

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Wednesday, January 10, 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. Vincencia Adusei, Ms. Elizabeth Burgess, Vice-Chairman Paul Butkus, Dr. Leah Glaser, Dr. Andy Horowitz, and Dr. Sarah Sportman
- Absent:** Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Mr. Thomas Elmore, Ms. Sara Nelson, and Ms. Deanna Rhodes
- Staff:** Mr. Kevin Berger, Ms. Julie Carmelich, Ms. Mary Dunne, Ms. Erin Fink, Ms. Deborah Gaston, Mr. Jonathan Kinney, Ms. Cathy Labadia, Mr. Todd Levine, Ms. Jenny Scofield, Ms. Elizabeth Shapiro, and Ms. Marena Wisniewski
- Guests:** Ms. Jane Montanaro, Mr. Jim Woodworth, Ms. Stacey Vairo
Ms. Christine Michaud, Ms. Cindy Greenblatt, Ms. Laura Natusch
Mr. John Cappadona, Mr. Walter Kendzierski, Mr. John Morini, Mr. Aaron Marcavitch, Mr. Fred Presley, Mr. Ken Lesser, R.H. Booz, Mr. Jim Woodworth, Mr. David Stein, and Ms. Stephanie Romano

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order @ 9:32 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 – December 6, 2023 Meeting

On a motion by Ms. Burgess, second by Ms. Adusei, the Council voted to approve the December 6, 2023 meeting minutes.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

V. State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items

A. Unfinished Action Items

1. Historic Restoration Fund, Durham Public Library, Front steps replacement, Durham

On a motion by Ms. Adusei, second by Ms. Burgess, the Council voted to recall this item back to the table.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

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.

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Dr. Glaser, the Council voted to approve this motion.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: Town of Durham/Durham Public Library
Amount: \$182,700

Ms. Fink presented this application. This application was first presented to the Council in September 2022. The Council recommended the applicant apply for a Survey and Planning grant for drawings to be completed. Mr. David Stein was on the call for any questions or concerns.

Vice Chairman Butkus asked if the drawing were stamped as construction documents. Mr. Stein replied the drawings are substantially complete, except for any comments received today, and are ready for the preparation of the bid to get the project moving forward.

Ms. Fink added that Silver Petrucelli completed the drawings including the architectural and engineering costs and a percentage for project management.

Ms. Acly asked for clarity on the estimated cost sheet. Ms. Fink replied this was preconstruction services, covered in the HRF grant, as well as architectural and engineering costs to manage the project and finalize bid documents and drawings. She spoke in error stating they were part of the Survey and Planning grant. Mr. Stein added when the project first started, the \$8,500 was part of the first piece of the project. Ms. Dunne added that only \$13,000 was included in the Survey and Planning grant.

Ms. Adusei and Vice Chairman Butkus asked if the construction drawing were 100%? Ms. Fink replied they are about 80% complete, and depending on the comments of the Council today, they will be finalized. Vice Chairman Butkus added the drawing seemed very light.

Mr. Stein added this isn't a full demolition and reconstruction of the structure. They are working with the structure that is there and redoing the brick work, not excavating out the full footings and foundations. They will tighten up the plan sheets and clarify that they are keeping the walls and the superstructure and the drainage at the bottom of the stairs.

B. New Action Items

1. Survey and Planning Grant, New London Landmarks, National Register Nomination for Desant Houses, New London

On a motion by Dr. Horowitz, second Ms. Adusei, 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 approval.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4, Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Amount: \$18,000

Applicant: New London Landmarks

Ms. Dunne presented this application. She and Ms. Jenny Scofield, National Register Coordinator, conducted a site visit on this property in November 2023 along with Ms. Laura Natusch, who was also on the call. It was determined the property does merit a National Register nomination and the budget for this application was developed in consultation with SHPO staff.

Vice-Chairman Butkus commented it was his previous understanding that it was not possible for an outside organization to apply for a grant to do a National Register nomination. Ms. Dunne replied that anyone can complete a National Register nomination, but that the owner's consent is needed. Vice-Chairman Butkus also asked if that pertains to both individual listings as well as historic districts, where there's an actual opportunity for owners to support or object.

Ms. Dunne replied, in this case, Ms. Natusch has been working with the current owner and submitted a letter of consent in the application, so we feel confident that money will not be spent then pulled at the last minute.

Yes, anybody can do a National Register nomination, and SHPO can give a grant to a municipality or nonprofit organization to get that done.

Ms. Scofield added that a nonprofit can apply to nominate a property when they're seeking grant funds, though SHPO just asks for an owner consent first, if it's a private property. If it's individually nominated private property, SHPO would not go through the grant process if the owner objected. Ms. Dunne usually collects a letter from the owner. In the case of the DeSant houses, the owner was very supportive and very much involved. For districts, SHPO recently started insisting on doing a community meeting, before a grant application, to gauge property owner sentiment and let them know that the municipality or their nonprofit is thinking of doing a grant application.

Vice Chairman Butkus asked if there was a level of protection from demolition in the future? Are there other avenues also available, such as an easement from Preservation Connecticut or New London Landmarks that would have something on the land records where there would be a greater level of protection. There are challenges when anybody puts a restriction on their land records, but you can do anything you want if you can find a buyer who is interested in accepting those conditions. If the goal is the long-term preservation of these properties, he believes there are some stronger options out there that are worth consideration.

Ms. Dunne agreed with Vice Chairman Butkus that a restriction handed over to New London Landmarks or Preservation Connecticut would certainly be a lot stronger protection, but it's not always guaranteed like CEPA. She does not believe they just take an easement on any property, some sort of designation would be desirable on the part of anybody that took the easement. The nomination is important in that respect, it offers financial incentives and ensures not only that it's not demolished, but that it's also maintained or rehabbed in a sensitive or an appropriate manner.

Vice-Chairman Butkus also added, if we're spending money to have a nomination listed, there's no 100% guarantee that it will not be demolished in the future. It would be better if there was a comparable level of protection for an easement, if the goal truly is to preserve the buildings. Setting it in stone, so to speak, he believes is a worthwhile consideration.

2. Survey and Planning Grant, City of Ansonia, Condition Assessment for Ansonia Opera House, Ansonia

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second Dr. Horowitz, 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-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Amount: \$20,000.00
Applicant: City of Ansonia

Ms. Dunne presented this application. The town was encouraged by SHPO to apply for funding for this project and SHPO is excited to be a part of it. \$66,000 was a ballpark estimate arrived at by talking with several architects. The grant cap is \$20,000. Ms. Sheila O'Malley, Mr. Walt Kendzierski, and Mr. John Morini were on the call for any questions or concerns. Vice Chairman Butkus asked Ms. Dunne to give a brief preview of the grant.

Ms. Acly had concerns regarding cracks in the bricks and how they were going to be inspected? Ms. O'Malley added they worked with the owner patching windows and coordinating with a crane company to use a bucket truck to inspect the bricks that are higher up.

Ms. Burgess asked how long the building has been unoccupied or not used as an opera house. Mr. Morini has replied since the 1970s. The building was used as a doctor's office and a roller rink. It has not been used as an opera house or a community forum since the 1950s. Mr. Walt Kendzierski, the owner, was on the call and this property has been in his family for decades. There are successful storefronts on the bottom level.

The city is looking forward to a 30-year lease to restore the opera house. Mr. Morini thanked Ms. Dunne, Mr. Kendzierski and Ms. O'Malley, the entire Board of Alderman and a group of volunteers that made this project happen.

Ms. Acly asked if there was any water infiltration problems and Ms. O'Malley replied no. The envelope of the building is the first order of business. Windows, doors, and the bricks need to be addressed first.

3. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Chester Public Library, Repointing and boiler, Chester 21 W. Main St, Chester, CT.

On a motion by Dr. Glaser, second by Dr. Sportman, the Historic Preservation Council voted to call this item to the table for discussion.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: Chester Public Library
Amount: \$12,800

Ms. Fink presented this application. The Chester Library has worked with their local building officials and fire marshal on a desperately needed boiler replacement. The scope of work is listed in the application. Several informal quotes were used to develop the budget. Ms. Fink recommended gentle power washing of the brick and repointing with appropriate material.

Vice Chairman Butkus has some concerns with the type of sealant being used. Ms. Acly asked if a professional was being used to seek out the root cause of the water damage. It dictates what the treatment would be and the type of mortar selected will be critical.

Ms. Fink suggested the possibility of using a TAC grant from Preservation Connecticut for additional assistance. Additional information will help with the bid package. Ms. Adusei asked for clarity on the budget and Ms. Fink agreed to clean up the budget form in the application.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Butkus, second by Ms. Acly, the Council voted to revise the original motion to table to the March 6, 2023 meeting for additional information.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

4. Historic Restoration Fund Grant, The Wintonbury Historical Society, Window restoration and carpentry repairs, Bloomfield

On a motion by Ms. Adusei, second by Ms. Burgess, 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.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Applicant: The Wintonbury Historical Society
Amount: \$75,000

Ms. Fink presented this application. Architect Bob Hurd conducted a condition's assessment on the property and identified several issues. Mr. Hurd was on the call to answer any questions or concerns.

Ms. Adusei asked for the costs to be verified. Ms. Fink replied that Mr. Hurd, will be assisting with the bidding process. Vice Chairman Butkus added the bids that came back are vastly different. Ms. Acly added the actual approach and expectations will help narrow pricing. With window restoration, the price is approached differently by different people.

Mr. John Cappadona, Wintonbury Historical Society, agreed the range is wide. This a spread of between \$80,000 to \$150,000 dollars.

VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations

A. Unfinished Action Items

B. New Action Items

1. Listing to the State Register of Historic Places, Kycia Farm Barn, 310 Highland Street, Wethersfield

On a motion by Ms. Burgess, second by Dr. Horowitz, the Historic Preservation Council voted to recommend this property to the registry.

(Y-6, N-0, Abstaining-1, Absent-4 Recused-0) (Roll call vote)

Ms. Wisniewski presented this application with the staff's approval. The property is eligible under Criteria 1 at the local level in the areas of agriculture and ethnic history.

The dairy barn was constructed by Polish immigrants who were part of a historical trend of eastern Europeans who found success in farming in the United States.

There have been a few alterations to the barn, but it maintains most of its integrity. It is associated with the Town of Wethersfield's agricultural history and the supply of dairy products to the city of Hartford. Ms. Vairo worked on the nomination. Mayor Ken Lesser of Wethersfield, Town Manager Fred Pressley, Members of the Kycia Barn Past and Present, Ms. Cynthis Greenblat and Mr. Jim Woodworth were on the call to answer any questions or concerns.

Ms. Acly asked if there was any post-war history associated with the property? Ms. Wisniewski replied that information can be added about agriculture during the war and post-war period. This was the last dairy farm in the town. Dr. Glaser stated that she was happy with the application. Ms. Burgess added she was happy about the ethnic and religious discussions in the nomination.

VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Report/s

VIII. Archaeological Preserves

IX. Threatened Properties - CEPA Updates –Todd Levine

80 Shore Road, Waterford – The property has been demolished. There may be an opportunity to discuss this next week at CEPA training with the OAG, SHPO and HPC. Mr. Levine explained the process with the owner. The architect suggested keeping the main part of the building. The OAG declined to pick up the case. CEPA matters are not discussed prior to a case being presented to the OAG. Vice Chairman Butkus asked if anything was salvaged. Mr. Levine replied he was not sure. He, Mr. Kinney, and Ms. Wisniewski will be meeting with the OAG.

Ms. Acly asked if the actions and conversations have changed with the personnel at the OAG. Mr. Levine replied yes.

X. Preservation Restrictions

XI. Report on State Historic Preservation Office – Jonathan Kinney

Mr. Kinney reported that CEPA training for HPC will be given by Rosemarie Weber and John Russo from the OAG on Thursday, January 18th, from noon to 1pm.

SHPO is also looking to do the full launch of the ConnCRIS system in February and training for HPC should be available after that.

SHPO will also plan to do an overview of its programs for HPC, potentially in a round-robin type format during a weekday lunch.

XII. Report on Museum Properties – Liz Shapiro

Ms. Shapiro reported that museum staff had a great meeting with the staff at the Museum of Connecticut History yesterday. They toured and discussed how they could work together more effectively. The group discussed policies for guns (use and display) and how we could work together for the 250th. Next month, museums staff will be meeting with the site manager at Dinosaur State Park, to begin to develop a more collaborative relationship with the DEEP managed museums.

There is drama at the Prudence Crandall Museum, where a significant portion of the new plaster ceiling fell. There are also other ominous cracks in other rooms where work was done. We are working on resolving that with our partners at DAS, the Department of Administrative Services.

Museum staff have received 80% completion documents for the Save America's Treasures grant to stabilize the four-story cell block at Newgate. We're waiting for approval from the National Park Service.

The RFP for restoration work at Viet's Tavern is complete, which is an NPS grant for the semi quincennial. And, we have a contract signed by the state and the contractor, GEI, for the survey work to be done in the mine at New-Gate, and we're now awaiting the AGs final signature on the contract. We hope to get this work done in late March/early April.

Ms. Shapiro stated that they have finally cracked the code with Human Resources and will have our museum seasonal jobs listed in plenty of time this year! She was very pleased about this.

Three of the museums are working with DAS to take advantage of their program to do a hazardous materials assessment in state buildings, at no cost to the agency who owns the state buildings. There may also be funds for follow-up hazardous materials mitigation.

XIII. Old Business

XIV. New Business

XV. Liaison with Public & Private Agencies - Jane Montanaro

Ms. Montanaro announced that there is still time to submit nominations for 2024 CT Preservation Awards until February 2nd @ 4:00 p.m. The submission form is on their website.

Jane's Walk 2024 will be held on May 4, 2024. Preservation CT had a planning meeting with Community Partners on January 22, 2024. The event will celebrate the work of Jane Jacobs. PCT is looking for ideas to be posted on their website.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Acly, second by Dr. Horowitz, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Deborah D. Gaston

***Next regularly scheduled Council meeting:
Wednesday, February 7, 2024 – Meeting Format TBD***