

MINUTES

**State Historic Preservation Review Board
Friday, December 3, 2021, 9:30 a.m.
Teleconference via Microsoft Teams (Recorded)**

Present: Mr. Barlow, Dr. Bucki (via phone) Ms. Dyer-Carroll, Mr. Edwards (Chair, via phone), Mr. Herzan (via phone), Mr. McMillan, Ms. Saunders (via phone), Mr. Wigren

Absent: Dr. Feder

Staff: Jenny Scofield (presenting), Todd Levine (presenting), Jane Schneider, Marena Wisniewski (via phone)

Guests (by Agenda Item):

IV.A.1 Jack Benjamin (City of New Britain), Eryn Boyce (PAL), Jacob Cole (City of New Britain), Michele Malinowski (New Britain Historic Properties Commission), Mathew Robayna (Winn Development), Steve Schiller (City of New Britain)

IV.A.2 Tod Bryant (Heritage Resources), Peter Viteretto (Heritage Landscapes), George Weston (Hillside Cemetery Association), Susan Weston (Hillside Cemetery Association and Torrington Historical Society)

IV.B.1 Peter Alter (Alter & Pearson, LLC), Mike Berdan (Glastonbury Historical Society), Steve Bielitz (Glastonbury Historical Society), Rebecca Delaney (resident/business owner), Meagan Alter Hope (Alter & Pearson, LLC), Richard Johnson (Glastonbury Town Manager), Robert Laughlin, Alley Schneitzel (Glastonbury community), Barbara Theurkauf (Glastonbury Historic Commission), Jennifer Wang (Glastonbury Town Council)

I. Call to Order

Ms. Scofield confirmed that a quorum of Board members was present. Mr. Edwards called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. The Board discussed the order of items on the agenda.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Ms. Scofield provided the digital meeting procedures and announced that the meeting will be recorded. She requested that each person wishing to speak state their name and affiliation before giving comments. Ms. Scofield acknowledged guests in attendance and asked that guests introduce themselves under the agenda items they are affiliated with.

III. Approval of the September 17, 2021 meeting minutes

Mr. Edwards requested comments on the June minutes. No comments were heard.

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Ms. Saunders, to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2021 meeting (Y-6, N-0, Abstained-1).

Board members voting yes: Ms. Dyer-Carroll, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Herzan, Mr. McMillan, Ms. Saunders, Mr. Wigren

Board members abstaining: Mr. Barlow

Dr. Bucki entered the meeting and requested to reopen discussion of the minutes.

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Ms. Saunders to open an addendum discussion of the minutes.

Dr. Bucki requested a correction on p. 5. All members approved the addendum.

IV. Action Items

A. Completed National Register Nominations

All registration forms are subject to changes made by the State Historic Preservation Review Board (SRB) and by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff.

1. Landers, Frary & Clark Ellis Street Plant Historic District, New Britain (Criterion A- state level, Criterion C- local level)

Ms. Scofield summarized that property is a 22-acre industrial complex located on both sides of Ellis Street. It encompasses 25 contributing resources dating from 1918 to 1962, including one railroad loop and a retaining wall. Staff recommends the complex eligible at the state level under Criterion A for Industry and Invention. The company was a major producer of household electrical appliances and military equipment used in both world wars. The property is also recommended under Criterion C at the local level for its representation of typical industrial construction. It is a massive complex, with so some window loss, but minimal building losses to the complex. It is also an important industrial complex in New Britain.

The owner of the property initiated the nomination. Notice of meeting was sent to owner, potential developer, the City of New Britain and New Britain Historic Properties Commission (HPC), 30 days before meeting. The CLG process was positive; the Mayor and HPC sent letters of support, which were shared with the SRB. The nomination was posted on the SHPO website during noticing period. No other letters were received in response to the notice. Erin Boyce of PAL attended the meeting to represent the nomination. Other guests included Jack Benjamin (City of New Britain), Jacob Cole (City of New Britain), Michelle Malinowski (New Britain Historic Properties Commission), Mathew Robayna (Winn Development), and Steve Schiller (City of New Britain).

Mr. Edwards welcomed the guests and noted that this is a stellar nomination for a worthy complex. He invited public comment.

Mr. Steve Schiller introduced himself as the City Planner, attending with Jacob Cole, Planner I. He spoke in support of the nomination, on behalf of the City Plan Commission, Historic Properties Commission, and Commission on Community and Neighborhood Development. The history of

New Britain is closely tied to the history of manufacturing. This building is emblematic of the City's history. Although the kinds of industries that occupied these factories are gone, there is still strong community support for preserving these reminders of the past. The City found that out during the demolition delay process for Stanley Black & Decker a couple years ago.

Mr. Edwards invited comments from the SRB.

Dr. Bucki commented on how intact the complex is. These are the only extant buildings of this type, and they represent the early twentieth century industrial landscape. She liked the reference of the complex to the adjacent residential areas in the nomination. It shows how integral these factories were to most neighborhoods. This is one of the intact industrial segments of the city and a wonderful nomination.

Mr. Wigren asked for clarification of terms such as spray pickling and bonderizing. He also asked what is special about a bacon can [referenced in the text]. He stated that another industrial building designed by William Brooks is the Atlantic Screw Works in Hartford. He requested clarification of Figure 4 – sometimes the photo numbers cover up the building numbers.

Ms. Boyce mentioned that the bacon cans were called out for the WWI production and will research why those were called out in the nomination.

Mr. Edwards stated that it is important to understand the connection between this local manufacturer and their partnership with Edison's juggernaut, which becomes General Electric. This was a big corporate combination.

Mr. Herzan commented on how thorough the documentation is and that the nomination is a great reference. The property is clearly eligible and well documented.

Mr. McMillan clarified that pickling is an acid wash that creates a corrosion-resistant coating on metal. He requested correction of the resource count (24 vs. 25).

Mr. Edwards asked if the New Britain Museum of American Art's building, which was the Lander's House was associated with the family member that was a partner in this firm. It is the only building on the museum site that is original to that property. Mr. Wigren noted that Marena Wisniewski wrote an article on the house for *Connecticut Preservation News*. It was originally built for William Hart, President of Stanley Works, and later sold to Grace Landers, the widow of George Landers, founder of Landers, Frary & Clark. The conversion of the house to the museum was done by William F. Brooks. Mr. Edwards requested that a quote or footnote recognizing that correlation be added to the nomination. Brooks is revered in Hartford because of his design (as Brooks and Davis) of City Hall.

Dr. Bucki noted that figure 12 is a famous photograph used in labor history. It is by Gordon Parks, who became a famous African American photographer. It should be noted that this is the first time (WWII) black women are given jobs of substantial nature in American industry. This is an important site for social history.

A motion was made by Mr. McMillan, second by Dr. Bucki to recommend Landers, Frary & Clark Ellis Street Plant Historic District for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-8, N-0, Abstained-0).

Board members voting yes: Mr. Barlow, Dr. Bucki, Ms. Dyer-Carroll, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Herzan, Mr. McMillan, Ms. Saunders, Mr. Wigren

2. Hillside Cemetery, Torrington (Criterion C, state level)

Ms. Scofield stated that staff recommends the property eligible under Criterion C at the state level for landscape design. It is a 132-acre cemetery on a hill overlooking the downtown. 64 acres is in used as a cemetery It was designed in 1907 by the Olmsted brothers – Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and John Charles Olmsted. The Olmsted firm continued to do work at the cemetery subsequent to the original design. It meets Criteria Consideration D because it derives primary historic significance for design.

The owner, Hillside Cemetery Association, initiated the nomination to honor the history of the property. Notice of the meeting was sent to owners, City of Torrington, and Torrington Historical Society, 30 days before meeting. Nomination also posted on our website during noticing period. The City is not a CLG. Todd Bryant and Peter Viteretto, consultants for the nomination; Susan Weston from the Hillside Cemetery Association and Torrington Historical Society; and George Weston from the Hillside Cemetery Association attended the meeting.

Mr. Edwards invited public comment.

Mr. Bryant shared that this project was a privilege to do. He noted that the Olmsted firm designed 4 cemeteries, including three by the Olmsted brothers, and only this one is in Connecticut. The Association has kept the cemetery intact.

Mr. Edwards invited comments from the SRB.

Mr. Barlow discussed the reference to an Olmsted-designed building on pages 5 and 13summary paragraph. He noted that it is unusual for the Olmsted firm to design a building and asked if there is a drawing or reference to that information. Mr. Bryant responded that the building is in the plan drawing for the cemetery as a whole. Mr. Viteretto noted that the siting and design of the building was influenced by the Olmsted brothers, but they did not do the design documents.

Mr. Barlow requested rephrasing of the term “design interventions” in the narrative description because that is a modern phrase. He asked that the Olmsted Brothers be changed to Olmsted Brothers and successor firms when referencing later work. On page 8, under vegetation, the botanical name is followed by common name; add parenthesis or italics to make it easier to read.

Mr. Barlow asked referenced the landscape design narrative on page 17. He requested that more discussion of the rural cemetery movement be added. Talk about Mount Auburn being the first one. Discuss how the rural cemetery movement led to the rural park movement. Mr. Viteretto clarified that the nomination is confusing implies that the rural cemetery was elaborate, but the

movement pre-dated the elaborate. Mr. Wigren added that fenced family plots were not characteristic of the rural cemetery movement. Mr. Bryant noted that he found references to the fencing.

Mr. Barlow asked that under Criterion Consideration D, the firm be referred to as the first landscape architecture firm, rather than the first landscape firm.

Mr. Edwards requested that the site plans shown on pages 47 and 51 be oriented in the same direction.

The SRB discussed the dates of the photographs.

Mr. Edwards commented on the emphasis on family monuments and concern that the headstones should not be prominent in the landscape. Mr. Bryant responded that the cemetery did follow Olmsted guidance on that but there are monuments in the area known as millionaires' row that are substantially more elaborate, but they are grouped in a semi-circle behind the chapel. Everything else is modest; there is one mausoleum. Mr. Viteretto stated that the monuments are always secondary in this landscape; it is about the drives and the grading. This is a quintessential Olmsted landscape. The only thing lost over time is vegetation; the circulation and view sheds are still there. The topography is in place and the grading is perfect.

Mr. Edwards asked if the gravel walks are unusual. Mr. Viteretto answered that it was part of the Olmsted design to separate the vehicle and walking paths. It was typical for the time; they are overgrown but some pea stone is still in place.

Mr. Wigren asked that the Olmsted firm job numbers be referenced in the nomination for the cemetery and the individual plots. Mention if those jobs were executed and the dual nature of commissions – for the overall design and the plots. Mr. Wigren requested that the mention of Frederick Law Olmsted in association with the national park system on page 23 be changed to Olmsted Jr.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll stated the in the integrity and significance sections, spatial organization is a key landscape characteristic, but it is not clearly called out in the narrative description. It is referenced through the topography and views but could be more thoroughly described as landscape characteristic. She requested that a heading for spatial organization be added. The text should move from larger organization characteristics, including topography and have the viewshed narrative follow it.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll asked for a contemporary photo of the overlook. Mr. Bryant answered that the overlook is in flux. Ms. Weston and Mr. Viteretto clarified that you can get a better photo now.

[Mr. Wigren assumed the role of chair from Mr. Edwards for the remainder of the meeting.]

Mr. Barlow asked for clarification regarding who completed the 500 projects mentioned on page 23. Mr. Bryant noted the source for this information. Mr. Vitteretto clarified that Olmsted Sr. completed the 500 projects. Mr. Barlow noted that this number sounds low over a 40-year period. Mr. Viteretto noted that the firm's projects is in the thousands.

A motion was made by Mr. Wigren, second by Mr. Barlow to recommend the Hillside Cemetery for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-6, N-0, Abstained-0).

Board members voting yes: Mr. Barlow, Dr. Bucki, Ms. Dyer-Carroll, Mr. Herzan*, Ms. Saunders, Mr. Wigren

* recorded vote later in the meeting (due to technical issues)

Board members absent from voting/left meeting: Mr. Edwards, Mr. McMillan

B. Review of Eligibility Status of National Register Listed Property

1. 2283-2289 Main Street and 2283-2289 Main Street Rear, Glastonbury (Glastonbury NRHD)

Ms. Scofield stated that this is not an application to add or remove property from the National Register. She summarized that SHPO can seek advice from the SRB on matters of National Register eligibility or related to SHPO programs. Any time a property listed on the National Register is proposed for demolition, SHPO asks the SRB to review whether that property continues to qualify for the National Register. The owner's representatives for 2283-2289 Main Street and Main Street Rear, and the Town were notified of this meeting per the SRB policy statement. The meeting materials were available online through the SHPO website prior to the meeting. Ms. Scofield noted that several members of the public are in attendance for this agenda item and asked them to introduce themselves.

Richard John (Glastonbury Town Manager) Robert Laughlin, Mike Berdan, Steve Bielitz (Glastonbury Historical Society), Rebecca Delaney (resident and business owner), Barbara Theurkauf (Glastonbury Historic Commission), Jennifer Wang (Glastonbury Town Council), and Alley Schneitzel (Glastonbury community) introduced themselves. [Meagan Alter Hope and Peter Alter of Alter & Pearson, LLC also attended the meeting via phone, but subsequently shared that they were not able to unmute themselves.]

Mr. Levine stated that SHPO asks the SRB to review resources listed on the National Register when they are threatened with demolition, under the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act. There are two buildings, documented as contributing resources to the Glastonbury Historic District, listed in 1984. Mr. Levine provided an overview of the National Register listing. The Glastonbury Historic District was listed on the National Register under Criteria C in the area of architecture as "for the large number of well-preserved 17th- and 18th-century houses that stand along its Main Street, and for the good examples of later architectural styles that also are represented." The district is also significant under Criterion B as the location of the homes and workplaces of many of the town's early influential founders, as well as later individuals who made significant contributions to Glastonbury.

According to the nomination (Section 7, Page 22), the property located at 2283-2289 Main Street is described as, "1740-1780 C, c. 1850 V. 2 ½ -story, Greek Revival, frame, gable-roofed commercial building, covered with clapboards, on brick foundations. There are plain pilasters with molded caps on both faces of all four corners. On the front elevation the pilasters support the gable-end front pediment with the help of added, paired, Italianate brackets. The property second

building at the rear of the property is described in the nomination as, “Second structure. c. 1875 V. 2-story, plain, frame, small, gable-roofed worker's house, covered with shingles and clapboards. Shed-roofed, enclosed front porch. Located in rear, at north.” SHPO did research on what appears to be a 3-bay garage that is also part of the rear building. It appears to be there in the 1930s and was attached to the rear building at the time of listing.

Mr. Wigren invited public comment regarding the integrity or significance of the buildings.

Mr. Steve Beilitz stated that he has gone inside all of these buildings. The Daniel Wright House is particularly significant. The chimney stack is still there, and it has a stone foundation. The building behind probably dates to the late-18th or early 19th century. It was originally a one-story structure with a garret. Beaded casings, flush beaded doors and other features such as the frame indicate that the building was constructed before 1830 or 1840. The 1870 date is misleading because that is when the second story was added. The Wright House is significant; it has a rare, curved beam (“the boat”) under the first-floor frame. There are other indications the building could have been built in two stages. The southern front room hearth has a long fireplace, and one was added in the back when the building was enlarged around 1740.

Mr. Beilitz referenced the Gaines Hotel. The 1850s was contemporary with the Smith sisters’ abolitionist activity. There is a passageway leading from 1849 Gaines Hotel into the cellar of the rear building. There was a long oral tradition that this was used on the underground railroad; the passage was not built for that purpose but would have offered the ability to hide people there. The eastern trail goes into the center of Glastonbury. All of these buildings are in the center of town; other buildings have been lost, altered, or planned for demolition. This would in essence wipe out the entire historic center of Glastonbury. The Wright and Gaines families were engaged in Caribbean entrepreneurship. This is a very significant area, and the buildings still have potential for further restoration. The whole village quality of Glastonbury would be lost if this area is demolished.

Mr. Laughlin added that it is not just the Glastonbury Historical Society interested in saving the buildings; community members have signed a petition.

Mr. Levine added that there is a process for listing properties on the CT Freedom Trail if that is of interest to the historical society.

Mr. Johnson thanked the SRB for the opportunity to comment. He stated that any thoughts of demolishing the subject property have brought strong opposition from the Glastonbury community. On two occasions, the Town Council unanimously voted to lodge a formal objection pursuant to the town’s demolition delay ordinance. The town would like to preserve and continue the National Register listing of the buildings. He has talked with Ms. Scofield and Mr. Levine. These buildings are a significant part of the history and fabric of downtown. Any activity to demolish these structures would be a sad day for Glastonbury.

Ms. Theurkauf shared that her parents were active in the establishment of the Glastonbury National Register district and Local Historic District. In 1984, a group of people said this building has historic value and character. In the nearly 40 years since, the buildings really haven’t changed. She agrees with the people in 1984.

Ms. Wang reaffirmed that the community truly cares about this and is horrified about these demolitions. Glastonbury is a town with a long history. Ms. Wang is a newer resident but has spoken with hundreds of residents at their doors and historic preservation is a topic that came up in conversations. These buildings are part of the spirit and fabric of the community.

Ms. Delaney echoed the other sentiments. She was raised by someone who did 18th-century restoration and appreciates it. Ms. Delaney noted that one reason she has appreciation is because there were structures to see and learn from; you can have history in books, but it's important to have the structures to learn from. Once they're gone, they're gone. Many structures have been lost to the north. To lose these buildings in the heart of town would be devastating. At one point Glastonbury had the highest percentage of historic structures. The buildings are even more important now than in 1984 because every year another one is lost. Ms. Delaney noted that there is a huge copper beech tree close to the Curtis House and hopes that it would not be affected by building demolition. She thanked the town representatives for speaking on behalf of the community.

Mr. Hale stated that the buildings are fully occupied. They haven't been altered since the installation of storefronts in the 1950s. The twentieth century is part of our history; there is a continuity there worth preserving. They are occupied as commercial with apartments above. The historic buildings to the north are also occupied as successful commercial establishments without too much alteration. The whole streetscape is worth preserving. Mr. Hale shared that his parents had a Norman Rockwell painting of a streetscape that reminds him of Glastonbury. Glastonbury has different buildings from different historical periods, which make up a traditional New England streetscape. There are opportunities to restore the buildings.

Mr. Wigren opened SRB discussion.

Dr. Bucki commented that this property looks like important part of the National Register and she suggested simply taking a vote to uphold its integrity.

Ms. Saunders acknowledged the Glastonbury officials and all of the citizens coming to speak, to allow the SRB to understand their appreciation for the historic streetscape. Mr. Wigren noted that the community support is impressive and significant.

A motion was made by Ms. Saunders, second by Dr. Bucki that the property at 2283-2289 Main Street and 2283-2289 Main Street Rear continues to possess integrity and contribute to the significance of the Glastonbury Historic District (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

Board members voting in favor: Mr. Barlow, Dr. Bucki, Ms. Dyer-Carroll, Mr. Herzan, Ms. Saunders, Mr. Wigren

Board members absent from voting/left meeting: Mr. Edwards, Mr. McMillan

V. Discussion

A. SRB Schedule

Mr. Wigren read the suggested 2022 meeting dates and asked the SRB if they were acceptable.

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Mr. Barlow to approve the suggested dates for the 2022 schedule (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

Board members voting in favor: Mr. Barlow, Dr. Bucki, Ms. Dyer-Carroll, Mr. Herzan, Ms. Saunders, Mr. Wigren

B. Informational Presentation

Ms. Scofield introduced the presentation as a continuance of 10-minute topic-specific discussions. An SRB member asked for more information about the SRB's role in the Protection Act. Ms. Scofield summarized that SHP reviews these proposed demolitions as part of the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act. That is not part of the NPS National Register program; it exists within the environmental regulations in state general statutes. The Protection Act applies to properties listed on or under consideration for listing on the National Register. She described SHPO's interpretation of under consideration.

Mr. Levine provided some history on the Protection Act. It is unique in Connecticut. The law prevents the destruction of the resource; in 1984 historic resources were added to the existing Protection Act law for clean air and clean water. [The law provides an opportunity to make a case to prevent demolition. The unreasonable destruction of a National Register-listed property can be challenged.] Mr. Levine described the process in which the state Attorney General's office could become involved and explained the language in the statute. Ms. Scofield clarified that the SRB's role is limited to review of the National Register eligibility status of the property. Mr. Wigren added that the SRB's discussion is really about significance and integrity, not issues related to the listing process. Mr. Levine offered to follow up with the SRB with updates on these potential cases. He explained how SHPO provides technical assistance and seeks to find alternatives to demolition.

VI. New Business

No new business was heard.

VII. SHPO Staff Report

Ms. Scofield announced that the National Historic Landmark nomination for the Barnum Institute of Science and History (Barnum Museum) was approved by the National Park Service NHL Committee this fall and designation is anticipated in January.

Ms. Scofield reported on NPS changes to the National Register regulations, shared in a memo by the Keeper of the National Register, Joy Beasley, on November 12, 2021. Owner objections do not need to be notarized. Instead, objection letters must include a penalty of perjury statement and signature. NPS provided this language.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Dr. Bucki, second by Ms. Saunders, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:35 a.m.