

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Wednesday, August 4, 2021 @ 9:30 am**

ONLINE TEAMS Meeting (see code for meeting in your email or contact Mary.Dunne@ct.gov or
Jonathan.Kinney@ct.gov for the code)

MINUTES

Council: Ms. Elizabeth Acly, Ms. Elizabeth Burgess, Chairman Thomas Elmore, Dr. Margaret Faber, Dr. Leah Glaser, Ms. Kathy Maher, Ms. Sara Nelson, Dr. Sarah Sportman, Dr. Walter Woodward, and Ms. Ellen Zoppo-Sassu

Absent: Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Vice Chairwoman Christine Nelson

Staff: Ms. Julie Carmelich, Ms. Mary Dunne, Ms. Erin Fink, Mr. Jonathan Kinney, Ms. Catherine Labadia, Mr. Todd Levine, Ms. Jenny Scofield, Ms. Elizabeth Shapiro, and Ms. Marena Wiesnewski

Absent: Ms. Deborah Gaston

Guests: Mr. John Crawford
Ms. Mary Falvey
Mr. Ben Baldwin
Ms. Susan Halpern
Mr. Andrew Droney
Mr. James Sexton
Mr. Mark Scully
Ms. Angela Thomas
Ms. Jane Montanaro
Ms. Francis Lane
Ms. Elizabeth McCauley

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Chairman Elmore read aloud the Public Comments Procedures.

III. Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest

Chairman Elmore read aloud the Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest and asked if there were any conflicts of interest.

1. Ms. Beth Acly recused herself from agenda item V.B.1.
2. Ms. Kathy Maher recused herself from agenda item V.A.5.
3. Dr. Sarah Sportman recused herself from item VI.B.1.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes and Transcripts

a. Minutes - July 7, 2021 Meeting

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. S. Nelson, the Council voted to approve the July 2021 minutes with corrections:

(Y-9, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

V. State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items

A. Unfinished Action Items

Chairman Elmore, based on information provided by Ms. Fink, stated that the first four agenda items in this section will need to be re-tabled in order to give the applicants additional time to obtain the documentation requested of them at the July 7th meeting. Chairman Elmore asked for a single motion for all four items (V.A.1, V.A.2, V.A.3, and V.A.4).

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Sara Nelson, to recall these items to the table and to re-table them until the future meeting dates indicated below:

(Y-9, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

1. **Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Union Baptist Church, Repairs to Basement and Roof, Hartford (Item V.B.1 on 7/7/21 Agenda)**

Tabled until the January 5, 2022 HPC meeting.

2. **Historic Restoration Fund Grant, First Congregational Church of Washington, Repair and Replacement of Support Structure for Bells and Chimes in Belfry, Washington (Item V.B.3 on 7/7/21 Agenda)**

Tabled until the September 1, 2021 HPC meeting.

3. **Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Thomaston Opera House, Replacement of 6 Condenser Units, Thomaston (Item V.B.8 on 7/7/21 Agenda)**

Tabled until the September 1, 2021 HPC meeting.

4. **Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Mansfield Historical Society, Installation of Drainage System, Mansfield (Item V.B.10 on 7/7/21 Agenda)**

Tabled until the September 1, 2021 HPC meeting.

5. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, First Church of Christ and Ecclesiastical Society of Simsbury, Window Repair and Restoration, Simsbury (Item V.B.13 on 7/7/21 Agenda)

Ms. Maher recused herself at 9:52 a.m.

On a motion by Ms. S. Nelson, Second by Dr. Woodward to recall this item back to the table for discussion:

(Y-8, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-1) (Roll call vote)

Ms. Fink read a new motion for this agenda item into the record. The new amount requested is \$81,200.

On a motion by Ms. Burgess, Second by Dr. Faber to bring this new motion forward for discussion:

(Y-8, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-1) (Roll call vote)

Ms. S. Nelson made a point of order that there were now two primary motions on the table. The Council will have to defeat the original motion tabled from the July meeting or vote to replace the original motion with the new one that Ms. Fink presented.

On a motion to replace the original motion tabled from July with the new update motion:

(Y-8, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-1) (Roll call vote)

Ms. Fink presented the revised motion and information that was updated since the July meeting.

1. Proper protocol, experience, and training qualifications to safely test for hazardous material was written and will be used in all bid documents.
2. Greater detail was added to the budget and additional funds for testing and remediation by an industrial hygienist were added.
3. Ms. Maher met with Mr. Mark Scully and Ms. Fink by ZOOM to discuss Ms. Maher's experience with hazmat testing on the windows at the Barnum Museum and other points made by the Committee.

The very capable church Building Committee has put together a plan for a \$3.7 million dollar restoration that is now under way and will continue for years to come. Ms. Fink is confident the applicant will work closely with SHPO on this project.

Chairman Elmore asked if a representative from the Church was on the call. Ms. Fink replied yes, Mr. Scully was on the call. He asked Mr. Scully how the hazardous materials are going to be identified in place and if they migrate to adjacent surfaces?

Mr. Scully, Board of Trustees, introduced himself to the Council. Although he did not profess to be an expert, research has been done with various contractors skilled in this area of expertise. The bid documents state very specifically the procedures any of the contractors would need to follow such as when the sashes are being removed, protective clothing must be worn.

Scaffolding will not be needed as the windows are going to be done from the inside. As the windows are taken back to the shop, the contractor is going to assume they have hazardous materials so all proper procedure will be followed.

Chairman Elmore asked if any of the windows were painted shut. Mr. Scully replied yes, there are a few. Chairman Elmore also asked if the surrounding area and floors had been tested. Mr. Scully replied no, they have not been tested.

Ms. Fink commented that Ms. S. Nelson sent very helpful information on PCB's and suggested hiring an industrial hygienist to test the areas around the window. This is also included in the budget.

Ms. S. Nelson added that there is some risk in assuming the presence of PCB's as this can add extraordinary costs. The measures to deal with PCB's can be extensive.

Dr. Faber asked if any of these hazardous materials had been confirmed as present or is it an assumption? Mr. Scully replied no, they have not been confirmed, the windows have not been tested yet. Dr. Faber asked if a condition's assessment had been done on the building? Mr. Scully replied that the Committee had done quite a few things but was not sure about a condition's assessment.

On a roll call vote to approve the revised application.

(Y-8, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-1) (Roll call vote)

Ms. Maher return to the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

B. New Action Items

1. Survey and Planning Grant, Union Baptist Church, Architectural Plans and Specifications for the Union Baptist Church, Hartford

Ms. Acly rescued herself at 10:00 a.m.

On a motion by Ms. S. Nelson, Second Ms. Maher, the Historic Preservation Council voted 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 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-8, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-1) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: Union Baptist Church

Amount: \$20,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application. Union Baptist Church requested funding in the amount of \$20,000 to obtain the consulting services of a 36 CFR-qualified architect/team to prepare bid-level plans and specifications for repairs to the roof of the church building. Staff recommended the application for approval. The Applicant applied for a Historic Restoration Fund grant in July and Council asked for additional information and clarification on the project scope. The project scope has since been narrowed to focusing on addressing issues with the roof, which is a priority need. Union Baptist Church will use the funding from this Survey and Planning grant to prepare construction documents so that a revised HRF application can be heard at the January 5, 2022 HPC meeting.

The match requirement for this application was to be waved, but the original architect is not available to complete the plans and specifications. This project will now cost approximately \$40,000, so the Applicant will be providing a match.

Ms. Angela Thomas was on the call to answer any additional questions. Chairman Elmore asked about the original architect and why they weren't available. Ms. Dunne replied the architect who performed the condition's assessment was on leave and was not able to complete the job. There has been no formal bidding process yet, so this will have to be competitively bid which may affect the timeline. Chairman Elmore added if the applicant is not ready at the January meeting, the postponement will have to be addressed at that time.

Ms. Maher added that she was still going to lobby for someone to write a book about the 1938 hurricane. There are quotes from 1938 about rebuilding the tower on the church and there may be an opportunity to explore any evidence of the original tower/steeple. Ms. S. Nelson replied that the perfect time to do that would be during construction.

Ms. Thomas added there are massive pieces of the steeple in the basement.

Chairman Elmore added that the budget/RFP could be revised to get existing condition drawings when the roof is opened. Ms. Dunne replied that can be added to the RFP.

Ms. Maher thanked Ms. Thomas for a great preservation plan.

Ms. S. Nelson mention she did not see an enumerated list of things to investigate in the RFP, but that the condition of the shingles and ties, and an evaluation of potential for reuse should be included. This information will benefit the development of the plans and specifications.

Ms. Dunne replied that she was not at the July meeting, but that will be investigated as will the soundness of the substructure. This kind of input is very important and will help produce the best RFP and product possible.

Chairman Elmore added that the goal is to reduce the potential for change orders.

Chairman Elmore added this application was an excellent example of how taking a step back actually benefited the applicant.

Ms. Thomas agreed and thanked the Council for the collective expertise and the guidance from Ms. Dunne and Ms. Fink.

2. Survey and Planning Grant, Town of East Haddam, Archaeological Survey of Chapman Falls, East Haddam

Ms. Acly returned to the meeting at 10:26 a.m. (She missed a portion of the conversation regarding item V.B.2 and abstained from the vote)

On a motion by Dr. Woodward, Second by Ms. Burgess, the Historic Preservation Council voted 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 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-8, N-0, Abstaining-2, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: Town of East Haddam

Amount: \$20,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application. The Town of East Haddam requested funding in the amount of \$20,000 to conduct an archaeological survey at Chapman Falls located in Devil's Hopyard State Park. Staff recommended approval of this application.

This a very significant resource for the Town of East Haddam. The project is a partnership with municipalities, local historical society, and other interested partners. It offers the potential to yield a lot of important information. Ms. Dunne was happy to answer any questions the Council may have had. Ms. Labadia, Staff Archeologist, was also on the line for any questions.

Dr. Faber asked if the budget should have an applicant share/match? Ms. Dunne replied no, this application came in during the no match requirement period and Council agreed to honor the no match requirement for project submitted during that period.

Ms. Maher asked if the sight had any current designation. She did not see anything checked off. Ms. Scofield commented that she strongly recommended the approval of this application. DEEP was very receptive and very helpful in helping to organize this effort. This began with a resident with a passion for the Revolutionary War history that occurred in the area and wanted to get the site listed on the National Register. It is not designated right now because additional information is needed. There are archeological remains on the site that have not been investigated yet. They go into other time periods and areas of significance that go beyond the revolutionary war context. Ms. Scofield contacted DEEP and DEEP reached out to the interested resident and formed a wonderful partnership and got the Town and non-profits involved. The archeological study must be completed before the nomination can move forward. Mr. Nick Bellantoni did go out to the site before he went on vacation and made his recommendations as to where the investigation should occur based on his familiarity with the site.

Ms. Maher wanted to make sure there was no issue with DEEP applying for state funding. Ms. Scofield replied that the funding request is from the Town, but she required DEEP to be involved since the site is on their land and they are the managers of the site. Ms. Maher asked that this information be added to the documentation. Ms. Maher's next question on the checklist was about the 501c3 status on the application being "contingent". Ms. Dunne replied because it is a municipality, they do not need the 501c3 status.

Ms. Maher asked if East Haddam was a CLG. Ms. Dune replied that they are not. no but working on it.

Ms. Maher asked what would happen if any indigenous artifacts were recovered? Would they have to be repatriated? Dr. Woodward stated that it depends on what you find, and Ms. Labadia could address that question. Ms. Labadia stated that the Council approved a grant last month for the listing of the Gungywamp site on DEEP's property. This is the same exact type of framework. This is a common approach for dealing with stuff on public lands, that were publicly accessible, and has huge public interest. Repatriation normally only has to do with sacred sites and burials and only falls under federal legislation.

Connecticut does not have any collections requirements for indigenous collections and materials. However, when Ms. Labadia works with the Town to put together their RFP, she will involve the Native American Heritage Advisory Council and consult with tribes that wish to be involved further.

Dr. Woodward stated that he was in favor of the project but urged caution with regard to the historical interpretation. There have been previous interpretations of the site that he thought were a stretch and he wants everyone to look closely at the data before endorsing a particular interpretation. Ms. Labadia added this is exactly why Ms. Scofield recommended to go this route, so the Town can speak more intelligently and have information to back it any decisions that are made. DEEP deals with this type of situation frequently, passionate people wanting to put up signage and take ownership over certain historical stories. Ms. Scofield added that the application does have a much broader area of study for the theme, time period and what DEEP and the community wants to confirm is what is really extant on the site, from what time period, and how was it used. This is what we do and is the reason why a nomination of any kind cannot move forward until additional study is done.

Chairman Elmore asked how big the site is? Ms. Labadia replied that the applicant did include a map showing the area of investigation. It is not a large area, maybe 1600 square feet. Chairman Elmore said that he saw the words development and future development in the application and asked someone to define that. Ms. Labadia replied that this was a reference to walking trails and signage, etc.

Ms. Burgess asked is there more information on the long-term preservation plan other than the paragraph listed? Ms. Dunne replied the paragraph was the plan. Ms. Labadia added, a good stewardship is knowing what you are a steward of, and this is the first step in that process.

Dr. Sportman added it doesn't look like there is a management summary for the report that's going to be produced. That is important to add. Ms. Labadia agreed and mentioned this information can be added to the RFP.

3. Survey and Planning Grant, Town of Ledyard, Structural Assessment of the Ledyard Up-Down Sawmill, Ledyard

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Woodward, the Historic Preservation Council voted 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 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-8, N-0, Abstaining-2, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote) (Ms. Zoppo-Sassu was muted and did not vote)

Applicant: Town of Ledyard
Amount: \$20,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application. The Town of Ledyard requested funding in the amount of \$20,000 to obtain the consulting services of a 36-CFR qualified architect and engineering team to prepare a structural and condition assessment of the Main Sawmill. Staff recommended approval of this application. This is a unique site that is listed individually on the national register. It is the only operational vertical sawmill in the northeast and possibly the country. This report is the first step leading to the structural assessment of the building and the historic components of it. This is an exciting project. There was no representative present, but Ms. Dunne was able to answer any questions the Council had.

Dr. Glaser commented she is aware this is the initial first step, but it would be a good idea to think about interpretation and management for the public in addition to the physical preservation of the building. This is a unique resource, and she would like the focus to be more than just the technical preservation aspects. She is working on a project interpreting energy, and it is interesting to her. Engineers are involved, but are there any industrial archeologists involved? Maybe that can be added to the RFP.

Ms. Dunne added that it is a working sawmill, and it is already being interpreted to the public. It was the millworkers who identified issues to be addressed. Ms. Dunne agreed that understanding the power source is very interesting.

Chairman Elmore commented that additional historical research might be beyond the scope of this project. They would do well to get a historic structure report that includes the landscape in a combined document. Ms. Dunne added they can apply for multiple grants to address those needs. This is an important resource for the town. They are not sure who the best consultant would be because of the uniqueness of the project. SHPO will assist them in selecting a qualified team.

Dr. Glaser added it would be good to have an industrial archeologist or an industrial historian on board in addition to the engineers. Ms. Burgess added that Mr. Tom Kelleher at Old Sturbridge Village would be a great historian to reach out to.

Ms. Maher added she thought the application was all over the place, but it was a good discussion. To Dr. Glaser's point, the applicant could also consider the next step being 3-D mapping or virtual tours, something to make this more accessible.

Ms. Acly commented there are structural engineers who also incorporate historical research into their projects. Ms. Acly asked Ms. Dunne if she know anything about the loft space added in the early 2000s and if it was historically appropriate. Ms. Dunne replied she did not. Ms. Dunne stated that this is why SHPO likes when applicants hire consultants with a lot of experience with historic structures.

Chairman Elmore encouraged Ms. Dunne to not let the scope get too watered down on a limited budget. Ms. Dunne replied there are a lot of facets to examining with this resource if funding is available. They can always take care of the structures issues first and come back in for another grant if research is needed.

4. Certified Local Government Historic Preservation Enhancement Grant, City of Stamford, Study Report for South End Historic District, Stamford

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Ms. Burgess, the Historic Preservation Council voted to recommend the award of a Certified Local Government Historic Preservation Enhancement 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-9, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: City of Stamford

Amount: \$20,000

Ms. Dunne presented the application. The City of Stamford requested funding in the amount of \$20,000 to obtain the consulting services of a CFR-qualified Architectural Historian to prepare a study report pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes section 7-147b for the proposed South End Historic District. Staff recommended approval of this application. Stamford is a Certified Local Government community and one of their duties is to propose new designations and protections for their historic resources. They do this by occasionally proposing new districts and enacting local ordinances for their protection. This designation would be for a local historic district. This is going to be a heavy lift for the consultants due to current integrity of the National Register listed district. The consultants will have to do additional research, interface with the community, and calculate what the boundaries should be for a local district. Ms. Sue Halpern and Ms. Elizabeth McCauley were on the call for any questions.

Ms. S. Nelson gave Ms. Dunne a compliment on the application. She asked if the organizers have any idea of what the local level of support is. Ms. Dunne replied this is something that SHPO suggests from the beginning, obtaining the community's support. Sometimes efforts like this can fail due to a lack of public education.

Ms. Halpern thanked the Council for hearing their application. The situation in the South End is very difficult. A major developer has bought a lot property and lots of demolitions are constantly ongoing. More than half of the National Register listed South End Historic District has been lost. They have done outreach to their neighbors and several streets are interested in participating. The developer has sent out letters to all the property owners arguing against the formation of a local historic district. They had to deal with a lot of push back so what ever help the Council can give will be greatly appreciated.

Ms. McCauley added that the neighborhood has never been under such a threat as it is now. They have tried working with the developer to encourage townhouses instead of 25 story buildings, but they haven't been successful. They have reached out to residents, but they want to make sure they have everything correct and good marketing materials in place so that they can refute the information included in the developer's letters. They were operating under the radar until they could go full force with their presentation and public meetings.

Dr. Glaser asked what the period of significance is for the district. If it was expanded, it could make the district more robust and diverse. Getting the community more attached and adding new resources to the story would be helpful.

Ms. Dunne stated that part of establishing the boundary is taking the most cohesive group of buildings that reflect the history of the area. It does not need to mimic the National Register district. This is a completely different designation. It's about local protection due to historical significance or architectural significance. This will be a very valid topic to introduce into the process. Dr. Glaser added that it makes sense not to limit themselves to the current NR district.

Ms. Dunne replied to Dr. Glaser she was correct, there is a loss of integrity anyway, so they are going to have to take fresh look at it. The NR nomination is going on 40 years old and there are buildings that may have become significant since then.

Ms. Maher mentioned she understands now why there is a \$3,000 line item for postage. She also hopes they will be launching a social media campaign as well to push this narrative out to the community. Due to the size of the district, there are a lot of people to contact. COVID did not help matters.

Chairman Elmore asked considering the size of the area and the complexity described, how long did she anticipate this project would take. The most time-consuming task is determining the boundaries. They must be contiguous and continuous. Once the study report is complete, it will be introduced to the Council at a monthly HPC meeting. There will be additional research done by the consultant. Ms. Dunne estimates 3-6 months to complete.

Ms. Halpern stated that she understands this is going to be a challenging effort.

5. Partners In Preservation Grant, Preservation Connecticut, SFY 2022 Circuit Rider Program, Statewide

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Faber, the Historic Preservation Council voted to recommend the award of a Partners In Preservation 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-8, N-0, Abstaining-2, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote) (Dr. Sportman did not respond).

Applicant: Preservation Connecticut
Amount: \$296,300

Ms. Dunne presented this application. Preservation Connecticut requested funding in the amount of \$296,300 for the SFY2022 Circuit Rider Program. Staff recommended approval of this application. The Circuit Rider program has really developed over the past few years. In addition to assisting with community needs, Preservation Connecticut has also provided more specific field support for multiple SHPO functions as needed. Ms. Jane Montanaro was on the call to answer any questions or concerns.

Ms. Montanaro stated that in the past few years this program has been a nice partnership with the SHPO office. They are grateful to the SHPO staff for not only being supportive, but also encouraging the development of the program. This past year there has been no slowdown in circuit rider activities due to the pandemic. Preservation Connecticut made one circuit rider full-time last year and anticipate the same this year. An archaeology circuit rider is being added and Preservation CT is very excited about that. The program is thriving with the help of the Council and SHPO staff.

Ms. Maher asked if COVID forced them to do anything that they will continue to do from here on out? Ms. Montanaro replied that being able to reach out to more people and attend more municipal meetings through ZOOM has been beneficial. They also implemented a very successful noon-time chat series about a variety of preservation related topics that were very well attended. Ms. Maher replied well done to Ms. Montanaro.

Chairman Elmore commented the Circuit Rider program is unique on how it reaches out to so many different people and is involved in so many projects. He was curious about the archaeology circuit rider. Ms. Montanaro answered they are looking to bring this person on as a full-time consultant first to work closely with the SHPO staff and anticipate this position growing into a Circuit Rider position. Chairman Elmore asked would it be someone from Connecticut. Ms. Montanaro replied that she is hoping that will be the case.

Chairman Elmore asked about the budget line for CEPA/TACH for \$35,000. Ms. Montanaro replied the budget presented this year was similar to last year's budget. Last year \$35,000 was spent on consultants specifically working with SHPO on CEPA cases. Preservation Connecticut hires the engineers, architects, and HAZMAT professionals directly. Anyone that needs to be brought onto the team is paid through the Circuit Rider program.

Ms. Acly asked what the history was behind the Circuit Rider program. Is Connecticut's the first? Ms. Montanaro responded that it originally started as a partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. That funding stopped and SHPO jumped right in and has been very supportive of the program. The Circuit Rider program has been alive and well for 20 years now. Vermont's was the first in the country. Ms. Acly added the program is an asset to the state of Connecticut.

Ms. Shapiro added that the program is finally where it needs to be. For the past 3-4 years this program has been revamped and revised and SHPO is now getting such good value with the program.

VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations

A. Unfinished Action Items

B. New Action Items

1. State Register Nomination for the Pawcatuck Bridge Historic District, 1 Cogswell Street/5 West Broad Street, 25, 29, 34, and 38 West Broad Street, Pawcatuck (Stonington)

Dr. Sportman recused herself.

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second Ms. S. Nelson, the Historic Preservation Council voted to list the Pawcatuck Bridge Historic District, located at 1 Coggswell Street/5 West Broad Street, 25, 29, 34, and 38 West Broad Street, Pawcatuck (Stonington), to the State Register of Historic Places.

(Y-8, N-0, Abstaining-2, Absent-2, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Ms. Wiesnewski presented this nomination. Staff recommended the approval of the nomination and listing of the historic district under Criterion 1 at the local level. The district represents the remaining portion of a 19th and early 20th century commercial industrial neighborhood formed along the Pawcatuck River. The area of the bridge expanded beyond the proposed boundaries. The proposed district is the most cohesive clusters of resources and collectively they retain sufficient integrity. The nomination was commissioned by the Town of Stonington. There is a letter of support from the Town included with the application. The Stonington Historical Society also provide a letter of support. A public meeting was held by the Town on June 24, 2021. No letters of opposition were received by Ms. Wiesnewski at the time of the meeting. Mr. James Sexton, the author of the nomination, was on the call for any questions or concerns. This project has been in the pipeline since 2018 when a property owner in the potential district was concerned with trying to maintain the integrity of their property while trying to conform with FEMA flood guidelines.

Ms. Glaser asked if it was possible to see less description and more historical context and more about the people involved. What kind of industry was mentioned? What was the waterpower source and what industry was if fueling? Who were the settlers? She was looking for a little more robust context.

Ms. Wiesnewski replied that this area is in between two National Register districts. A lot of that information was included in the existing Mechanic Street Historic District nomination. Ms. Wisniewski looked at the possibility of including this area in the Mechanic Street District, but it would not be feasible due to boundary and integrity issues. The applicant could reference the existing nominations and pull excerpts from it. The other National Register district is in Rhode Island, but they could also reference the Westerly HD. Ms. Wiesnewski stated that referencing these other areas would add a lot of context for the industrial history of the area as the district currently under consideration was more of the commercial area that served the surrounding industrial and residential areas.

Chairman Elmore stated he would like to see a map illustrating this district and the other two National Register districts and how they relate to each other.

One of Chairman Elmore's questions was is there a way to attach this small district to another? Ms. Wiesniewski replied they have tried, but it was an issue due to integrity and infill. The public support has been great. People really enjoy this area and would like to maintain its character. They are also acting at a disadvantage due to the current flood guidelines.

Dr. Sportman returned to the meeting.

VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Report/s

VIII. Archaeological Preserves

IX. Threatened Properties - CEPA Updates – Todd Levine

1. Stamford

There was a threat to 650 Atlantic St., 79 Garden St. and 130 Henry St. The remediation of 650 Atlantic, the Blickensderfer Building, triggered a Section 106 review through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). SHPO, EPA, and BLT worked out an agreement where they are going to keep all but 5 bays of 650 Atlantic, then rehabilitate the building in consultation with SHPO. It is the best scenario considering the contaminants present on the site. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) decided not to contest the widening of the road. In negotiations with BLT, SHPO tried to get \$150,000 plus listing 79 Garden St. and 130 Henry St. on Preservation CT's historic property exchange for 3 months. That was declined, but the OAG is in the process of getting a donation of \$100,000, 100% of which is going to the South End of Stamford for owner occupied historic preservation projects. This will be administered by Jane Montanaro at Preservation Connecticut. Detail are being worked out now. Chairman Elmore asked what does "did not pick up the road widening" mean? Mr. Levine replied our charge was an alternative to demolition. The AG can decide if they want to pick it up or not and they chose not to.

2. Norwalk - CEPA

Mr. Andy Glazer had withdrawn his demolition back in May. He is back and may have to pull a demo permit again. This just came in this morning. Mr. Levine spoke to the new building official. The building official is going to talk to the Town's planning folks and will get back to SHPO.

X. Preservation Restrictions

XI. Report on State Historic Preservation Office – Jonathan Kinney

Mr. Kinney reported briefly on the historic preservation working group that DECD has been tasked with putting together because of the passage of legislation in June. The working group is tasked with developing a plan for supporting and facilitating efforts by municipalities, historical societies, and other nonprofit entities to preserve historic resources. The hope is that the working group will be convened by the end of August/beginning of September. Mr. Kinney will keep the Council apprised of the working group's progress.

Mr. Kinney also informed Council that SHPO's return to work in the office has been delayed and most staff will continue to work remotely until at least October 1st, with occasional trips to the office as needed. Mr. Kinney will keep Council updated as the situation evolves.

XII. Report on Museum Properties – Liz Shapiro

Ms. Shapiro reported that all the museums, with the exception of Prudence Crandall, which is still undergoing renovations, have seen visitation that is equal to or greater than the same period in 2019. This is primarily due to the CT Summer at the Museum program, which is providing free entry for children under 18 and one adult.

The three museums that are open have been able to do so safely and following current COVID guidance. The only issue has been at New-Gate, where the museum has had to close on Mondays due to staffing and volunteer shortages that prevented them from opening safely.

Finally, Mike McBride, long-time curator at the Henry Whitfield Museum, retired on July 31st. Mike's contributions have been innumerable, and he is to be commended for his dedication and service. Ms. Shapiro is happy to report that Michele Parrish has assumed Mr. McBride's position.

Ms. Shapiro provided additional, detailed information on each museum.

The renovation work at the Prudence Crandall Museum is not yet completed. This is primarily due to issues involving the painting contractor. DAS is working with SHPO to navigate this situation. Ms. Shapiro and Curator Joan DiMartino are working with scholars and community members to create a new exhibit and narrative for the museum when it reopens. The exhibit is being imagined as one that is constantly changing as additional research is done. Ms. DiMartino is also looking to move the collection, currently in storage, to several different locations. Only a small fraction of the items previously on display will be put back once the renovations are complete since only a small number relate directly to the Crandall story. A bench with a plaque is also going to be placed in honor of several of the young African American woman who were educated at the site.

The Eric Sloan Museum is doing well with visitation and the gift shop is selling out. The guided tour currently being offered at the museum is extremely popular.

A mold issue in the tool exhibit is being addressed by the installation of new de-humidifiers. Curator Andrew Rowan has been involved in an exciting project to reconstruct one of the wooden trusses that will be used in the restoration of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Visitation at New-Gate is excellent. The site is seeing 100 people on weekdays and over 300 on weekends. The biggest issue that New-Gate is now facing is a series of water tests showing excess levels of bacteria that are showing up in well testing. It is not showing up in the bathrooms or drinking water. This is due to the large amount of runoff that is coming through the mine system. Unfortunately, the typical remedies will not work here due to the nature of the underground mine system and archaeological sensitivity. A new water chlorination system may have to be added and could cost between \$20,000 to \$40,000. The Department of Public Health has been excellent to work with.

The Henry Whitfield Museum hosted a musical performance on Father's Day and had over 150 visitors. There have also been a lot of out-of-state visitors that have been drawn by the signage on I-95. Mike McBride's position at the museum will be filled, but the position will be slightly different. Ms. Shapiro is looking to hire a Curator of Education for all four museums that will interface with teachers and the Department of Education and will create a unified presence and help maintain consistent branding while creating programs that are unique to each site.

Chairman Elmore asked how the other museums are doing. Ms. Burgess replied that the Stowe Center is open from Thursday through Saturday. They will expand to Mondays in September. But all of this depends on the direction of COVID. They have transitioned to an on-line ticketing system. Tickets must be purchased in advance. As far as COVID cleanliness, it is a lot easier being open three days a week.

XIII. Old Business

XIV. New Business

XV. Liaison with Public & Private Agencies – Ms. Jane Montanaro, Preservation CT

Ms. Montanaro announced that Preservation Connecticut has announced their new photography contest, which will focus on historic landscapes to coincide with the ongoing Olmsted context and survey project and Frederick Law Olmsted's 200th birthday next spring. This will be a traveling exhibit similar to the historic barn's photography contest.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second Dr. Faber to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Deborah D. Gaston

*Next regularly scheduled Council meeting:
Wednesday September 1, 2021 – Meeting format to be determined*