

**State Historic Preservation Review Board  
One Constitution Plaza, Second Floor  
Hartford, Connecticut  
Friday, June 23 2017, 9:30 a.m.**

**MINUTES**

Present: Mr. Edwards, Mr. Favretti, Dr. Feder, Mr. Herzan, Ms. Saunders, Dr. Tucker, Mr. Wigren  
Staff: Jenny Scofield, Catherine Labadia, Todd Levine, Marena Wisniewski  
Absent: Dr. Bucki

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Edwards at 9:33 a.m.

**II. Review of Public Comment Procedures**

Copies of the public comment procedures were available at the sign-in table.

**III. Approval of the March 31, 2017 meeting minutes**

*A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Dr. Tucker to approve the minutes of the March 31, 2017 meeting (Y-7 N-0, Abstained-0).*

**IV. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. COMPLETED NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS – Jenny Scofield Reporting**

All registration forms are subject to changes made by the board and by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Ms. Scofield reported that for the nominations on this agenda, all property owners were notified by mail and other interested parties were notified by email of the pending nomination, 30 to 60 days prior to the meeting. The chief executive officer of each municipality was also notified.

**1. Stonington: Stonington Cemetery (Criterion A and C, local)**

Staff recommended the Stonington Cemetery for listing at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the category of Social History and Criterion C for Funerary Art and cemetery design. Ms. Scofield noted for the SRB that the period of significance in the nomination must be directly tied to the contributing resources and themes of significance. She stated that the nomination was initiated by the Stonington Cemetery Association. No letters of support or objection were received. Scott Goodwin and Kirsten Peeler of R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc. attended the meeting as the consultants for the nomination.

Mr. Favretti wrote comments on a hard-copy of the nomination for the consultant. He felt the author was straining to fit the property under the Rural Cemetery movement. Also, the term garden design is not correct. It is very rare to have a cemetery grow out of and around a 1-acre graveyard. This affected the design of the cemetery. The main half goes in and then takes a left turn (this is not characteristic of the Rural Cemetery Movement). In terms of the design discussion, available technology also affected landscape design; there were no bulldozers so more natural features were left like ledges.

Mr. Favretti asked that the difference between Stonington and Stonington Borough be pointed out early in the nomination. This clarification will help the significance statement (in comparison of this cemetery to others in Stonington Borough). Some characteristics of this cemetery are unique within the borough but not within the town. It is not necessary to say this in the nomination, but is interesting – this is the first Borough established in CT (in 1801).

Mr. Favretti recommended to mention the significance of “Evergreen” in the cemetery name. The connotation is eternal life, like the evergreen tree. Many cemeteries in the country are named Evergreen because of this.

Mr. Favretti asked why this cemetery is different from others in the area. Mention the significant people buried there, like Whistler’s father, and mention Poet’s corner (group of burials of writers/actors). Ms. Scofield noted that some of this information was removed from the first draft of the nomination. Other SRB members responded that you cannot list cemeteries under Criterion B unless no other examples of properties associated with them exist; put this information under the category Social History.

Mr. Favretti noted that Avenues are referenced in the text but are not labeled on the map.

Dr. Feder asked if soul effigies should be referred to as death heads and cherubs instead. Mr. Goodwin responded that based on the reference he was using (Ludwig 1966), soul effigies is a more specific type.

Mr. Wigren stated that there is an interesting mix between the gridiron plan and Romantic plantings like Grove St Cemetery in New Haven.

Mr. Wigren noted that there are continuity issues in the text, maybe because there were multiple authors. For example, classifications in the text do not match those presented in the table. The box tomb is outside the period the authors placed it in. More information is needed on the cemetery association in the significance section.

Mr. Herzan asked for a correction of inconsistencies in stylistic references throughout the text such as the spelling of Neoclassical.

Mr. Herzan noted that cemeteries are special resources that are difficult to analyze. He asked the gravestone sculpture ranked compared to other cemeteries in the area? More comparison to [the funerary art in] other local cemeteries is needed to make a case that this cemetery is unique.

Mr. Edwards mentioned that there is a great length of text on the Stevens family carvers. However, it is fascinating that stones were made in Newport and brought to Stonington. Stonington Borough was a notable port.

Mr. Favretti commented that there are many errors in the history section based on assumptions, not fact (see hard-copy edits).

Mr. Herzan commented that African American should not be hyphenated. He also noted that the nomination does not have a unified voice or outline.

Mr. Wigren recommended the consultant focus on fixing the design significance argument [take out the Rural/Garden Cemetery mentions] and increasing the funerary art argument.

Mr. Favretti commented that the statement that all prominent people in Stonington are buried here is not true. They are in Elm Grove Cemetery. This could potentially be corrected by saying Stonington Borough.

Mr. Favretti commented that the cemetery design is not a Rural/Garden Cemetery. It is a grid. Mention how Stonington Borough changed in the Arc of History and how that can be seen in the monuments.

Mr. Goodwin responded that in referencing the Garden Plan, he was referring to the Grove Street style layout, not the Rural Cemetery Movement and did not mean to draw a parallel to the Rural Cemetery Movement.

Mr. Favretti stated that the term Garden Plan does refer to the Rural Cemetery Movement. The use of this term is not a good fit to describe a grid layout system. He suggested the solution: call the design a grid system and talk about how it was refined. Play up the fact that this cemetery grew up around an older grave yard. Each section employed trends that were happening in cemetery design at the time.

Mr. Edwards commented that the Grove Street Cemetery grid plan influenced Connecticut.

Mr. Favretti suggested to tie in with that, when the Rural Cemetery Movement happened, they [existing cemeteries] decided to plant trees etc. Many cemeteries in New England wrote to the Grove Street Cemetery and asked how this type of updating was handled there. Tie in this idea with the plantings at Stonington Cemetery.

Mr. Wigren made a note about the history of Stonington's conservatism; they may have been slower to adopt new design trends.

Mr. Favretti stated that Stonington was using curbs around plots when other cemeteries weren't.

SRB members discussed whether or not to hold this nomination until the next agenda.

Dr. Feder motioned to approve the nomination because the SRB feels the property is eligible for National listing under the stated criteria. The revised nomination will be brought back to the SRB at the next meeting as a discussion item.

**A motion was made by Dr. Feder, second by Dr. Tucker to approve the nomination of the Stonington Cemetery because the State Historic Preservation Review Board feels the property is eligible for National Register of Historic Places listing under the stated criteria. The State Historic Preservation Review Board requests that a revised nomination be a discussion item on a subsequent meeting agenda (Y-7, N-0, Abstained=0).**

2. ***Bristol: Bristol High School (Memorial Boulevard School) (Criterion A, local and C, state)***

Staff recommended the Bristol High School for listing under Criterion A at the local level for Education and Criterion C at the state level of significance for Architecture. The building is an example of the work of George Wilson Potter, Sr. and it was purpose-built to include spaces for specific curriculum, including domestic arts, typing, a science lab and greenhouse, drafting, a gymnasium, and a pool. Ms. Scofield noted that the potential inclusion of Memorial Boulevard, developed concurrently as part of the same land donation, was initially considered. The Boulevard was excluded from the nomination because of alterations and because the school has other areas of significance that do not apply to the Boulevard. Ms. Scofield stated that the nomination was initiated by the City of Bristol. No letters of support or objection were received. Stacey Vairo attended the meeting as the consultant for the nomination.

Mr. Herzan asked if the architect attended MIT because he used to be in Boston; it is interesting that he worked with Richard Morris Hunt. Ms. Vairo responded that she did not find a reference to MIT; the Boston reference was from a *New York Times* article. Mr. Edwards noted that he thought Henry Van Brunt was a founder of MIT's architecture school.

Mr. Herzan requested that the building be referred to as Bristol High School throughout the nomination.

Ms. Saunders noted that the nomination should clarify that Forestville is a section of Bristol.

In reference to a mention of the school board insisting on a space for domestic arts (p. 8-21) Mr. Wigren asked if this space for was part of the original design.

Dr. Feder asked, at the time the school was built, what was the end-game for the students? Ms. Vairo responded that she thought most entered into the trades.

Mr. Herzan noted that the word Art was missing in the list of sign panels on p. 7-5.

Mr. Herzan asked whether the property is of state or local significance; there are conflicting statements in the significance summary. Mr. Edwards asked if the design was ever shown in architectural journals. Ms. Vairo and Mr. Wigren have not seen the school mentioned in architectural journals.

***A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Mr. Wigren to list the Bristol High School (Memorial Boulevard School) on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-7, N-0, Abstained= 0).***

3. ***Windsor Locks: J.R. Montgomery Industrial Complex (Criterion A and C, local)***

Staff recommended the J.R. Montgomery Industrial Complex in Windsor Locks for listing under Criteria A and C, at the local level of significance. It meets Criterion A at the local level in the area of Industry Criterion C for Architecture. Ms. Scofield noted that the complex consists of seven resources constructed from 1875 to 1939 on the Enfield Canal. A Determination of Eligibility (DOE) exists for a larger proposed district that encompassed this area, but the DOE is now 27 years old and the area has changed. She also noted that some additional editing will be completed to shorten the summary

statements in the nomination. Ms. Scofield stated that no letters of support or objection were received. Lucas Karmazinas attended the meeting as the consultant for the nomination.

Dr. Tucker commented that this is a very significant industrial complex. It is the silicon valley of Connecticut. It is notable for thread manufacturing and the production of mercerized thread in particular. This manufacturing company was innovative and able to adapt to changing product demand during World War II. The complex appears to be significant at the state level under Criterion A for the production of mercerized thread, which is a special coating that allowed dye to penetrate it.

Mr. Wigren asked if there was a typo in the quote on p. 8-22. Mr. Karmazinas replied that there is not.

Mr. Wigren asked if the power generation equipment is still extant. Mr. Karmazinas responded that it is probably not. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Wigren discussed that the company was probably using power from the canal to generate electricity.

Ms. Saunders asked about the band of asphalt mentioned on p. 7-5.

Mr. Herzan asked about the significance of the footbridge. Mr. Karmazinas replied that it was built by the company for employee access to Main Street, to avoid traffic.

Ms. Saunders requested correction of the building numbering on the map graphics.

Dr. Feder noted that this is the first nomination involving a property where tinsel was produced.

**A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Ms. Saunders to list the J.R. Montgomery Industrial Complex on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-7, N-0, Abstained=0).**

## **B. REVIEW OF NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS OF PROPERTIES PROPOSED FOR DEMOLITION**

### **1. 116 Bank Street, New London, Downtown New London Historic District**

SHPO staff requested that the SRB evaluate whether the property at 116 Bank Street continues to contribute to the Downtown New London Historic District. Todd Levine, SHPO staff, attended the meeting to answer questions.

Mr. Edwards asked if the building is constructed of brick.

Multiple SRB members discussed that based on the photographs, non-historic alterations to the building appear to be minimal; the siding and roofing material appear to have been replaced.

SRB members commented that this building is still important as part of the larger historic streetscape.

**A motion was made by Mr. Wigren, second by Mr. Herzan; to affirm the continued contributing status of 116 Bank Street to the National Register-listed Downtown New London Historic District (Y-7, N-0, Abstained=0).**

**V. DISCUSSION**

Ms. Scofield announced that the National Park Service is updating National Register Bulletin 16A and will be collecting comments on this bulletin through the fall. Ms. Scofield will attend a listening session on the topic in July. She requested that Board members provide feedback on sections of the bulletin that need clarification or amendment.

**VI. STAFF REPORT**

Ms. Scofield reported that the state historic preservation conference held in May was a success with more than 300 people in attendance. She subsequently discussed the office's relocation from Constitution Plaza to 450 Columbus Boulevard in Hartford and provided an overview of logistics for the next SRB meeting. Ms. Scofield announced a series of public meetings regarding the office's statewide historic preservation plan, to be held during the summer. She announced the resignation of Dr. Kathleen Curran from the SRB and introduced two new staff members, Marena Wisniewski and Elizabeth Shapiro. Ms. Scofield concluded the staff report by summarizing staff attendance at a National Park Service flood workshop in New Jersey, National Historic Landmark designation celebration for the James Merrill House in Stonington, and re-dedication ceremony for the Hoyt-Barnum House in Stamford.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was discussed.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ms. Saunders, second by Mr. Wigren and so moved. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Jenny Scofield, National Register Coordinator