

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Wednesday, September 10, 2025 @ 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)

MINUTES

Council: Ms. Elizabeth Acly, Chairman Paul Butkus, Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Mr. Thomas Elmore, Dr. Leah Glaser, Dr. Andy Horowitz, Ms. Deanna Rhodes and Dr. Sarah Sportman

Absent: Ms. Vincencia Adusei, Ms. Elizabeth Burgess, Mr. Kent McCoy

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

Guests: Mr. Robert Cohen, Ms. Ginger Fiorte, Ms. Claire Guadagno, Ms. Lashawna Jarret, Dr. Daryn Reyman-Lock, Ms. Kathy Maher and Ms. Jane Montanaro, Ms. Sandra Winslow, Ms. Jordan Sorenson, Ms. Maria Mastajo

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 a.m.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Chairman Butkus read aloud the Review of Public Comment Procedures.

III. Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest

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 none.

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes and Transcripts

A. Minutes – August 6, 2025 Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Elmore., second by Dr. Horowitz, the Council voted to approve the August 6, 2025 meeting minutes with corrections.

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

V. State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items

A. Unfinished Action Items

1. Survey and Planning Grant, Blau House and Gardens, Inc. State Register Nomination for Blau House, Westport

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Mr. Elmore, the Historic Preservation Council voted to award 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. Staff recommended this application for funding.

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

Applicant: Blau House and Gardens Foundation, Inc.

Amount: \$3,861

Ms. Dunne presented this application. A Survey and Planning grant was awarded to this applicant in 2023. The applicant competitively selected a consultant who began the work but was unable to finish it. The applicant came back and asked for advice, and Ms. Dunne advised them to competitively reselect a new consultant, which they did. However, the new consultant did quote a higher price. SHPO initially awarded \$8,500. The new price was, as seen in the budget, a little over \$12,000. The applicant is asking for an increase in the original grant to make up the difference. Mr. Robert Cohen was on the call to answer any questions or concerns.

Dr. Glaser asked if the first consultant's work was usable and if the new consultant was able to take advantage of any of the original work, or is the new consultant planning to start from scratch?

Ms. Dunne replied yes, there was a lot of discussion between Ms. Wisniewski and Mr. Cohen. The new consultant did not feel that what had been completed was usable. SHPO will not be reimbursing those original funds. The Applicant will be absorbing that cost.

B. New Action Items

1. Survey and Planning Grant, Lake Waramaug Association, National Register Nomination, Lake Waramaug, New Preston

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

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

Applicant: The Lake Waramaug Association, Inc.

Amount: \$20,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application. The Lake Waramaug Association requested funding in the amount of \$20,000 to complete a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the property. Ms. Scofield, SHPO's National Register Coordinator, did meet with the applicant previously, to make a preliminary determination of eligibility. The applicant is coming in for a non-matching grant to hire someone to prepare the nomination. The budget was discussed and staff felt that the maximum award was appropriate for this grant. Ms. Claire Guadagno and Ms. Maria Mostojo were on the call for any questions or concerns.

Ms. Acly asked, from a land point of view, what Ms. Dunne thought about the actual lake itself. The boundary includes the lake, and would it be a listed resource in or of itself? Ms. Dunne responded that the lake is a unifying feature and is naturally included. Ms. Scofield added that the parcels in this case go into the lake, but the lake is a primary feature in this district. Since we are recognizing it for significance of recreation. We don't know if they will count it as a site but we haven't gotten that far yet. Certainly, the landscape here is critical to significance.

2. Survey and Planning Grant, Mark Twain House and Museum, Condition Assessment, Mark Twain House, Hartford

On a motion by Mr. Elmore, second by Dr. Glaser, the Historic Preservation Council voted to award 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. Staff recommended this application for funding.

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

Applicant: The Mark Twain House and Museum

Amount: \$20,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application. The Mark Twain House and Museum requested funding in the amount of \$20,000 to produce a condition assessment of the building. SHPO has given grants to the Mark Twain House and Museum over the years for specific items that have included an assessment of conditions and then maybe plans and specs to address whatever the issues are. However, she does not believe that a comprehensive condition assessment has been prepared, or at least not recently. Dr. Daryn Reyman-Locke was on the call for any questions or concerns.

Chairman Butkus commented that there are known water issues, temporary patches on the roof, and drainage issues. Is it appropriate to go through a \$40,000

exercise to document things that have been documented to then actually have to start and do the work? Or, would it be possible for them to just do a bid drawing scope instead of a conditions assessment, since the big chunk with HVAC is already being undertaken separately. Ms. Dune replied if the Council wants to suggest that, then the applicant can incorporate that since the application indicates that have identified several different issues, but they just haven't folded it all into one comprehensive report that would give them a road map. It does make sense not to repeat work to identify known issues and maybe make better use of the money.

Dr. Daryn Reyman-Lock commented that she was brought on to staff about 3 months ago, and when she came on there had been an architectural survey done of all the buildings on the site, but nothing comprehensive was done on the historic house. A lot of the things that have been identified were identified by her, especially when it came to possible structural issues, but she is not qualified as an architect. There hasn't been anything very comprehensively looked at in the historic house for quite a few years and they know they need to undertake a significant restoration project. They want to make sure they are not missing anything, which is why they would like to bring on a historic preservation architect to the project. In addition, the HVAC system upgrade was started about a year and a half ago and she is still unclear where they are in that process. That's an ongoing discussion and there's three different HVAC systems that are currently being discussed, one in the carriage barn, one in the historic house and one in the visitor center, which was built in 2003.

Dr. Glaser added, if it goes out for the RFP, since this is an Edward Tuckerman Potter building, there should be a little more about him. Architects are going to do this building assessment, and she believes anybody deciding what this building needs and what the issues are should be familiar with his other works. He is prominent. Just because as a grant, this is going to go on public record, and we always want to be clear about that significance.

Ms. Dunne added that they can ask that this be added to the RFP, to talk a little bit about the resource and its history. They might not be able to make it a formal condition, but perhaps a preference for a bidder that is familiar with this architect and his other works. Dr. Glaser added there are at least two other buildings in Hartford, and then he has a building in Pennsylvania, building at Union College at Lehigh University where her son is attending now. Dr. Reyman-Lock added she is an alumnus of Lehigh College herself.

Ms. Acly added she wanted to put in a plug for the holistic conditions assessment. Maybe some of the conditions are relatively obvious, but the conditions assessment can link them all together and find root causes. She believes, as Dr. Reyman-Lock recommended or suggested, maybe there's an underlying structural issue too. She also believes the benefit of seeing them all cohesively is, if there's something more that hasn't been considered, it would be uncovered in that process.

Chairman Butkus added the number of temporary repairs that have been in place and just wanted to make sure that things get done as expeditiously as possible so

that the interior finishes are not damaged, which are such a significant portion of this building.

VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations

A. Unfinished Action Items

B. New Action Items

1. Listing to the State Register of Historic Places, The Charles Roemer House, 111 Tunxis Avenue, Bloomfield

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Dr. Glaser, the Historic Preservation Council voted to list the Charles Roemer House, located at 111 Tunxis Avenue, Bloomfield, to the State Register of Historic Places. Staff recommended this property for listing.

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

Ms. Wisniewski presented this application. This property is eligible under Criterion 2, at the local level, as an intact example of a bungalow-style residence with Craftsman influences. Alterations have been minimal, primarily related to bathrooms and kitchens, and the house retains its integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association of a single family residence as when it was constructed by Charles Romer in 1913. Ms. Carnell provided some edits on this application. Ms. Jordan Sorenson from Preservation Connecticut, the owner Ms. Lashawna Jarrett, and her parents were also be on the call to answer any questions or concerns.

Chairman Butkus asked Ms. Carnell if she noticed the living room and dining room doors were glass. She replied yes and added this was a good, strong nomination with some great history about the owners and the builder that you do not always get in a house like this. She was happy to support this nomination. Dr. Glaser also appreciated the history of the Craftsman style in that context.

VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Report/s

A. Unfinished Action Items

B. New Action Items

1. Local Historic District Study Report, Georgetown Mill Village Historic District # 1, Redding

Pursuant to CGS §7-147 c, on a motion by Mr. Elmore, second by Ms. Rhodes, the Historic Preservation Council voted to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance and boundary for the proposed Georgetown Mill Village Historic District #1 as presented in the study report transmitted by the Town of Redding on July 29, 2025.

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

Ms. Dunne presented this application. An application just like this was presented last month. The Council's charge here is to recommend the approval of the ordinance and boundaries and provide any comments that Ms. Dunne can provide to the applicant in a formal letter that will be shared at a public hearing. This submission does include all the components that are required and several members of the report committee were on the call.

Chairman Butkus asked if they can request that the map be based on the tax map that shows the parcel boundaries? He could not follow the description of where things started and went through, as we've seen in other cases where there's a little bit of ambiguity as to whether a property was included or not included in use. That tax map shows the full extent of parcels rather than what is included. This is more of a key plan of the general area, but not distinguishable as to what's included and what's not included, because it includes the railroad tracks and everything else.

Ms. Dunne replied, yes this is important, and she should backtrack and say that they do have a map, but the requirement is to have an exact boundary map. The ordinance, of course, delineates the boundaries, but we can ask them to include a map because this can create a lot of confusion down the line if the boundaries aren't exact.

Dr. Horowitz appreciated the application. There were a couple of points to be looked at. One, in the narrative in the beginning, there is a reference to the Connecticut Historical Commission, which has not existed in several decades and the definition that's used there, he believes is not the current one in the state statute, so that should be changed. He was also curious about page 4, which jumped out at him, and he realized that we're talking mostly about architecture, but there's a bunch of attention paid to the initial residents of the town, who are described as industrious and civic minded with shared values and mutual support. Then there's Italian, Polish and Scandinavian immigrants who are quote "reliable, low-cost labor who enjoyed housing within walking distance".

He was curious about what they meant to signal here in the distinction of one group of people living in these houses from another. People were industrious and civic minded. So, if there's evidence for that, he would love to see it. And if not, he believes it should be adjusted. The third thing, it should say what Gilbert and Bennett produced. He believes there was a wire factory but it should say something about what this mill town was producing.

Mr. Elmore added this was a great application. He asked if all the historic outbuildings were included, and can they be identified in this report so that we don't run into the same issue we ran into with the tobacco sheds here in Suffield for 25 years. When properties change hands and things get removed from surveys and don't show up here and don't show up there but were included at the time or did exist at the time of this preparation. He just wants to make sure that it's more than just everything within 200 feet of the center line of the road and that each outbuilding that's significant should be identified with that property.

Ms. Dunne replied, a lot of outbuildings are identified, but they can go back over each property and make sure because that's another sort of endangered resource. A lot of times commissions don't realize the importance of the outbuildings.

Ms. Acly asked Ms. Dunne to check the paragraph style, some have a colon list of different characteristics of the building and then some have bullet points and it might be worth making those all one format. The technical comment is on the ones that have the character-defining features with a colon and then a description of it, the one that says roofing typically seems to describe the shape of the roof. That would be better to say roof only because roofing is the material that covers it. It's just technically not accurate, but it might end up becoming a difficult thing down the road if it were used for weighing a part of the building.

Ms. Dunne added that the process is that the comments are relayed and the study report can be amended. The Council's and SHPO's roles are not as involved as it is with the State or the National Register. It's just sort of advisory, in fact, she can ask if any changes that they make are returned to us for our files, especially if they're going to include outbuildings that are not there. That's important for us to know so that we have that on file. Often it goes to the Council and then they're not obligated to get back to us with the outcome. She has to keep on top and see what the vote is and all of that so that we have records.

Mr. Elmore asked, can this get rolled into a district at some point down the road and if that is the case, will it come back to us at that point? Ms. Dunne replied that we no longer automatically list things on the State Register automatically when they are designated locally. However, if they want to be on the State Register, yes, they will have to submit a State Register nomination and then it would come back before Council. However, she believes these are already part of a larger National Register district so they probably will not be coming back because if it is listed on the National Register, it is automatically on the State Register. Mr. Elmore was trying to add the outbuildings. Ms. Dunne will firmly recommend; there's really no reason to cut them off if the parcel is going to be included.

VIII. Archaeological Preserves

IX. Threatened Properties - CEPA Updates - Todd Levine

X. Preservation Restrictions

XI. Report on State Historic Preservation Office – Jonathan Kinney

Mr. Kinney reported that Congress is back from its August recess. With regards to Federal Fiscal Year 2026 funding, we are in a holding pattern to find out what happens on that until there is some movement on the budget.

On the state side, we're hearing that there is most likely going to be a special session of the legislature. We originally thought that it might be in mid to late September, but it's looking more like it will be in early October. The large housing bill that was vetoed earlier this year will be back on the agenda there, so we will see what impacts or potential impacts that may present to preservation work.

Earlier this year Mr. Kinney had reached out to our legal department to get some information on the recusal process for public boards, in order to relay that information to the Council. Mr. Kinney will be prepared to share that information in October, as a quick training moment for Council.

Two exciting events that are coming to the region this fall, both of which some SHPO staff will be attending, are the Historic New England Summit, which is coming to New Haven on November 13th and 14th, 2025 at the historic Shubert Theater. The second event, which overlaps a little bit with the Historic New England Summit, is the Association for Preservation Technology International Conference, which is going to be held in Providence, RI this year. The theme this year is Revolution, Innovation and the power of Water, Craft and Architecture.

XII. Report on Museum Properties – Liz Shapiro

Prudence Crandall Museum:

Ms. Shapiro reported that security cameras have been installed, and staff have a variety of views of the exterior of the property. This has already assisted us when the alarm system was recently activated, and it was a false alarm. We were able to note that from the cameras.

On Friday September 5, the museum hosted the unveiling of four books previously owned and signed by Prudence Crandall, which have been acquired by the museum. Secretary of State Stephanie Thomas was the special guest, and we were joined by Senator Flexer and representatives from the town. The event was held in the museum and the room was full of guests spilling over into additional spaces.

Eric Sloane Museum:

The Friends of the Eric Sloane Museum will present A Night at the Museum on Friday September 12, featuring tours, stories and other activities.

The CT Antique Museum Association Fall Festival takes place on September 26 through 28th. Although the museum is not “officially” a participant, we do help with traffic control and the museum is open free to visitors that day.

A log-hewing workshop will take place on Saturday October 4, from 10-4 pm, and it’s a great hands-on class and demonstration. There is a fee to participate but students will learn the basics of timber selection and beam layout and will create a hand-hewn finished product. These workshops sell out every time they are offered and it’s fun to watch the participants work.

The museum is preparing for their big SPARK event on Saturday October 25th. This is a full day of historic trades with lots of hands-on activities for people of all ages, presented in conjunction with TradesUp. The free event offers youth and adults the opportunity to safely participate in trades, crafts, and self-sufficiency skills through hands-on activities and demonstrations.

Henry Whitfield Museums:

Nature Stewards Field Day took place at the museum on Sunday August 14. There were live animal demonstrations, such as the one she attended on Birds of Prey in CT, throughout the day, with audiences of nearly 70 people. We are exploring a partnership with a local beekeeper in Guilford (who keeps bees about a block from the museum) to put a hive on the property and to produce some Henry Whitfield branded honey. Stay tuned!

WelcomeFest returns to the museum on Sunday September 14th. If you are around Guilford, please stop by, it's a lovely event. And hold Sunday October 19 for the event, "Making Chocolate the 18th Century Way". Robert Lecce and Edward Dirgo of Pewter Pot Fine Spiced Chocolates will demonstrate how chocolate was made in the 1700s. They'll also be selling their chocolate bars and chocolate drinking mixes. The event sold out of "goods" last year by 1 p.m.!

Funding for the museum's new geothermal system is nearly at the finish line. We are waiting for approval from DEEP to be able to use the GreenerGov TAC funds to cover the costs. GreenerGov CT sets out a bold set of goals for state agencies for the next decade to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, curb wasteful water use, and reduce the amount of waste disposed of at state facilities. Funding for projects is available via state bonding, however there are some funds that are currently available. The geothermal system would provide heating and cooling.

Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine

Historic Trades Day came to Old New-Gate on August 23. The event was hosted by the museum, in conjunction with TradesUp and the Eric Sloane Museum, and drew over 200 visitors. Ms. Kelly Fellner, the Superintendent of the New England National Scenic Trail (NET), which includes Springfield Armory National Historic Site and Coltsville National Historical Park stopped by for her first visit to the site. The trades event series is gaining a reputation in New England, and we have been approached by other organizations about hosting events at additional sites.

Bat Day is coming up on Saturday September 20th, which is presented in conjunction with staff from DEEP.

Light in the Dungeon, the event that features over 200 hand-carved jack-o-lanterns dotting the mine will open on October 3rd with fifty new pumpkins. The event runs Friday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and closes November 2nd.

The first reading of a new play that is set at Old New-Gate Prison will take place on October 3rd, by invitation only (let me know if anyone is interested.) The play is scheduled to be presented throughout the 2026 museum season and will be our main event focused on America 250. There will be plenty of opportunities to see the full production next season.

XIII. Old Business

1. UPDATE - Structural preservation and rehabilitation of two historic tobacco sheds located on Firetown Road, Simsbury, CT. (Approved by HPC on 2/1/2023)

Ms. Fink shared the questions that Council asked at the last meeting with the representatives from Simsbury. After getting their answers, we had a follow-up meeting with Ms. Beth Acly, Mr. Kent McCoy and Mr. Jim Grant, who is a structural engineer as well, and they offered to get together with the town to revise the scope of work and the bid documents. Ms. Fink shared with the Town and they are curious to hear their approach and would like to get together and hear their ideas.

We are going to award a small TAC grant, which is a Preservation Connecticut's grant, to have Ms. Acly, Mr. Grant and Mr. McCoy work on this project with the Town of Simsbury so that we can revise the scope and hopefully save the barn. Chairman Butkus corrected Ms. Fink by stating that barns, not barn is the goal.

XIV. New Business

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

Cathy Labadia reminded the group that the Connecticut Archeology Fair is on Saturday, October 4th from 11:00 to 3:00 and will be held at the Eli Whitney Museum and Workshop. It is a great site to host talks and demonstrations and welcome kids to the field of archaeology. There's still an opportunity to sign up to give a talk. Stefon Danchuk with PCT is helping to coordinate that.

Ms. Montanaro reported that on Thursday, November 6th, there will be a gala celebration in Ridgefield at the Lounsbury House to continue the celebration of PCT's 50th Anniversary. They are hoping the Governor will attend and we're going to have some remarks from Ms. Sarah Bronin. She will be coming from Washington to help us celebrate 50 years of Preservation Connecticut and get us energized and focused on our charge for the future. Please consider tickets and bringing friends and sponsorships and donations. They would like to make this a big fundraising event for us, and we know you and all your contacts are our dearest friends, and we hope to see you all there.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Mr. Elmore, this meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Deborah D. Gaston

*Next regularly scheduled Council meeting:
Wednesday, October 8, 2025 – Meeting Format TBD*