

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Wednesday March 4, 2020 @ 9:30 a.m.
450 Columbus Blvd., Hartford, CT *2 South, Conference Room H**

MEETING MINUTES

Council: Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Dr. Margaret Faber, Ms. Karyn Gilvarg (phoned in), Dr. Leah Glaser, Ms. Kathy Maher, Chairwoman Sara Nelson, Dr. Sarah Sportman and Dr. Fiona Vernal (phoned in)

Staff: Ms. Mary Dune, Ms. Erin Fink, Ms. Cathy Labadia, Ms. Jenny Scofield, Ms. Liz Shapiro and Ms. Marena Wisniewski

Guests: Mr. Nick Bellontoni – State Archaeologist
Mr. David L. Taylor – Town of Branford (phoned in)
Mr. Kerry Duques – Town of Branford (phoned in)
Ms. Stacey Vairo – Preservation CT, Circuit Rider
Ms. Mary Falvey - Hartford Preservation Alliance
Mr. Mike Farino – Preservation Connecticut, Circuit Rider
Ms. Jane Montanaro - Preservation Connecticut

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Historic Preservation Council was called to order at 9:35 a.m. Chairwoman Nelson welcomed new Council member Dr. Sarah Sportman. Introductions were made around the room and on the phone.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Chairwoman Nelson reviewed public comments and procedures.

III. Code of conduct/Conflict of Interest

Chairwoman Nelson reviewed the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest statements. Ms. Maher disclosed the Barnum Museum has a business relationship with GNCB, with no financial benefit.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes

February 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved with corrections.

*On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. Carnell
(Y-6, N-0), Abstaining – 2)*

V. **State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items**

a. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Woodstock Academy, Woodstock

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. Carnell, the Historic Preservation Council votes to recommend the award of a Survey and Planning Grant, funded by the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut, to the below-listed applicant in the amount of \$20,000.00. All grant guidelines and state requirements shall be met by the below-listed applicant upon receipt of a grant as administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

(Y-6, N-0), Abstaining – S. Nelson, S. Sportman)

Ms. Dunne presented the application as approved by staff. Woodstock Academy had received a grant twenty-eight from the Connecticut Historic Commission and did work according to the preservation standards of that time. Ms. Dunne and Ms. Fink completed a site visit on the property. There were some issues with missing original materials (probably due to the old restoration) so replacing the windows may be plausible. Mr. Greg Farmer is the consultant working on this project.

Ms. Maher asked if hazmat testing or lead abatement was part of the application, as it is not addressed in the narrative. Ms. Dunne replied she could not find the original report from 25 years ago and the hazmat and lead abatement could have been handled at that time. She will check with the applicant to make sure.

Ms. Gilvarg asked if this was the same building presented to the Council last month for restoration of its clock tower and belfry. Ms. Dunne replied yes, Ms. Fink presented this project last month due to pressing safety concerns with the belfry.

b. Unitarian Universalist Church, Stamford

On a motion by, Ms. Maher Second by, Ms. Carnell, the Historic Preservation Council votes to recommend the award of a Historic Restoration Fund Grant, funded by the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut, to the below-listed applicant in the amount shown. All grant guidelines and state requirements shall be met by the below-listed applicant upon receipt of a grant as administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining – S. Nelson, S. Sportman)

Ms. Fink presented this application as approved by staff. She conducted a site visit on February 10, 2020 with congregation representatives and architect Paul Dennis. Water damage is visible to the interior of the sanctuary, kitchen and foyer and the situation is urgent. The church has a restoration plan and a funding match in place. There was a conditions assessment completed in 2012. The budget was based on conversations with the area roofers.

Ms. Maher noted the insurance certificate had expired and asked if Ms. Fink was confident with the architect even though he was lacking historic preservation credentials.

Ms. Fink will check with the applicant for an updated insurance certificate. She has carefully reviewed the architect and is confident in his abilities.

VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations

a. Nomination to State Register of Historic Places – 33 Wheaton Road, New Milford

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. Carnell, the Historic Preservation Council votes to list the Morehouse-Chittenden Farmstead, located at 33 Wheaton Road, New Milford, to the State Register of Historic Places.

(Y-6, N-), Abstaining – S. Nelson, S. Sportman)

Ms. Wisniewski presented this application under a Criterion 1 at the local level, and Criterion 2 as a Greek revival house. The incorporation of local marble shows the importance of the local marble industry. The house retains most of its original materials. There is early siding underneath contemporary clapboard in one section. Ms. Stacey Vairo, Preservation CT Circuit Rider, is on the line for any questions.

Ms. Gilvarg asked to what extent the farm scape is included in the nomination and was it documented well enough. Dr. Vernal added that it seems like a very small plot. Ms. Wisniewski replied that there were about five acres currently associated with the property, the rest was subdivided in the 1970s. All of the outbuildings were clustered round the house and are within the five acres. She feels the farm scape was documented appropriately, including the stonewalls.

Ms. Maher asked if the property will stay a residence. Ms. Wisniewski replied it will be the owner's permanent residence, and that they have a plan to apply for a homeowner's tax credit.

Ms. Carnell mentioned there is a lot of great history associated with this home. She noted a few typos to be corrected.

b. Nomination to State Register of Historic Places – 298 Forest Road, North Branford

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. Carnell, the Historic Preservation Council votes to list the Bartholomew-Augur Farmstead, located at 298 Forest Road, North Branford, to the State Register of Historic Places.

(Y-6, N-0), Abstaining 2 – S. Nelson, S. Sportman)

Ms. Wisniewski presented this application for the Bartholomew-Augur Farmstead under Criterion 1 and 2 at the local level. There are very few remaining 19th century farmsteads prior to 1925. Part of the land was used for a reservoir.

The site retains most of its significant integrity, as well as its original 19th century out buildings and property. Mr. David Taylor, author of the application and Mr. Kerry Dupress, Town Planner and owner, are on the call for any questions.

Ms. Maher noted that where the actual names of women associated with the property are available, they should be included in the nomination. She added that she would like more historical substance in the nomination in addition to the reference to the 1870 census.

Dr. Vernal asked if there as a reason the local sources like the census and genealogical records were not further mined for information about the Bartholomew family. Mr. Taylor replied the association with the Bartholomew family was not related to the period of significance, and that the Auger family is the primary focus.

Dr. Glaser noted that since the criteria focused on farming, that additional contextual material would be important and she would like to see more information on the context of what the farm's role in the community.

Ms. Wisniewski added this property is one of the last intact farms in the community, but its historical context is as one example of many farmsteads. Not the first or the last.

Chairwoman Nelson relayed to Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duques that these comments are made to strengthen the application for future reference. This does not reflect the value of the property. A suggestion was made to table the application without prejudice so that additional research could be added.

Ms. Maher suggested that the application be tabled so that further research can be gathered and added to strengthen the nomination.

Mr. Taylor affirmed that 30 days should be enough time to amend the application and would like Ms. Wisniewski to consolidate all comments and email to him.

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. Carnell to table this nomination for 2 months, May 6th, 2020 HPC meeting to allow the applicant to expand the narrative and content to provide more primary source material.

(Y-7, N-0), Abstaining – S. Nelson)

VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Reports

VIII. Archeological Preserves

IX. Threatened Properties

X. Preservation Restriction

XI. Report on State Historic Preservation /Museum Activities – Ms. Shapiro

Personnel

The position for the deputy SHPO/director of Operations for Preservation, closed with about 60 applications. Not all were qualified. In a brief review of the applications, it looks like there are at least 20 potential candidates. The required question follow-up was sent on Monday 3/2. Answers must be in by 3/10. Mark MacMillan of the DOT and Stacey Vairo of Preservation CT will join Ms. Shapiro on the interview panel. The committee is currently holding March 23 for first interviews.

Second interviews were held at the Eric Sloane Museum for the position of Museum Assistant. Three candidates were invited. The interview team has chosen the top three candidates, and are now waiting for HR to approve the choices so that an offer may be extended.

SHPO Museums has been approved to hire seven seasonal employees. With luck they will be posted in the next ten days.

SHPO

SHPO staff led by Cathy Labadia has proposed a conference session for the CLHO conference in June. It has been accepted, as has a conference session proposed by museum staff.

Julie Carmelich hosted a workshop on the mechanics of the state tax credit program for staff and members of Preservation CT on February 26.

On February 19, Scott Choquette (Dewberry) and Dave Murphy (Malone and McBroom) attended our SHPO staff meeting as a follow-up to the completion of the Hurricane Sandy grant project. They provided thoughtful feedback and suggestions for next steps.

Section 106 Training will be held from May 12 to May 15. The location is to be determined.

Mary Dunne will be attending preservation advocacy week in Washington the second week of March. Staff have been working to create materials to distribute during visits to legislators.

Liz Shapiro will be attending a Creative Place-making Summit in Philadelphia at the end of March.

Plans for an agency-wide conference are in the works for late September / early October.

Jenny Scofield and Todd Levine attended the APTNE (Association for Preservation Technology) conference in Providence on February 28.

Museums

Sloane Museum:

Staff met with contractors, building code officers and David Barkin, the state architect, for a substantial completion walk through at the museum on February 28. There are a few items still incomplete for the building interior. The new bathrooms and the code compliance – both for safety and ADA – are magical! There is also heat in the gallery and the museum office, and in the bathrooms.

Ms. Shapiro has been working with Jim Mauk of the Friends group to create a new exhibit for the gallery which will look at Eric Sloane as an artist, collector, author and community philanthropist. There is also a booklet in the works that gives in-depth information regarding the Sloane art in the museum's collection.

New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine

Morgan Bengal has created all new forms for New-Gate and the other museums – incident report, library pass, etc. Her new brochure for education programs has already had positive results with school bookings. Geotechnical surveys for the mine have been a source of frustration due to state contract regulations. Working with Nick Bellantoni on a booklet that discusses the history of the New-Gate cemetery.

Prudence Crandall Museum:

The pre-bid meeting at the museum will be held on March 11. After that, project bids will be received. Once the successful contractor has been chosen, we will know more about the timetable.

Staff continue to work to empty the building. The entire library has been moved, as has a majority of the collections. Collections are being housed in CONEX boxes onsite, at the State Library, in the adjacent Carter House, and in fine arts storage. Movers will be coming to move the collection in March. At the same time, curator Joanie DiMartino has been ensuring that the systems in the Carter House will support the office functions during the construction.

Henry Whitfield State Museum:

The Henry Whitfield Museum staff have deinstalled “fake” walls in the visitor's center in order to prepare the building for upcoming work on electrical systems (probably early 2021). Plans to have a new fire and security system are moving forward. There is substantial site work to be completed prior to opening.

XIII. Old Business

XIV. New Business

a. Presentation on SHPO Budget and Funding Balances – Ms. Dunne

Ms. Dunne presented information on the Historic Preservation budget. She will post the presentation in Dropbox.

b. Digitization Project – Ms. Scofield

Ms. Scofield presented an overview of the planned digitization project. Prior to 2016 through Hurricane Sandy funds, SHPO had an entirely paper-based system which was completely inefficient. The SHPO goal in disaster response is to immediately be able to answer public questions. This project will aid by creating the same data for the north half of the state that was created and digitized for the south half during the Hurricane Sandy project.

Ms. Maher asked if there is a FEMA flood overlay. Ms. Scofield replied yes.

XV. Liaison with Public & Private Agencies

Mr. Mike Farino - Preservation Connecticut

Mr. Farino presented an update. 1772 application have been reviewed with a total of 40 applications totaling \$330,000, and only \$100,000 to grant. They are also providing four grants for church-related preservation projects through CIA funds.

Ms. Carnell asked for an update on their awards. Mr. Farino replied the program is in the works and moving forward.

Ms. Mary Falvey – Hartford Preservation Alliance

Ms. Falvey presented an update. The legislative session has been relatively quiet. A bill is being forwarded to have the cap on tax credits raised. Do not expect for the bill to pass, but would like to keep it in front of legislators in case it should ever come up for cuts.

CIA Lobby Day is March 25th, 2020 at the State Capitol.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Maher Second, Dr. Glaser to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no further discussion, meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Deborah Gaston, Secretary

Next conference call meeting:
Wednesday, April 1, 2020 @ 9:30 a.m.