HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Wednesday, September 2, 2026 @ 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, Ms. Elizabeth Burgess, Chairman Paul Butkus, Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Mr. Thomas Elmore, Dr. Leah Glaser, Mr. Kent McCoy, Ms. Deanna Rhodes and Dr. Sarah Sportman (arrived late)

Absent: Ms. Vincencia Adusei, Dr. Andy Horowitz

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, Mr. Todd Levine, Ms. Jenny Scofield, Ms. Elizabeth Shapiro, and Ms. Marena Wisniewski

Guests: Ms. Rochelle Davis, Mr. Nicholas Griffin, Mr. Bob Guynn, Huntington Homestead, Ms. Jane Montanaro and Dr. Daryn Reyman-Lock

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 two:

1. Ms. Acly recused herself from Agenda Item V.B.2. Trinity Parish Church
2. Mr. McCoy recused himself from Agenda Item V.B.2. Trinity Parsh Church

IV. Review and Approval of Minutes and Transcripts

A. Minutes – July 1, 2026

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Ms. Carnell, the Council voted to approve the July 1, 2026 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

B. New Action Items

1. Survey and Planning Grant, United Churches of Durham, Existing Conditions and Structural Assessment for United Churches of Durham, Durham

On a motion by Mr. McCoy, second by Ms. Rhodes, 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.

Applicant: United Churches of Durham
Amount: $20,000

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

Ms. Dunne presented this application. The United Churches of Durham requested funding in the amount of $20,000 to obtain the consulting services of a CFR-Qualified historical architect and engineering team to prepare a structural assessment of their 1847 church building at 228 Main Street, Durham. As noted in their narrative, over the years, they've been addressing issues piecemeal as they come up with the building. With a little help from Preservation Connecticut, they've decided to apply to SHPO to get a more comprehensive structural look at the building. They're asking for the full amount, which they will match and cover anything over the cost of the assessment. That's how they based their budget, they weren't quite sure what it would cost, so they asked for the full amount. They will get half of the amount, up to $20,000, of whatever the final amount is. Mr. Bob Guynn from the Church was on the call to answer any questions or concerns.

Chairman Butkus stated that the previous reports mentioned in the application, the structural engineering reports and the report on the bells, were not attached to the application package. Ms. Dunne replied the reports were submitted, but she will upload them on the shared drive or just replace the whole application by adding the reports.

Ms. Acly added that with the piecemeal nature of the structural work, certainly the steeple work, there's a vulnerability still there. She was trying to get a sense if there's an actual structural stability concern that was raised in that 2023 report or if it's more just tying up loose ends, getting the building envelope all set so that it doesn't progress to that point again in the future.

Mr. Bob Guynn from United Churches commented, certainly, that 2023 assessment was the most comprehensive and encompassing one done in the 150 years the church has been around. Up until that time, most everything was putting

out fires. He is new to the congregation since 2020. He was there for 2023, but he was not there for the structural steel installation back in 1993. There is overall degradation of stability of the building, which is what they are trying to, in their holistic approach, remediate. In the pictures, you can see that there have been less than comprehensive installations of things like cinder blocks and temporary pylons in the basement. It is an earthen floor with a stone foundation, again, dating back to 1847. This is all the information he had other than what was presented in the document.

Ms. Acly asked if there was a sense of urgency on the steeple side. Mr. Guynn replied he felt more of an urgency on the flooring and the structure at the base of the building. The problem with that steeple repair in 1993, as he pointed out, was that they put structural steel up. There are two generations of structural steel up in the belfry, and timbers that date back to 1847.

Chairman Butkus reiterated to Ms. Acly, from the photographs, it didn't look like they transferred everything all the way down to new footings in the basement underneath that tower. It is listing inward and it would be good to carry those loads all the way down. It's not uncommon for those kinds of repairs to be needed on structures like this. To Ms. Dunne, when the RFP is done, that's probably a strong focus, it's engineering forward that all of those structural concerns are a priority and not a secondary kind of focus.

2. **Survey and Planning Grant, Trinity Parish, Architectural Plans and Specifications to improve accessibility for Trinity Parish Church, Wethersfield**

On a motion by Mr. Elmore, second by Ms. Burgess, 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-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-2, Recused-2) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: Trinity Parish (Episcopal)
Amount: $20,000

Ms. Dunne presented this application. Trinity Parish requested funding in the amount of $20,000 to obtain the consulting services of a CFR-qualified historical architect to prepare plans and specifications to support accessibility for the church building. SHPO did fund the condition assessment, more like exploration of accessibility options. SHPO did invite the applicant to apply for an HRF grant in October. This grant will support the preparation of the necessary plans and specifications to accompany that application. It is a non-matching grant for that reason. However, as you can see from the budget, it's going to go over $20,000 and they will cover any remainder. The original architect was competitively

selected and did submit a realistic budget, SHPO feels confident, we can only give them $20,000, so the budget is solid. Ms. Carol Jones unfortunately had another appointment at 9:00 a.m., so she was not on the call. Ms. Dunne answered any questions or concerns from the Council.

Chairman Butkus commented it is a broader topic on non-matching grants. At some point, we should have a longer discussion about what that means, because it is becoming a practice where people think that they can get all the work done for what the grant amount is because they're not required to match. This should be put on a future agenda to have a broader discussion because it's more of a meal supplement, for these things, not the whole meal.

Ms. Dunne replied that this grant and the other non-matching grants that SHPO supports are for National Register nominations, and those are more than $20,000. On the application, we have sort of an assertion that they have the match in place, but she can add something that says, are you prepared to cover the entire budget, above the match, just so that we have a confidence level that the applicant can get going if and when they're awarded the grant. A broader discussion can be had.

Chairman Butkus added Ms. Acly and Mr. McCoy have recused themselves because they're on the original team and the way the application was worded, they were continuing with that original team. He didn't know if all Council members are aware that those kinds of relationships or continuations are allowed underneath the program, without needing to go back out to bid and all of those kinds of typical requirements that we would see if issuing an RFP.

Ms. Dunne replied that SHPO set the parameters of these non-matching grant specifically for feeding into the HRF grant program. To make the Council aware, if the consultant is competitively selected the first time and then they've done the pre-development report, they're naturally the best person to move forward and the best person to create a realistic budget for the plans and specifications that might be required. Otherwise SHPO would require a competitive selection process.

VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations

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

1. Listing to the State Register of Historic Places, John Peck Gager Homestead. 150 Gager Hill Road, Scotland

On a motion by Dr. Glaser, second by Ms. Carnell, the Historic Preservation Council voted to list the John Peck Gager Homestead, located at 150 Gager Hill Road, Scotland, to the State Register of Historic Places.

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

Ms. Wisniewski presented this application. Staff recommended approval of listing of the John Peck Gager Homestead, located at 150 Gager Hill Road, Scotland, to the State Register of Historic Places, under Criterion 1, at the local level, in the areas of community development and agriculture, as the family home of the

Gager family who were significant in the development of Scotland, as well as an example of a local farmstead developed through the early 20th century. The property maintains most of its integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association of a farmstead typical of those that developed across Scotland and the eastern part of the state, which includes evolution over time. Dr. Darren Raymond-Locke, author of the nomination, and Mr. Erik Johansen, representative of the Scotland Historical Society, who have also lent their support to this nomination, were on the call for any questions or concerns.

Chairman Butkus thanked Ms. Carnell for her comments on this and the next application/nomination.

Dr. Glaser commented, Dr. Raymond Locke's nominations are always nice to read. She had a couple comments about just the phrase “new world” on page 9, and then mention the word colony, because it's not clear that this is during the colonial period. For those who don't know the history, and just to get away from that new world, old world, because it's only a new world to the Europeans. She was wondering about the War of 1812 and considering where we are in commemorations, if there's any information about the family during the American Revolution and what they did. The other thing was just a little more context about that time period when it was built in the early 19th century when Connecticut started more to industrialize and understanding that agriculture is not what's going to be economically viable in the state, but to show the importance of this farm and this agricultural place in Scotland. Just a sentence mentioning what else was going on in terms of industry in the cities and how important these agricultural spaces are.

Dr. Reymond-Lock replied that she will certainly make those changes. In terms of the question about the American Revolution, she put in everything she could find about this family because there was so little that had really been documented. As far as she can tell, none of them participated in the American Revolution, but we're involved in the War of 1812. There was little she could find after extensive research.

Ms. Wisniewski added maybe since that question came up, it's important to just make a note that a review of sources did not indicate one way or the other. Dr. Glaser added that's a good idea. Connecticut was known as the “Provision State”. Farms did provide support to the revolutionary cause, but we do not have evidence that this one was involved.

Ms. Acly commented regarding the evolution of the house, it might be helpful to know it most likely would have had a central chimney mass. That room in the back would have been the kitchen, or the L might have been a purpose-built kitchen, but it sounded like that might have been added a little later.

There was a nice discussion of the value of the estates of some of the household members and comparing it to today's dollars. Does it make sense to just say in 2026 with that, just so that if somebody's reading it in 20 years from now? Dr. Reymond-Lock replied, yes absolutely.

Ms. Acly continued, in the very last sentence it talks about the Gauthier family who retained ownership until 2026. Does that mean that it's recently changed owners again? Dr. Reymond-Lock replied yes, the owner, Mr. Eric Johansen was on this phone call. He purchased it earlier this year or late last year.

2. **Listing to the State Register of Historic Places, William and Rebecca Gilbert House, 55 Maple Avenue, East Haddam**

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Mr. McCoy, the Historic Preservation Council voted to list Honey Gable, located at 55 Maple Avenue, East Haddam, to the State Register of Historic Places.

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

Ms. Wisniewski presented this application. Staff recommended approval of listing of Honey Gable, located at 55 Maple Avenue, East Haddam, to the State Register of Historic Places, under criterion one, at the local level, as the residence of Eliza Ann Smith, a free woman of color with prominence in the local community, and under criterion 2, at the local level, in the area of architecture, as an intact example of a turn of the 19th century residential dwelling incorporating popular architectural styles of the time. The property maintains a high degree of integrity, including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association of a circa 1800s home. Mr. Nicholas Griffin and Ms. Rochelle Davis, owners and authors of the nomination, were on the call for any questions or concerns.

Ms. Carnell offered a commendation to the young, emerging professional and the homeowners for doing a nice job on this nomination, which is a complex property. She questioned if there any consideration given for the National Register? Ms. Wisniewski replied, yes there was, it was evaluated for both. Staff did determine that it was eligible for the National Register, but in conversations with the owner, they decided that State Register was the best fit for them at this time. The National Register option is always open should they want to pursue it. It is a lovely property that has a very high degree of integrity.

Ms. Carnell also added, if time would allow, some of those details are fabulous and it would be great to have a few more photos of the coin work and details of the clapboards would be nice to have.

Mr. Griffin commented it is interesting to observe this process. They have only been in the house for under five years. The prior owner happened to have been an artist, and she was the third generation of her family. They were residents for about 60 years. The property is large and beautiful and extremely intact, as was mentioned. They spent much of the first several years cleaning and getting a good look at things. It's only been relatively recent that they have seen the full scale of the place they now reside and feel very fortunate to be here. Historic homes in East Haddam are not a dime a dozen, but there are certainly many beautiful houses here. They are in a very quiet rural part, about a mile from the river. They

are getting their hands dirty now inside the house and doing that research. His wife Rochelle Davis was the person who put together our proposal. They have had good conversations with Mr. Carl Stavko, who's the local historian, and with Mr. Dick Everett, who's a local neighbor and a person of significance. They have had the help of a young Conn College student to put together some of the architectural significance of the home. They are really pleased to be in working in partnership with what SHPO/Council does. Ms. Davis thanked everyone and invited everyone to come and visit their home anytime. She feels like they are sort of a part of it for a moment and they need to preserve it for everyone else who's going to come after them.

Chairman Butkus added it was interesting to read about the bank records, kind of tied to the woman of color, and he was just wondering where that information was found, if anybody knew about where that was tracked down. Ms. Davis replied, Mr. Carl Stavko is the one who compiled all that information on Eliza Ann Smith, and because Venture Smith Day is here in East Haddam every year, they have dug up many of Venture Smith's descendants and all those connections, et cetera. Eliza Ann Smith and her husband didn't have children, so that line, her father was Solomon, ended with her. But the church also kept the records. She believes the church also has the records of her $200 being transferred to the church. Mr. Stavko was the one who compiled these amazing records of everybody in town.

Chairman Butkus thanked Mr. Griffin and Ms. Davis and commented it was very interesting to read all the little bits of history. As Dr. Glaser may remember, his Historical Society has a bunch of bank records, and he has been trying to make the case whenever anybody says, what do we need these for? Well, this is a perfect example of if someone has the will to go through and track a very significant time period of all the bank transactions, which would be a great thing. A shout out to anybody that's interested in doing that kind of research. He'd be happy to share that information. Those original sources are sometimes hard to come by and the profession of faith on July 4th, 1852, also jumped out at me as kind of a nice thing as we're celebrating our 250th. It's a nice spin on things.

VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Report/s

A. Unfinished Action Items

B. New Action Item

VIII. Archaeological Preserves

IX. **Threatened Properties - CEPA Updates** – Todd Levine

649 Howard Avenue, New Haven

We've been going back and forth with the owners for quite a few months now. SHPO and the AG's office have been trying to set up one last meeting to go over prudent feasible alternatives before we go forward with an injunction, but they have been non-responsive. They did change lawyers last month, and we've reached out a couple of times and have not gotten any answer. The current moratorium runs out on September 15th. We don't

anticipate renewing it. If we don't have a conclusion, by then we're just going to file an injunction.

40 Prospect, Essex

Currently, we are scheduled for a court date on September 15th. There are four depositions that must happen on our side, and then one on their side. The four people that are going to be deposed are Mr. Levine, Ms. Jenny Scofield, Ms. Beth Acly, and Mr. Dave Goslin by their attorneys, and SHPO in turn, is going to depose one of their experts. But the AG's office thinks it is unlikely that they will get all that done in the next two weeks. Next week, September 8th, there is a status meeting with the Attorneys and the Judge for exhibits. Mr. John Russo expects there to be a postponing of the court date. But as of now, SHPO is scheduled for Essex for September 15th.

29-31 Eldridge, Manchester

Mr. Levine had a site visit on August 20th with Ms. Marena Wisniewski, Ms. Beth Acly, and Mr. Dave Goslin. The Town was a no show, no call, but the tenant was still there and gave us access. SHPO did our review of the significance of the site and a structural analysis was done by Ms. Acly, as well as looking at the reason behind the demo, which is additional parking. After reviewing the parking lot, Mr. Goslin is working on some alternatives to potentially have a solution that gives them about half of what they wanted. We will have those reports in the next three weeks. We are probably going to be moving forward with the Manchester HPC meeting for CEPA next month. October 7th is when we are planning to present to The Council in Manchester.

Chairman Butkus added there has been a lot of pressure from the Town related to the library obtaining more parking and acquiring space on an adjacent property, but it really does seem to cut into that nice clean line behind all the commercial along the Main Street and into the residential neighborhood. This is a dangerous precedent.

Mr. Levine added that there was a CIF grant for the Manchester Library that the state funded, and they are 100 spots short of meeting code. They had to get a variance to get this whole thing through, and the addition of a fraction of that at the cost of a local historic district landmark site is something that is important to consider.

2 Greenwich Ave., 10 Greenwich Ave. and 10 West Putnam Ave.

That's currently on hold. The owner has expressed desire to work with the State, particularly to apply for tax credits to save all three buildings. They're going to be trying to schedule something with Ms. Julie Carmelich, National Register Specialist/Tax Credit Coordinator, this month to work that out to some level. SHPO intends to, regardless, set up a site visit early mid-October. They are in no rush, but the momentum is strong right now. SHPO does not want this to drop. Either we're going to have them go through the process of applying for tax credits, or we're going to do our site visit and prepare for CEPA, even though they've expressed that they do not want a demo any longer. Until we have a solution, SHPO is going to assume that it's in flux. We have received many letters of support for preserving it. SHPO has never had more support from a community for the preservation of a National Register site. Over 200 letters of support have been received, including letters from both sides of the State's legislative aisle. The Municipality's First

Selectmen wrote in a letter of support for preservation. There's a lot of support for preservation here.

X. Preservation Restrictions

XI. Report on State Historic Preservation Office – Jonathan Kinney

Mr. Kinney reported that, unfortunately, some substantial events have transpired since our last meeting. There has been a request by several Council members to go over the proposed changes to the Section 106 process at the federal level. For those who are not familiar, the Section 106 process is essentially a consultative framework that requires federal agencies who are undertaking a project to take historic properties into consideration and to consult local experts at the state or local level to gather information on the presence of historic properties and the possible impacts of the proposed undertaking. Throughout the first half of 2026, there had been rumblings at the level of the ACHP about a desire to make some revisions to the Section 106 regulations. This came to a head on June 4th during an ACHP business meeting, the ACHP obviously being the federal agency whose responsibility is to provide guidance and information to Congress and the president on preservation, they also promulgate the Section 106 regulations. At a business meeting of the ACHP on June 4th, the Vice Chairman indicated that they were going to develop a specific timeline and a collaborative working group to review and provide suggestions for the regulations for revisions with the intent of streamlining the process.

The date of August 3rd was set as the deadline for the submission of comments. All the Council members and SHPOs went back to their drawing boards and were reviewing the regulations to provide suggestions for places where they could potentially be tweaked to make some improvements. No regulations are perfect. There are certainly areas where the 106 process can be improved. However, the deadline of August 3rd was set for the Council members with the intent of circling back for additional discussion. In the middle of that window of time, however, on July 17th, several weeks before that deadline, the Vice Chair of the ACHP, apparently without the knowledge of any of the Council members or the ACHP staff, distributed a red line version of the Section 106 regulations. These are not simply revision; these are potentially devastating changes to the entire Section 106 process. It wholeheartedly changes the form and intent of consultation through that process. That was on July 17th. At that time, the Vice Chair, of the ACHP indicated that there would be a one-week period during which folks could review the proposed changes and that the vote of the ACHP would close exactly one week later, on July 24th. As anticipated, several members of the ACHP who have seats and voting ability, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, NCSHPO, and NATHPO, all voted no. However, the ACHP, which is primarily filled with appointees of the current presidential administration, voted 16 to 5 to pass the regulations and move them forward. They are currently sitting with the Office of Information and OIRA, which will review the proposed regulations for financial impacts and impacts to other agencies.

Mr. Kinney read through the bullet points of the changes proposed by the ACHP's new regulations:

- Federal agencies would no longer be required to try to avoid or minimize damage to America's historic properties. Right now, there is a three-step process when going through the Section 106 consultation, where we first try to avoid impacts to

historic properties, then try to minimize them, if avoidance is not possible. If the impacts cannot be minimized, we collaborate and agree upon mitigation. There is no longer language requiring the federal agency to avoid or minimize any impacts to historic properties. They simply will document what they're proposing and move straight to mitigation.

- The second bullet point is that state and local governments will no longer have the right to be notified or comment when federal agencies propose to damage or destroy historic places within their jurisdiction. Federal agencies will no longer be required to talk to SHPO. Federal agencies will no longer be required to talk to local governments about their projects, it is completely at their discretion.

- The third bullet point is the public's opportunity to comment, which is by right, on federal historic preservation policies or actions is now entirely optional and at the discretion of federal agencies. Federal agencies may now weigh their concerns for delays and costs associated with the public outreach and decide that that is too much. They can then move forward with the project.

- The 4th bullet is the federal government is no longer required to consult with Native American tribes or to seek their expertise regarding their own significant cultural resources.

- The 5th bullet, significant cultural landscapes would no longer be historic properties. Federal agencies would no longer be required to take into account any adverse effects on certain places, even places as significant as the Grand Canyon. This is particularly aimed, we believe, at our Native American colleagues and, traditional cultural places.

- The 6th bullet, federal agencies are no longer required to consider the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their actions other than direct actions that would physically damage the property. That, in a nutshell, means that cumulative effects are no longer considered, as well as a visual.

The democratic process by which local communities and states can comment on a federal undertaking has been completely removed. This is incredibly concerning and this certainly has ties to some current projects in Washington, D.C. It also has ties to large-scale energy and extraction projects across the country and trying to move those through the process quicker. SHPO is doing everything we can, along with our federal and state partners, to push back against this. The National Trust, NCSHPO, Preservation Action, and professional organizations like SAA and ACRA have all put out statements. SHPO has requested a meeting with OIRA. Right now, the process with OIRA is that any organization with standing may request a meeting to express their concerns with the proposal. SHPO has done that and is waiting for a response. NCSHPO and some other states have already had their meetings. Once the regs move through OIRA, which is anticipated, the proposed regulations will be published in the Federal Register. At that time, public comments will be opened. Mr. Kinney encouraged everyone to submit comments to write to their legislature to let them know that you have concerns about this process if that is something you want to do.

Dr. Glaser asked if Mr. Kinney recommended waiting until public comments were open or if they should do so now. Mr. Kinney recommended doing so now. It can be done again

when the Federal Register posting comes up. There'll be a specific approach to submitting them then, but we need to make our voice heard and over and over again, honestly. Our elected officials are telling us that the most important thing right now is to make our voices heard.

Chairman Butkus asked what happens at the end of that public comment period? Do they just get filed away? Is there a requirement for an action based on the amount of public comment? Mr. Kinney replied that there are two things right now, the first is the OIRA process. They are accepting meetings from states and SHPOs, not members of the public.

But the real public comment will start after OIRA, when it will theoretically be published in the Federal Register. That is when there will be a mandatory public comment phase. The Agency can take those into consideration, or they can completely ignore them. That's up to the federal agency on how they proceed. But once the federal agency decides to move forward from public comment, it will be enacted. There's no requirement for Congress to be involved in the regulations themselves. From his understanding the OIRA process is completely gray. There's no set timeline. He believes they can end the process of accepting meetings whenever they want. We are trying to sneak one in before they do end that process.

On top of everything with the regulations, one of the primary arguments SHPO has against these proposed regulations is that they fly directly in the face of the language and with the intent of the National Historic Preservation Act. There's no argument there. But what we are seeing is a legislative push in Congress to potentially revise the National Historic Preservation Act to line up with these new regulations, thereby eliminating that conflict and that legal argument. This has been brought to the attention of our federal delegation in Congress and our leadership here at DECD, as well as some state elected officials. SHPO has elevated it to the Governor's office, and we are currently working to see if a representative from the Attorney General's office would like to join us for that OIRA meeting because other states are having their Attorney General's join them with the potential that we may see a similar effort to what we saw last year when a group of AGs got together to file suit against the administration.

Dr. Glaser asked if the Native American tribes, especially the federally recognized ones in Connecticut, are part of the efforts? Mr. Kinney replied, "They have been, their national organization NATHPO, did put out some guidance for them to share their voices. Obviously, we're very concerned about the impact on our tribal partners. To answer Dr. Glaser's question, Mr. Kinney strongly encouraged the Council to do so if they feel the need to reach out and share their concerns. If they needed some additional background, the National Trust has a wonderful webpage about the 106 issue that you can certainly pull information from. They also have template letters depending on who your audience is to send out to various people.

Ms. Burgess asked if something can be sent individually? Mr. Kenney replied, yes and it could also work as a group if the Council wanted to submit something together.

Dr. Glaser asked if any letters were sent to any editors of local newspapers in Connecticut? Mr. Kinney replied that there have been a few articles about the topic, even in national media. He saw one that just came out this morning that he and Mr. Todd Levine were mentioned in, and the office as well. SHPO is currently working on one in the office and

hoping to get the Chairs of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Caucus to sign on with us. Currently working on our letter, which is in draft form. Information is posted on SHPO's website. We are just trying to get the word out because the more people that know about this the better. This is not something you need to know a lot about historic preservation to understand the seriousness of. This is about state and local voices being taken away from a federal decision-making process. Anyone can understand the concern there. A federal agency, based in some other state, a single staff member is making a decision that could mean the end of a historic property in Connecticut. This is obviously a major concern.

Mr. Kinney and Ms. Julie Carmelich have been speaking with The Connecticut Main Street Center about partnering on a new legacy business program in Connecticut This would be in Main Street communities, and this would be recognition of businesses that have sort of become cultural landmarks in a community that have been there for a certain amount of time and are anchors where they exist and would really be missed if they were to no longer be part of the community. SHPO and CMSC are coming up with an initial survey that's going to be sent out to the communities to get a handle on what the population of these businesses may be, what types of businesses they are, whether or not the community is interested in supporting a program like that and what their needs may be. We are envisioning an identification and recognition portion of this program, as well as some light funding, some small grants to help support these businesses, such as work on their storefront or awnings or signage, whatever they might need to help them support themselves and continue to operate in those municipalities. This project is in its very early stages. There are some additional meetings coming up, but he wanted to put it on the Council's radar. and we'll keep you posted on that as we move forward.

The third item is a quick update on HPC membership. Requests for renewals of terms for Ms. Beth Acly, Ms. Beth Burgess, and Ms. Vincencia Adusei were sent to the Office of the Governor. Mr. Kinney asked Ms. Acly if she had heard from the Governor's office yet and she replied, no. He was told they were reaching out just to get some new forms from her, but that they were moving forward with the renewal. Mr. Kinney also put in some additional recommendations for some new members.

September is Connecticut Freedom Trail Month. It sounds like they have a bunch of great events planned. They are on their website, which is ctfreedomtrail.org. The Freedom Trail is our program that Mr. Levine runs that commemorates and shares our important African American history in Connecticut.

XII. Report on Museum Properties – Liz Shapiro

XIII. Old Business

XIV. New Business

Town of Simsbury - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tobacco Barns – Todd Levine

SHPO gave an HRF to the town of Simsbury to stabilize a few tobacco sheds that are associated with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We had brought this back to the Council after the bids came in very high, over $2,000,000 and several sheds had fallen. SHPO went back again and asked the Town to reduce the scale of the stabilization so that we could afford the project. We got help from Ms. Beth Acly, Mr. Kent McCoy, and Mr. Jim Grant. They

incorporated changes and they are lowering the risk category from A2 to A1. This means the buildings are presenting low hazard to human life in the event of failure, including agricultural facilities.

The scope was reduced to get under the amount of money available, which is a little more than $900,000. But the motion that funded this grant in the first place, this portion of the grant, $200,000 from HRF, he believes is for more than one shed. Mr. Levine wanted to bring it to the Council's attention to open it up for discussion. He believes this item will have to be brought back to the table on next month's agenda to get a new motion if we want to move this forward. There are cost concerns.

There is $200,000 from the HRF, mitigation money, funding from the Good to Great program, and some private money. So there is approximately $950,000 available to do this. And that's about what Silva Engineers estimated will be the cost for just one shed, $944,000. It could come in lower and we would put an add-alt for stabilization of the other remaining tobacco shed that's next to it with any leftover money. But what we would need is a new motion to change the grant award because the grant award has multiple sheds on it, not just the one. Change it to one shed with maybe a second shed if we can get it stabilized. The costs have just gone way too high. And this may be the only chance we have here is to at least be able to secure the stabilization of one of these tobacco sheds and celebrate the time Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had here in Connecticut.

Chairman Butkus commented it makes some sense to make that modification. Has there been any other discussions about other tobacco barns within the Town that are at risk or would there be any scenario of moving another one from somewhere else to make sure that it's not just the one-off to kind of preserve that multiple?

Mr. Levine replied that there were an additional three across the street and down the road there were three with one left standing in that area. The cost of moving the sheds, because they have to stabilize after the fact or before the fact to move them would cost more than stabilizing the ones we already have right there. He doesn't think that's a likely scenario. When SHPO started this project, however many years ago, there were five sheds on this particular parcel. The hope was to stabilize all five with that cost of almost $1 million. But just the complexity of stabilizing these very large, wooden structures that have deteriorated over time is more complicated than we understood five years ago. There is certainly a better understanding of it now, but really the costs are just outrageous. SHPO will be putting $1 million into a tobacco shed that's not going to be used for anything except as a monument to one of the most important figures in our country's history. The sheds are not going to be used for housing or anything else. Entry to the barns is prohibited.

Ms. Acly asked if the reason for prohibiting us from entering is because the category was reduced? Mr. Levine replied yes, occupancy of the building will be prohibited. It went from a risk category 2 to a risk category 1. Ms. Acly added, in building codes, how they determine mostly what kind of wind load we put on it, so it can sustain, but it can't by design of the reinforcement, it wouldn't necessarily be able to sustain a high hurricane. That doesn't mean that it won't, but we're not building the reinforcement to that. She would push back on whether anybody can enter, but that's in the case of extreme weather. It's not inherently unstable. I mean, that would be ridiculous to invest money in that.

Mr. Levine added that they said rehabilitation is limited to shed three, and then they talk about the decreased wind load capacity of 20%. Then they talked about what they were removing from the original bid, which came in at $2 million dollars, but it was replacement of the foundation and interior column pairs. Replacement is removed from the bid documents.

Replacement of the interior column pairs, jacking and resetting interior columns, and then reinstalling the guide cabling system are not in this new scope. Basically, it sounds sad except for potentially, having a tour of the inside because the interior has, it was a tobacco shed and obviously there was charcoal used as chalk there and all the students signed their names in there which is really cool. But maybe once a year we can set up a tour or something, other than that, it would be closed to the public.

Ms. Acly added the historic building doesn't meet live load capacity per code, but we can limit the occupancy of a building. The same can be done there. Post it, only enter during good weather. Mr. Levine replied they still have a lot of concerns about having anybody have access, but they did say, at least earlier in our discussions about having, guided tours at some point. Ms. Acly continued, there still seems to be a little bit of a disconnect in her mind. When we did that walkthrough, there was a lot of collaboration and let's be practical here about what we must do and what is like, maybe ideal under the code, but doesn't offer huge returns so that we can get more done. How do we protect it and how do we bid it? Everyone was on board, but there seems to be this concern that keeps creeping in that's more risk averse, she didn't want to say risk averse, they have to be careful, but ultra conservative more about less about reading the building and what its inherent capabilities are and the critical things to preserve and more about reading the letter of the code and not interpretation. This is a tough situation.

Mr. Levine added that there's a sum of money that we would have to pull from mitigation from other sites lost to update the drawings to reflect this, which is like another $40,000. Now it is almost $100,000 for architectural drawings, structural drawings, which he feels is a lot.

Ms. Carnell asked how many bids were received. Mr. Levine replied he believes two or three. Ms. Acly added, this was still a couple years ago, and they had put a lot of really intense pressure on the bid for the project to be done in a certain period of time. And there were all these constraints which really drove the price up. The Council is offering conversation about how you can structure the bidding process to make it more inviting for a more reasonably cost project. Everybody was on board. Sometimes in the process of budgeting, sometimes people are very conservative about that, just to make sure that they're asking and they've got enough to cover it. So, he doesn't know if that's the case here, but it could be.

Mr. Levine replied, there was an original cost estimate of $600,000 to $700,000 for this stabilization. They came back with a correction of $900,000. Maybe they're being conservative about the potential costs. We would indeed still have an add/alternate if there's money left over to stabilize the other shed. We would insist upon that, because it makes sense, especially if we come in well under budget. If we don't come in under budget, though, then this is a reality that we're faced with. What are we going to do?

Mr. Levine asked Chiarman Butkus if we needed change to the original motion for the HRF now or wait until October's meeting that went from multiple sheds to the single shed? Chairman Butkus replied to modify the original motion that, the bids will come in with an add alternate for the second building, or if the bids come in lower, then you can add the second shed. But isn't there a bigger question about our HRF funding. We always ask applicants what the level of public access is going to be to a property. It is contrary to say, we're going to fund this, but there is no entry to the building. You know, it hasn't been, oh, you can look at the church from the outside. Then we would only be funding the exterior, not interior work. Isn't there some condition of HRF for that public access? To Ms. Acly's point, if there was a weather station monitoring that you knew the wind speeds, and if it gets over a certain amount, you can't go through. He doesn't know if that access is going to be controlled and kind of scheduled. There are always ways around entering things when it's safe. He believes that the blanket nobody can go into this building is kind of contrary to what makes sense. It begs the question of, does it make sense to dismantle things and put them in a museum where you can actually see all of the writing on the boards and preserve that in perpetuity rather than having it risk coming down in a storm and then you have nothing.

Mr. Levine added that the requirements for HRF is at least one day yearly. Ms. Fink added that it's 10 times per year to be open to the public and the public must be able to see whatever work was funded. So that might mean interior bracing, but isn't it also still repaired and some other things? They would need access to the barn. That's per the easement, added Ms. Fink. Mr. Levine continues, we have clarified that they're going to have to be a part of 10 tours. That is a requirement and they've signed off for that as a requirement. He doesn't see us changing that.

Ms. Carmelich, the Easement Coordinator commented they don't have to be tours, they just must provide access. They could list available times when someone could come by, for example, every Wednesday from 9 to 11. It would be fine. It doesn't have to be organized in any way, but these are barns that are open to the public, on land that is public, as she recalls. She doesn't believe that SHPO would hold them to anything real strict about access, if people could just walk by them on a daily basis.

Mr. Levine added, he was only saying tours because they would not allow anybody in without somebody else being there.

Ms. Acly added, they could be open, and then just have somebody on call one Saturday a month, March through December for even 3 hours or like over the morning, you know what I mean? Like one to four or something and then have it on their website.

Chairman Butkus added, to Ms. Carmelich's point, that it's available, if you sign up, then they can open it up and bring somebody through, available at these times with a pre-registration required.

That way it's not like somebody sits out there for three hours every Saturday and once a month and nobody shows up, he believes you can meet the spirit of the easement restriction to say, we made it available, nobody signed up, therefore, we check off that box that it was available, but no one went through. His concern is that we don't have to redesign the stabilization so it's suitable for assembly, under all conditions, but there needs to be some benefit of getting into the building on a guided tour for the public, otherwise we're just

looking at a painting on the outside of, wasn't it nice what used to be with five barns here. So much of it is the specific history to this shed and the association, not just that it's a shed. He asked Council members if they'd like to do a roll call vote to do a modification now or prefer to have a specific motion at the next meeting just to modify that language?

Mr. Kinney suggested waiting until next October's meeting because the action was not on the current agenda, was not announced, and the town of Simsbury was not present.

Mr. Elmore asked if there was a commitment from the Town on any future maintenance of this one-million-dollar investment? Mr. Levine replied, yes. Exactly what maintenance meant, he did not know and has not seen an outline. He imagines they would keep an eye on it, and over the years, if things happened, they would repair them. To Mr. Kinney's and Chairman Butkus's point, they will add this item to October's agenda and Mr. Elmore can express his concerns to the Town directly. Looking at a minutes from last year, there were concerns then as well.

XV. Liaison with Public & Private Agencies – Jane Montanaro

Just to follow up quickly on Section 106, Mr. Kinney pointed you all to the National Trust for Historic Preservation website for a lot of the latest information on the Advocacy efforts on that point. They are hosting an Advocacy Day in Washington this month on the 24th. She and Mr. Charlie Jansen are planning on attending. She will be coordinating meetings for Connecticut. She would love to have talking points, letters, anything staff and Council would like to send to Washington with her. They will be coordinating all of this with the SHPO office to make sure they are getting our message across to everyone as loudly and clearly as possible. The National Trust is trying to put out a call for 250,000 letters, definitely a letter from the Council would be great. Your contacts, constituents, everyone, all hands-on deck for this one. She thanked everyone for their support.

Chairman Butkus had one question on one of our nominations, the period of significance went up to like 1968, which was broad. His question is just a practical question. When you have such a broad historical period of significance and you have things like asbestos siding on the building and interesting paneling on the interior, what criteria are used for any future modifications on a project with that kind of period of significance? Typically, you would say, the period of significance was 1850 when it was built and people would try to work towards restoring it back to that time period.

Ms. Wisniewski replied, the nomination shows the evolution over time and how things were added just from a practical standpoint. So, how does that inform any future restoration or remodeling efforts for a property owner if it's within that period of significance and you are making an argument that is significant under whatever criteria and whatever area of significance, and that period of significance is tied to that material, those materials are considered historic because they contribute to those aspects of integrity that make the building significant. It's a little tricky, but what you strive for is to make sure that you retain the features that help identify that property as historic and that relates back to those periods and areas of significance. If a building is significant because it's 1965 and it's using whatever sort of siding and it's significant because it's associated with a person who lived there around 1965, then even though the building may have been built in 1820, what's significant is what was present during that period of occupation. She understands Chairman Butkus' point where it's like, okay, but what if we have a period of

significance that's 200 years long? That's the trickier question and it is, it depends on what you're goals are. Is this just like a general preservation question? Or, are you trying to apply to a specific program of which there are guidelines, in which case you refer to those programs' guidelines. It all depends on what you're doing. There's general guidance, but then there is very specific guidance if you're trying to take advantage of a financial incentive program. What she had previously said is just the general guidance is you are trying to ensure that you retain those features that help convey the significance of the property both the period and within those areas. It depends; the answer is it depends.

Chiarman Butkus responded, in this case, when it goes from the early 1800s through 1968, you can make an argument that you want to bring it back to any period. But if the definition is we're listing this property because it shows the evolution by a family over that significant time period. Imagine you're a local historic review board trying to say, you're taking off something that was done, within that time period, you can't take that off or you know, you can't go back to a different time period because you want to bring it back to the first iteration of the building. He believes it's a conundrum.

Ms. Wisniewski replied, it's a very tricky question. What Chairman Butkus was alluding to is a local historic district for which there are guidelines, right? You would again refer back to that program's guidelines and what are the guidelines that they focus on? What are they trying to encourage? But again, the general guidance is it depends and it's all about striking that balance. There may be features that you see just because they were installed during the period of significance, it does not mean they're a character defining feature. It may be that does not help to convey the significance, the area of significance or the period of significance. A great example is like 3-tab asphalt shingle roof, not manufactured anymore, correct? Nobody uses them anymore. We usually use architectural asphalt shingles, right? They were installed during the period of significance. The significance is 200 years, the evolution of the building, can we replace this? Does that three-tab asphalt shingle roof convey the significance of the building? There are there are features or materials or things that may have been added or included during the period of significance but are not character-defining features. That's why it's very important, and that's why these documents are so important that we adequately document the building in its current form, and then we refer back to the physical state, the physical pieces of that building that convey its significance.

Not to lean so hard on her program, but that's why the designation programs are so important because they provide that kind of handbook that maybe people in local HDCs could use as their reference document. Maybe the most important thing is when you make an argument for 200 years of significance, you tie it back to the physical fabric that is present at the time of designation and identify what is it there that are character defining features. That's the easiest way to explain it.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Acly second by Mr. McCoy, this meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m

Respectfully submitted by:

Next regularly scheduled Council meeting:
Wednesday, October 7, 2026 – Meeting Format TBD