

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Wednesday, May 1, 2024 @ 9:30 am**

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Meeting will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams (see code for meeting in your email or contact Jonathan.Kinney@ct.gov for the code)

MEETING

Council: Ms. Elizabeth Acly, Ms. Elizabeth Burgess, Vice-Chairman Paul Butkus, Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Dr. Leah Glaser, Dr. Andy Horowitz, Ms. Deanna Rhodes and Dr. Sarah Sportman

Absent: Ms. Vincencia Adusei, Mr. Thomas Elmore, Ms. Sara Nelson

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

Guests: Ms. Jane Montanaro, Mr. Steve Vastola, Ms. Priyanka Panjwani, Mr. Mike Forino

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order @9:36 a.m.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Vice-Chairman Butkus read aloud the Review of Public Comment Procedures.

III. Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest

Vice-Chairman Butkus read aloud the Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest and asked if there were any conflicts with staff members or Council. There were no conflicts reported.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes and Transcripts

A. Minutes – April 10, 2024 Meeting

On a motion by Ms. Carnell, second by Ms. Acly, the Council voted to approve the April 10, 2024 meeting minutes.

(Y-5, N-0, Abstaining-3, Absent-3, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

V. State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items

A. Unfinished Action Items

1. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Chester Public Library, repointing and boiler replacement, 21 W. Main St., Chester, CT. (Table until August)

On a motion b Ms. Burgess, second by Dr. Glaser, the Historic Preservation Council voted to recall this item to the table, and to retable it until the August 2024 HPC meeting, so that the applicant can gather additional information.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-2, Absent-3, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Ms. Fink spoke on this application. After receiving the conditions assessment and recommended repairs she started to work with the applicant and Circuit Rider, Mr. Mike Forino, to revise the scope of work and materials. The applicant will meet informally with several masons and contractors to develop a budget and will be prepared with a revised application at the August meeting.

B. New Action Items

1. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, The Mark Twain House and Museum, 351 Farmington Ave., Hartford, CT. Repair and painting of porch decking and skirting, painting of decorative brickwork, and spot repointing: \$143,204

(Y-7, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-3, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

On a motion by Ms. Rhodes, second by Ms. Carnell, the Historic Preservation Council voted 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. Staff recommended this application for funding.

Applicant: The Mark Twain House and Museum
Amount: \$143,204

Ms. Fink presented this application. Crosskey Architects was hired by the Mark Twain House to prepare a conditions assessment and bid documents for several critical projects. There is a large amount of restoration already in progress using several other grant sources. This specific HRF grant is being used for porch repairs, masonry repairs and painting. This is both a significant landmark and easement property committed to preservation and preventive maintenance as good stewards.

Ms. Acly asked for clarity on the status of the bid documents. Ms. Fink replied the current bid documents were posted to OneDrive so the Council can view and get an understanding of the project. The bid documents are still being finalized.

Ms. Acly also asked if the applicant was still working with Crosskey as their consultant? Ms. Fink replied yes, with the project manager.

Ms. Carnell asked what specific types of paints would be used on the brick and how the vermilion color would be matched? Ms. Fink replied Crosskey and Preservations Strategies prepared separate reports in 2023. Both will be conducting a paint analysis to match the paint.

Vice Chairman Butkus added he wondered if a mineral paint, which does not fade, would be used. Anything with a red hue, over time, will fade. They may have to use a gloss because mineral paints may not be available in a matte finish. It would be good to use a paint with the longest retention rather than the gloss. Ms. Fink added she did notice during her site visit the paint was fading.

Ms. Acly noticed she did not see a quote worked up like in most applications. Ms. Burgess asked the same question. Ms. Fink replied, the estimates from the Architects and Preservation Solutions are being used due to this being a large project. A contractor has not been selected yet; they are still going through the bid process. Ms. Burgess also commented the applicant's long-term preservation plan is great!

2. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, The Congregational Church of Plainville, United Church of Christ, 130 West Main St., Plainville, CT. Urgent stabilization, and repair to prevent steeple failure and collapse: repair of top chord of main roof truss, repair of the failed connection in steeple, reinforcement of girt, and removal of chimney: \$50,000

(Y-7, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-3, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

On a motion by Ms. Burgess, second, Dr. Glaser, the Historic Preservation Council voted 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. Staff recommended this application for funding.

Applicant: The Congregational Church of Plainville United Church of Christ
Amount: \$50,000

Ms. Fink presented this application. Crosskey Architects was hired by the church to produce a conditions assessment in 2022 and in 2023, based on visual observations, they determined that critical repairs were needed. The application was completed in about a month so that Crosskey could go out to bid and select a contractor to conduct a stabilization as soon as possible. Due to the Henry Austin building being used by the entire community and Playbill, safety concerns need to be addressed immediately.

Ms. Acly commented that even though the chimney is not being used, she did not see in the bid document how far down the chimney is going. Ms. Fink replied the chimney is no longer being used and it is being removed all the way down internally then rebuilt up to the roof line. It will no longer be visible from the street.

Ms. Acly also asked if anything was being done about damaged siding. Ms. Fink replied yes. They wanted to address the stabilization first then come back to complete another HRF application for the siding.

Ms. Carnell mentioned in the specification there was some DOH information from a recycled spec that should be removed.

Vice Chairman Butkus asked for clarity regarding the structural connections in the project. Ms. Acly replied they are addressing the connections that failed. There were three, plus the chimney issue. This seems like a real stabilization/mitigation exercise as opposed to a reinforcement exercise.

3. Partners In Preservation Grant, Preservation Connecticut, SFY 2025 Circuit Rider Program, Statewide

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Ms. Carnell, 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. Staff recommended this application for funding.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-2, Absent-3, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation doing business as
Preservation Connecticut
Amount: \$300,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application to the Council. SHPO has funded the Circuit Rider program for many years. The program provides direct services to our constituents that SHPO sometimes does not have the capacity to address due to limited time and staffing. Mr. Mike Forino helps with the easement program that Ms. Julie Carmelich runs. Ms. Stacey Vairo has started completing National Register updates. State Register nominations are also done on a yearly basis. The Technical Assistance Consultancy (TAC), part of the Circuit Rider Program, is also funding through SHPO and has been a tremendous help in assisting our constituents when on-the-spot questions come up in the field about their structures. Ms. Jane Montanaro, Executive Director, was on the call for any questions or concerns.

Vice Chairman Butkus asked if there were any fees for services for her program. Ms. Montanaro responded. As Mary mentioned, we have the TAC, so that is where we can bring a consultant directly to a constituent. The constituent doesn't go through the process of a grant or hiring someone. We don't charge any fees for any of the services that we do.

Separately from the Circuit Rider program, Preservation CT does offer several services for a fee. That's a separate part of our office. Ms. Renee Tribert and Ms. Jordan Sorensen complete tax credit applications and National Register nominations and state credit nominations. That is separate from the Circuit Rider Grant.

Ms. Acly asked if there were going to be any significant upcoming changes to the program? Ms. Montanaro replied there will not be any upcoming changes, but this application covers two circuit riders as they already have a team of four in the field. Over 250 calls through the office each year and they are proud of the team and thanked SHPO and the Council for their support.

Ms. Burgess asked about additional funding for growth. Ms. Montanaro replied she would welcome any additional funding for the program. They do receive private support along with their members as well.

Ms. Carnell added it is a great program and she is happy to support it.

VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations

- A. Unfinished Action Items**
- B. New Action Items**

VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Report/s

VIII. Archaeological Preserves

IX. Threatened Properties - CEPA Updates

X. Preservation Restrictions

XI. Report on State Historic Preservation Office – Jonathan Kinney

Mr. Kinney provided an update on the process for the Historic Restoration Fund grants, which Ms. Fink manages. The HRF grants for maintenance and repair of historic buildings, owned by nonprofits and municipalities, has moved to a yearly cycle due to current funding limitations.

The total budget for the program for 2024-2025 is going to be \$1,000,000. Ms. Fink met with 53 applicants virtually to discuss their prospective projects. The applicants were made aware that the program would be highly competitive this year and that projects would need to show urgency, thorough planning, community impact, and institutional capacity.

Letters of intent were due at the end of March 2024, and 50 organizations submitted letters of intent. The total funding requests were over \$7 million. SHPO staff, alongside Preservation Connecticut Circuit Riders Mr. Mike Forino and Ms. Stacey Vairo, scored each letter of intent to determine which organizations to invite to submit a full application. 28 organizations from 22 different municipalities, representing a total funding request of 3.3 million will be invited to apply and to submit a full application. 24 organizations with funding requests totaling 3.7 million will not be invited to apply this year but will be encouraged to submit a letter of intent next year. Of those 24 organizations, 5 organizations will be encouraged to apply for a Survey and Planning grant before they move forward to HRF.

Full applications will be due at the end of October of this year. Applicants will be required to submit plans, specs, drawings, and other construction documents that are at least 80% complete so that HPC will have a thorough understanding of the projects. SHPO Staff and Preservation Connecticut Circuit Riders will again narrow down the applicants and propose \$1,000,000 worth of projects that will be brought to HPC in January of next year for approval and a full timeline of this process is available on our website.

Vice Chairman Butkus asked if the 80% complete drawings are going to be CD level or DD level? Ms. Fink replied she was hoping it would be CDs to have a full understanding and review the plans.

Vice Chairman Butkus asked about cost estimating. Ms. Fink replied, we will ask them to meet informally with contractors. At least two to get an idea of the budget justification, but then also if any of them have architects, they can use those as estimates as well.

Following the April meeting, Ms. Nelson requested a high-level overview of the small discussions SHPO and HPC members conducted.

Mr. Kinney reported that the groups discussed a little bit about what resources the state had to address a large-scale project or large-scale issue like the New London church collapse.

We also talked a little bit about bond funding and the CIF program, about HPC having the power as a state entity to leverage your positions to talk to legislators, to request legislation, or to comment on it as a body.

The other discussion we had, which was about Council planning. We've not really had any meetings outside of our normal monthly discussions where we've done any planning for the Council.

This could be a lunchtime discussion of HPC statutory obligations with some of the newer members. HPC members who were willing to come to the office, we could have a meeting, we could maybe combine it into a meeting and a training of some kind. These were just ideas to step outside of our norm, our monthly meeting and get some good interactions going, some additional training, some discussions about our work, etc. Mr. Kinney was happy to answer any questions or have any further discussions on this topic.

Mr. Kinney also provided a brief legislative update:

HB 5190, which is the historic homes rehabilitation tax credit. That has been voted out of committee and we're waiting for that to go to the General Assembly for a vote.

SB-442, which was the Mount Decatur bill never made it out of committee. That was requesting that we list the property on the National Register. SHPO supports the listing of the property, but opposed this legislation strictly on procedural grounds.

SB351, which is the Community Investment Act bill which would provide a critical increase to that funding source for us. That bill passed the Senate 42 to 12 yesterday and will be moving over to the House.

The SHPO CEPA Bill, HB5433 We have been working very closely with our legislative liaison and the Commerce Committee leadership over the past week or two now on some revisions to that bill. Happy to report that it is in a much better place than it had been a couple of weeks ago. Many of our primary concerns with that legislation have been minimized or removed, particularly the buyout process, which allowed people to bypass the process or the law essentially, that is now gone. That option is now only available after several other steps have been completed. Fingers crossed we saw a version yesterday. We're hoping that will be the one that moves forward and there is a house session today at 12NOON, so it could be called to vote as early as that.

XII. Report on Museum Properties – Liz Shapiro

General

- Ms. Shapiro reported that the Henry Whitfield and Eric Sloane museums open this weekend (May 3), Old New-Gate Prison opens May 10 (an extra week for seasonal training) and the Prudence Crandall Museum will open on May 19th. We have full seasonal coverage for Whitfield, New-Gate, and Sloane, and are working to find appropriate assistance at Prudence Crandall.
- XIII.** It looks like the museums will finally have a new POS system that can be used on and off-site. Working through state processes can take some time, and we've been trying to accomplish this for six years, can't help being optimistic because we have approved paperwork to move forward!

Crandall Museum

Plaster will be removed from a second room at Prudence Crandall tomorrow. Because we feel it is critical to reopen the museum for this season, the plaster will be replaced immediately after the close of the season, at the end of October. State Architect Mr. David Barkin met with Mr. Eden Marron from Kronenberger onsite, on April 11, to determine a plan of action and to see the situation in person. As of now, the plaster ceilings in the third and fourth first floor rooms are being monitored. Happy to report they seem stable currently. Our partners at the Department of Administrative Services are providing strong advocacy and guidance for us on this project.

Eric Sloane Museum

Ms. Shapiro and Mr. Andrew Rowand will be meeting with the DECD legal team this week to discuss transferring DEEP managed property adjacent to the Sloane Museum to DECD. DEEP seems to be enthusiastic about the transfer, as it will simplify management of the full site. Meanwhile the relationship between the CT Antique Machinery Association and the museum, after the clarification of the narrow-gauge railway issue, remains strong. Ms. Shapiro credits that to Andrew's excellent relationship skills.

Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine

The National Park Service, which administers The Save America's Treasure's grant, has not given us permission to do any dismantling of the four-story cellblock without complete reinstallation. At present, we are waiting for our consultant on the project, GNCB, to provide an alternative solution.

Staff will be meeting with the Department of Administrative Services on Friday to discuss the restoration project at Viet's Tavern.

Henry Whitfield State Museum

Curator Ms. Michelle Parrish continues to monitor the various physical infrastructure projects on-site, as she prepares the museum to open this weekend. The team has enjoyed watching a bonded pair of Great Horned owls and their owlets hatch and thrive. According to staff member Mr. Chris Collins, they make quite a mess in their feeding! Both little owls have left the nest, and we wish them well.

XIII. Old Business

XIV. New Business

XV. Liaison with Public & Private Agencies – Jane Montanaro

Ms. Montanaro reported on Preservation CT activities. There will be a Talking About Preservation (TAP) Session on Historical Churches at noon today. They will be talking with Modern Ruins, an architectural firm out of New York. Walter Sedovic is the lead architect and they're working with us in Washington Square in Bridgeport on Saint Lukes, doing a condition assessment of the church. Mike Forino, our Circuit Rider in charge of that project will also be talking about the project, but also talking generally about stewardship for historic properties and resources.

This Saturday is the international celebration of Jane Jacobs and the Jane's Walks, PCT is participating for the first time and trying to coordinate with partners. Go on their website and see what's happening in Connecticut. There are about 15 walks planned.

Next Thursday is the annual Connecticut Preservation Award ceremony, which will be held at the New Haven Country Club, same as last year. PCT will be presenting our Harlan Griswold Award in conjunction with the SHPO. The award is going for the Farmington rails to trails project.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

On a motion by Dr. Horowitz, second Ms. Rhodes, this meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Deborah D. Gaston

*Next regularly scheduled Council meeting:
Wednesday, July 10, 2024 – Meeting Format TBD*