner was a
3 significant local person, an industrialist who had a lot
4 to do with the development of New Hope and he built his
5 business based on the construction of the canal and the
6 opportunities that that presented him.
7 So a National Registry nomination is a more
8 thorough, more disciplined, more inclusive, holistic
9 mitigation than just writing the history. So all I am
10 saying is we are going further than just writing the
11 history.
12 And then we put that online, on the town
13 website, on the historical society website, we put that
14 online at the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission.
15 We put that online in the archives of the Athenaeum in
16 Philadelphia. We put our pictures and our drawings in an
17 exhibit in the historical society or the lobby of the new
18 library if it gets built. Plenty of opportunities, all to
19 be determined.
20 MR. KIMMERLY: Okay. Can I ask one more
21 question? So the -- in your opinion if Cintra, the
22 building currently as it stands, if it is demolished and
23 rebuilt in modern materials but to appear old, would it
24 lose its National Registry designation?
25 MR. PRIMAVERA: You don't lose your

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 2 National Registry designation unless you go to the
 3 National Park Service and apply to de-designate a
 4 property, which I have done eleven times in my career.
 5 Now I have done hundreds of nominations but
 6 there have been eleven times where we were saying that the
 7 property lost its significance. Mr. Hillier is not saying
 8 this property has lost its significance. He is saying he
 9 acknowledged it, he wanted to save it, he wanted to make
 10 it central to the redevelopment project from the start.
 11 And so what we have is a situation where the significance
 12 cannot be captured in saving the existing building to the
 13 point you're making.
 14 The other point I would like to answer for
 15 you, Mr. Kimmerly, you talk about the cost analysis. I
 16 want to be totally honest about that, how do you analyze a
 17 building that you are demolishing completely and you're
 18 left with an 1824 foundation flooded with water. What
 19 zoning officer would let you do that?
 20 We have to rebuild a modern foundation with
 21 spread footers. And all that we would be able to do in
 22 the way of using the existing building is find replica
 23 materials and probably not argillite, right? Probably not
 24 argillite because we have to have a good solid material,
 25 not a bad material. As you said, we don't let people

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1
 2 educational programs, which is something we would want to
 3 talk about.
 4 We are not going to make any money at all
 5 on this project. I want to make that clear. This is not
 6 a money making project. This is a reputation saving
 7 project and that is why we want to do it but we want to do
 8 it right. And that is all. To answer your question, I
 9 gathered the data from my expert.
 10 - - -
 11 (Recess).
 12 - - -
 13 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Okay. So we can have some
 14 time to open up for public comments. Everyone will be
 15 restricted to three minutes. Please.
 16 MR. BALDERSTON: Thank you. Good evening.
 17 My name is Joe Balderston and I was born and raised in New
 18 Hope and I have never left, and I think some of the
 19 Borough Council members kind of wish I would leave but I
 20 am here to say.
 21 What I would like to say is that I would
 22 like to congratulate Mr. Hillier, the team that he has put
 23 together and brought here to give the explanation on the
 24 history of this building and where it is and where it is
 25 going to go if we don't move forward with the team's

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1
 2 build buildings like that any more. And we put the stucco
 3 on it, that is an important point that Mr. Hillier made.
 4 We put the pebble stucco on.
 5 So from the interior what we are not doing
 6 is any of the four Secretary of Interior standards
 7 treatment of historic buildings because this is not a
 8 reconstruction. What we are doing is we are trying to
 9 emulate, replicate. In a reconstruction you have enough
 10 documentation to make it look like the day it was built.
 11 MR. HILLIER: To answer the question that
 12 you have asked about the cost. We heard that to restore
 13 the walls and we were at one point talking about the five
 14 walls on the front only, that that cost was 3 to 5
 15 million. To build the house new complete is going to cost
 16 about 2,700,000.
 17 The demolition, and this is stunning. The
 18 demolition, I asked Jim who is our construction manager,
 19 how much -- and I said is a 100,000 enough to demolish it?
 20 He has a price of 45,000 to demolish it.
 21 So that -- the point is just saving those
 22 walls is going to cost 3 to 5 million, we can build the
 23 whole place for 2.7 million and demolish it also.
 24 And what we did offer is I would be willing
 25 to commit a gift to the Historic Society to just have

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1
 2 presentation and take that building down and get a new
 3 building there that is going to look exactly like the
 4 building that was there.
 5 Because if we don't do this and this team
 6 walks away from this, what is going to happen? The
 7 building is going to come down. Maybe nobody else will
 8 come with the funds and rebuild it.
 9 So I would like to encourage this Board to
 10 move forward in the right direction for this community,
 11 take that building down and let this project move forward.
 12 Thank you.
 13 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Yes.
 14 MR. EDWARDSON: My name is Peter Edwardson.
 15 I am a local builder in Bucks County. I have done a lot
 16 of work over the years for Mr. Hillier and I have done a
 17 lot of work on Cintra Mansion; the repairs, the fall
 18 downs, the snowstorm when the back porch fell off. There
 19 is just different things that occurred there that caused
 20 this building to not be repairable.
 21 Just two years ago we were -- started the
 22 repair on a fall down about eight feet wide from twenty
 23 feet of stone just collapsed overnight. So we initiated a
 24 repair in that section, twenty feet.
 25 We are working on it and as we are going up

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1
2 it is getting bigger and bigger and bigger and wider
3 because every piece of that wall is just ruined. It is
4 just ruined. There is no mortar in the building, it is
5 all just lime and like mud.
6 The stone has gotten wet from the outside.
7 The wood -- every joist it pockets into the stone is
8 rotted. Therefore that -- so what do you fix? Do you fix
9 the wood structure or do you fix the stone? They are both
10 no good.
11 I just wanted to share that as a local
12 builder that has been doing this a long time, that if the
13 building were saveable, Mr. Hillier would save it. There
14 is no way that I can see any of this happening just in the
15 condition that the building is.
16 One of the other comments I want to make
17 about the ten years that Mr. Hillier has owned it is there
18 was one leak in the roof. One leak that I was aware of.
19 That leak didn't cause all of the stone walls to start
20 failing.
21 Just so you know, that is -- the one fellow
22 said you could put a tarp on the building and save it for
23 restoration when you are ready to do it. The building was
24 already gone a hundred years ago as far as -- I wouldn't
25 live in that building.

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1
2 MR. FREEO: My name is Jay Freeo,
3 F-R-E-E-O. I am a New Hope resident.
4 I just came across something which I assume
5 most of you are aware of but I happened to Google New Hope
6 for some reason and there is a paragraph on Google search
7 for New Hope, again which many of you may have seen.
8 New Hope is a town in Eastern Pennsylvania.
9 The decor of the Parry Mansion reflects the different
10 generations who lived here from the late 1800s onward.
11 Nearby Cintra is a distinctive 1800s mansion. So that is
12 on the Google search for New Hope.
13 So I guess my question is if -- based on
14 what I have heard there is insufficient structural
15 integrity to rebuild what is there. And the question is
16 if it does get totally demolished and then rebuilt -- this
17 is a question that came up earlier is -- does Cintra still
18 retain that historic designation in any way? It seems to
19 me it would not because it would simply be rebuilt over
20 the existing footprint.
21 So I guess my question is what might be
22 important is preserving that historic distinction and look
23 at ways in which it was referenced can we save this, can
24 we save that? But for example only assuming this building
25 has a basement, can the foundation walls be utilized

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1
2 I wouldn't put my family in that building
3 because it is -- honey, you get home from work which wall
4 fell down today. That is how serious the building is and
5 that is how delapidated it is. Even though it is
6 structurally held together by you know band-aids, it is
7 like a foundation from the basement level, the footing
8 level all the way up. So what you have is you have to
9 take the whole foundation down to the footing. So really
10 what he's offering to do to replace it -- Mr. Balderston,
11 his comments are wonderful.
12 There is nobody else going to repair this
13 property, restore it and make it right for this town to
14 have a legacy signature job by Mr. Hillier, the architect
15 that just wow, look at that because it will be a perfect
16 restoration, it will not be half-assed.
17 Anybody else that comes in here will want
18 to develop it as quickly as possible and make as much
19 money as they can. He is willing to take the architecture
20 that is there and replace it with something just as
21 perfect and wonderful, even better and it will last that
22 200 years you're after. It is just -- that is my case or
23 what I just wanted to share.
24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Thank you. Any other
25 comments?

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1
2 there, earth on the outside? Hopefully that stone is in
3 better condition. Can you do reinforced concrete walls
4 against the existing basement foundation, preserve the
5 basement foundation and then build up from there?
6 And does that change the distinction in any
7 way? Because to salvage the other portion of the building
8 from what we have heard is a futile attempt at any sort of
9 restoration. Thank you.
10 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Thank you. Any other
11 comments? Okay. Lets bring back to the Board then. Any
12 additional questions you would like to followup?
13 MR. O'BRIEN: Nothing.
14 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So I have at least one, it
15 is sort of a followup based on Dave's comment.
16 The dollar sign amount here, I mean it is
17 difficult for me to think that it is impossible. I have
18 heard you quote a price now, \$3 million plus. So I think
19 to me -- for me to make a valid decision at this point I
20 need a way to quantify the impossibility of this task. If
21 impossibility means that it has a \$500 price tag, then
22 that is what it is. If impossible means a \$5,000,000
23 price tag, then that is what it means.
24 But I can't make a -- hearing that it is
25 impossible when in fact there is a possibility, I think I

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1 need to know -- I need to be able to quantify that so I
 2 would like some -- I don't want to vote yes or no on this
 3 at the moment. I just need to know how impossible it is.
 4 So again the idea I was asking and I asked
 5 Mr. Kimmerly a little bit more just for detail of what it
 6 might look like. I don't know. That notion I had of you
 7 know, if we had a framework inside which is the same steel
 8 that you are planning to build a new construction, then it
 9 seems to me we could save the current facade and that
 10 might mean having a two-inch thick layer of cement bonded
 11 to the backside of the wall.
 12 Again I am just saying this without knowing
 13 a dollar price -- a dollar amount, but if that could be
 14 done, in fact the facade from that layer out would be the
 15 original. And it would serve a purpose of saving at least
 16 portions of the building, the portions that are front
 17 facing.
 18 So I think I would like to see it -- sort
 19 of a cost analysis between the knockdown rebuild versus
 20 saving the front facade only versus saving the entire
 21 building surrounds. It just seems that is what I would
 22 like to see.
 23 I don't know what you two feel about that.
 24 If there is a way we can talk about what request would be
 25

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1 And what we are trying to do is to preserve
 2 -- you know, as I have learned Williamsburg is not a
 3 preservation, Williamsburg is all new buildings with one
 4 exception.
 5 Lots of historic aspects of this country
 6 have been preserved by replication, not preservation and
 7 that is what what I think we are trying to accomplish.
 8 MR. HILLIER: Williamsburg incidentally is
 9 totalled recreated. There is not -- there is one building
 10 in all of Williamsburg that is authentic. People still go
 11 to Williamsburg and think they are going back to the
 12 1600s.
 13 MR. VanLUVANEE: And they learn a lot about
 14 the 1600s when they do go. The fact is they wouldn't
 15 learn any more if those buildings were original or built
 16 now.
 17 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So if I am hearing you
 18 correctly, you're saying that in comparison to ten years
 19 ago when you would have put a \$3.5 million price tag, it
 20 is now impossible.
 21 MR. VanLUVANEE: I think he is saying he
 22 didn't know what he knows now ten years ago or he wouldn't
 23 have put the price tag on it.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I thought we heard a price
 25

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1 reasonable. Part of the reason I am mentioning this is
 2 because we are again tasked, I believe it is Section 1011
 3 in the HARB Ordinance and it specifically gives us the
 4 possibility to look at the financial hardship but we need
 5 quantifiable numbers to be able to act on that.
 6 MR. VanLUVANEE: That is the reason why we
 7 asked Mr. Naccarato to testify because that is relevant if
 8 there is a way to preserve what is there. But this --
 9 Mr. Naccarato's opinion was he wouldn't recommend
 10 preservation because the walls will continue to
 11 deteriorate.
 12 So what you have accomplished if you back
 13 it up and build a new building behind it, you really
 14 haven't preserved anything except you watch it deteriorate
 15 again. Who will want to live on the property if you can't
 16 guarantee that it is going to stay there, it won't blow
 17 over again.
 18 There is no point in putting a price tag on
 19 it. It makes no sense doing it. That is the point we
 20 were trying to make. It is not about the money. It is a
 21 matter of doing something that makes the most sense for
 22 the property when you can't preserve the property and we
 23 can't. The property is on the National Registry, not just
 24 the building. Remember that too, it is the property.
 25

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1 tag now of ten years ago.
 2 MR. VanLUVANEE: What is the price tag for
 3 3 to 5 million?
 4 MR. HILLIER: The price tag of tearing
 5 those walls down and rebuilding them with real stone is 3
 6 to 5 million.
 7 MR. VanLUVANEE: Not preserving the
 8 existing stone?
 9 MR. HILLIER: The exiting stone cannot be
 10 used. That is the big thing, that is the whole problem
 11 frankly. I mean a lot of what you are saying it is
 12 possible but you can't do it with that stone. You can't
 13 do it with those foundations with all due respect to the
 14 gentleman who said that.
 15 Those stones in the basement are the reason
 16 we are getting those settlements on the corner because
 17 those stones in the basement are also soaked and they were
 18 -- they have been soaked for 200 years, not because we
 19 owned it for the last ten years. So the stones are the
 20 issues.
 21 Yes, we can build a steel frame. And yes,
 22 we can put up stone and pebble dash on top of it but today
 23 that stone would only be that thick, not that thick.
 24 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Could you explain that
 25

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1 part? Sorry. Could you explain that again? You said
 2 this thick.
 3
 4 MR. HILLIER: Today if you were building
 5 that with modern technology and you wanted to have the
 6 stone wall, it would be three, no more than four inches
 7 thick.
 8 MR. O'BRIEN: You would use a cultured
 9 stone?
 10 MR. HILLIER: Excuse me.
 11 MR. O'BRIEN: You would use a cultured
 12 stone as opposed to real stone?
 13 MR. HILLIER: You could use a cultured
 14 stone. My house is all done in stone and it is a four
 15 inch deep stone.
 16 MR. O'BRIEN: It is just a facade.
 17 MR. HILLIER: It is four inch thick with a
 18 steel frame behind it, steel studs behind it and sheathing
 19 and then on the corners we did big stones and they cut
 20 them out so that the cornerstone is only four inches thick
 21 also. But when you look at the house, those big thick
 22 corners make you think the house is that.
 23 But the problem is that whole thing was all
 24 covered up with the pebble dash and to me the pebble dash
 25 and the windows and the shutters are the character of that

NEW HOPE HARB MEETING - FEBRUARY

1 house and what is behind it and holding it up can't be the
 2 stone. That is the problem.
 3
 4 It is just as Tony Naccarato said, the
 5 stone is really garbage and it is because the stucco
 6 failed over the years. And who knows -- you know the --
 7 there is no caulking around those windows. So you -- if
 8 you look at the way the window sills are, the cracking
 9 around those windows, water is getting -- has been getting
 10 in there for years.
 11 It is just not a well-built building and we
 12 are not trying to get away with anything.
 13 MR. O'BRIEN: Can I ask you a question, Mr.
 14 Hillier?
 15 MR. HILLIER: Yes.
 16 MR. O'BRIEN: Knowing what you know now
 17 about this building and knowing that -- I am making a
 18 brash assumption here, that not only the mansion structure
 19 but the outbuildings and the barn are probably built with
 20 the same stone. Okay. Knowing what you know now, would
 21 you have bought the property back in 2010?
 22 MR. HILLIER: No. No. I would not have
 23 knowing that today.
 24 MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you.
 25 MR. HILLIER: I am not sure incidentally

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1 that the same stones were in the barn.
 2
 3 MR. O'BRIEN: Again making a brash
 4 assumption but if that is what they mined to build the
 5 primary structure, I would assume the outbuildings which
 6 were used probably are the same stone.
 7 MR. HILLIER: Yes. The one thing about the
 8 outbuildings to get your question about rebuilding, they
 9 are not carrying a floor load and the roofs need --
 10 frankly need to be replaced, they are sagged roofs.
 11 But the footprint and the walls will still
 12 work. We can make those work. This we can't because it
 13 is holding up floors and the floors are rotted. You saw
 14 those beam pockets.
 15 In other words, you build the stone wall
 16 and then the beam comes into it and that is where you get
 17 the dry rot and how you're able to stick a screwdriver
 18 right into the wood. And we have the same -- and this
 19 goes at the windows too. The same condition at the window
 20 headers, there is a wood header. This is oak, white oak
 21 wood headers over the windows and they are all dry rotted
 22 because of water penetration. And that oak can take a lot
 23 of water. And the fact that you can just jam a
 24 screwdriver into them just shows that its just been rotted
 25 away.

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1 It just is poorly -- I want to say poorly
 2 designed technically for its time because we can go around
 3 here and look at a lot of barns that were built with the
 4 right fieldstone and with real rock Lockatong argillite as
 5 opposed to this argillite, and they are beautiful and they
 6 are standing and they will stand for another hundred years
 7 but this one is really done. I hate to say it.
 8
 9 And to answer your question, Mr. Code
 10 Enforcement, I wouldn't have bought it.
 11 MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you.
 12 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I am personally -- I don't
 13 mean to speak for the group, personally I am still
 14 concerned. I don't know if it means that we do need an
 15 outside -- a second person to look at this to give us an
 16 estimate of what they believe it would cost.
 17 I mean right now I am hearing that it is
 18 not possible. So if someone were to say it is possible,
 19 then I would want to know what cost would come along with
 20 that. It seems to me that it is the impossibility of the
 21 reconstruction that is central to your argument and so if
 22 that is not the case, then I have difficulty voting in
 23 favor of a demolition.
 24 I don't know how to get that extra
 25 information but it seems like that is the -- that is what

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1 I need.

2 MR. BALDERSTON: May I? I am just going to
3 say again, if this team decides to walk away from this and
4 nobody else comes forward, you're libel to just have a big
5 vacant hole in the ground after it collapses and nobody to
6 rebuild it.

7 Don't waste your time. Please. You had
8 the experts. These people are well recognized all over
9 the world. I encourage you to move forward with this.
10 Please. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Seems like we are perhaps
12 ready to at least entertain a motion. I would want to
13 suggest however that there would likely be conditions that
14 we would want to place upon this.

15 If there were agreements for passing this
16 to Borough Council with a recommendation for demolition,
17 would you be comfortable with the idea of us having a
18 separate discussion for us to try to think of what -- in
19 other words, I don't know that we are ready right now for
20 -- to make all of the conditions that we might want to
21 place in our recommendation.

22 And I guess what I am wondering is if -- if
23 a decision were made now to move it along, would it be
24 acceptable to you to delay that transmission to the
25

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1 MR. HILLIER: It is not an ancient
2 building, it is more something from the 1940s/1950s.

3 MR. VanLUVANEE: That is the only thing I
4 am saying. The cottages, which are the two on both sides
5 and the barn in the back that has already been renovated.
6 Bob is certainly happy to preserve those. The other one I
7 think everybody has agreed doesn't have any historic
8 significance.

9 MR. HILLIER: HARB originally allowed us to
10 take that down, that third building that is in the back.

11 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Well again that is not part
12 of our proposal.

13 MR. VanLUVANEE: I know. You were talking
14 about a condition that would require the preservation of
15 the other buildings, I am just clarifying to you what Bob
16 was saying, he says he is more than willing to do that.

17 MR. HILLIER: I am happy to sit down with
18 you and even help you with the conditions if you want.

19 MR. VanLUVANEE: That is the other thing I
20 was going to offer is the dialogue.

21 MR. HILLIER: I mean we talked about the
22 brick, I think it is a great idea to save the bricks and
23 frankly that is an easy thing to do. And I would like to
24 save the shutters and there are probably other things you
25

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1 Borough Council while we had a chance to discuss further
2 what conditions we would like to place on it?

3 And then of course when you are in front of
4 Borough Council you would have the opportunity to discuss
5 those conditions and discuss it with them rather than with
6 us. I am just trying to think of how we can do this. I
7 am not ready to put the conditions on right now.

8 MR. VanLUVANEE: I understand that. And
9 certainly conditions, we have already offered you some and
10 so I understand that. And you haven't had a chance to
11 discuss it among yourselves, you saw it for the first time
12 tonight so I appreciate that.

13 I guess my question is what timeframe you
14 would request in order to do that. And I also would
15 caution you that the outbuildings -- Bob has made a
16 statement of his intent to preserve the two -- there is
17 one building that you do not intend to preserve, right?

18 MR. HILLIER: And we have approval for
19 that.

20 MR. VanLUVANEE: When he says he has
21 approval, on the site plan just so you understand, there
22 is a small building in the back next to the barn. That
23 has always been proposed to be taken down and that has
24 never been an issue in any of the discussions in the past.
25

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1 would like us to do and we can work that out.

2 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Okay. Like I said, I know
3 we can't -- I don't want to --

4 MR. VanLUVANEE: We know you can't do that
5 and I appreciate that. I would rather have a well thought
6 out set of conditions and dialogue back and forth usually
7 helps to do that. And I am always willing on behalf of
8 the clients in front of HARBS or Zoning Hearing Boards or
9 Borough Councils to try to get the conditions to a point
10 that we are all in agreement so we don't end up in a fight
11 whether a condition is appropriate or not.

12 So we are more than willing to work with
13 you to get to that and the question is how do we
14 accomplish that. You meet once a month and you have
15 hearings rather than work sessions, but we are more than
16 willing to make ourselves available for a discussion on
17 conditions.

18 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Okay. So just with the
19 assumption -- so if you make -- you want to make a motion
20 -- if you would like to make a motion that --

21 MR. O'BRIEN: No. What we would do at this
22 point in lieu of making a formal motion would be to table
23 the application while we discuss possible conditions
24 associated with some level of recommendation to Borough
25

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1 Council.

2 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I guess the only reason I

3 wonder if there is an issue with that is then we would

4 have to have a public meeting in order to have the final

5 vote.

6 MR. O'BRIEN: Yeah. Next month we will --

7 just like the zoning hearing would convene to make a

8 decision.

9 MR. VanLUVANEE: Continue to a date certain

10 which will be your next HARB meeting?

11 MR. O'BRIEN: Exactly.

12 CHAIRMAN VOSS: That is fine. I didn't

13 know if you were looking for something had to be in two

14 weeks.

15 MR. VanLUVANEE: No. I recognize you

16 postponing the formal decision until your next HARB

17 meeting at which time be prepared to hopefully make a

18 motion with conditions and we hopefully have a chance to

19 know what they are going to be.

20 MR. O'BRIEN: I will make sure that the

21 Borough forwards you a copy of conditions that we may

22 impose on that official decision. Okay.

23 MR. VanLUVANEE: And if you could get it to

24 us so we have a couple days to comment on it.

25

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1 MS. CONNELL: I will resend them tomorrow

2 morning.

3 CHAIRMAN VOSS: We will table that so --

4 so we are not voting on that tonight. I think that is it.

5 Motion to adjourn.

6 MR. KESTER: I will make that motion.

7 CHAIRMAN VOSS: All in favor?

8 MR. KESTER: Aye.

9 MR. O'BRIEN: Aye.

10 CHAIRMAN VOSS: Aye. Thank you.

11 - - -

12 (The proceedings were concluded.)

13 - - -

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1 MR. O'BRIEN: Yeah.

2 MR. VanLUVANEE: Okay. That is fine.

3 CHAIRMAN VOSS: So we are looking to table

4 it?

5 MR. O'BRIEN: Table it to next month when

6 we will make a formal recommendation to Borough Council.

7 CHAIRMAN VOSS: With conditions. And they

8 -- again some of them could be built off of --

9 MS. CONNELL: You can discuss them on the

10 record.

11 CHAIRMAN VOSS: That is why I wanted to

12 make sure we were on the record.

13 MR. VanLUVANEE: That is fine. Thank you

14 very much for your time.

15 CHAIRMAN VOSS: And the final item on the

16 agenda is the minutes.

17 I realized that I only saw them.

18 MS. CONNELL: I sent them to everybody.

19 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I thought they never saw

20 them.

21 MS. CONNELL: I sent them to all of you at

22 the same time.

23 CHAIRMAN VOSS: I only saw the preliminary

24 communication.

25

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me in the above cause and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Karen W. Browndorf, RPR
Official Court Reporter

- - -