

MINUTES

State Historic Preservation Review Board

450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Plaza Level, Meeting Room E (North Building)

Friday, December 1, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Present: Mr. Edwards (chair), Dr. Bucki (arrived at 10:30), Dr. Feder, Mr. Herzan, Ms. Saunders, Ms. Tucker, Mr. Wigren

Absent: Mr. Favretti

Staff: Jenny Scofield, Elizabeth Shapiro, Catherine Labadia

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Edwards at 10:00 a.m.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Copies of the public comment procedures were offered to guests and available at the sign-in table.

III. Approval of the June 23, 2017 meeting minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Dr. Feder to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2017 meeting (Y-6, N-0, Abstained-0).

IV. Approval of the September 15, 2017 meeting minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Wigren, second by Ms. Saunders to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2017 meeting (Y-6 N-0, Abstained-0).

V. Action Items

A. Completed National Register Nominations (September 15, 2017)

All registration forms are subject to changes made by the board and by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff.

Ms. Scofield reported that for 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. All nominations were posted on SHPO website for download.

Ms. Scofield explained that the State Historic Preservation Review Board (SRB) discussed this group of nominations on September 15, 2017, but action could not be taken due to a lack of quorum. She asked the SRB to now vote on these items, based on the nominations distributed for the September meeting and the September meeting minutes.

1. New Haven: Morris Cove (Criterion A, local)

Mr. Edwards introduced the nomination and Ms. Scofield read the SRB's discussion from the September meeting minutes.

Ms. Saunders noted that the property at 90 Townsend Avenue was damaged during Hurricane Sandy and was planned for demolition. Ms. Scofield reported that SHPO would check the status of the property and the nomination would be updated to reflect the change.

Mr. Wigren clarified that one of his comments on the significance narrative from the September meeting was regarding the economic level of Morris Cove inhabitants, not vernacular architecture.

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Dr. Feder to list the Morris Cove Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

2. New Haven: Westville Village Historic District Amendment (Criterion A and C, local)

Mr. Edwards introduced the nomination and Ms. Scofield read the SRB's discussion from the September meeting minutes.

SRB members discussed the lack of text for Criterion C in the significance statement.

A motion was made by Dr. Feder second by Mr. Wigren to table the Westville Village Historic District Amendment until the next regular meeting (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

3. Norwalk: Whistleville Historic District (Criterion A, local)

Mr. Edwards introduced the nomination and Ms. Scofield read the SRB's discussion from the September meeting minutes.

Dr. Feder encouraged the inclusion of oral history in the nomination.

A motion was made by Mr. Wigren, second by Ms. Saunders to list the Whistleville Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

4. Clinton: Hubbell Carter House (Criterion C, local)

Mr. Edwards introduced the nomination and Ms. Scofield read the SRB's discussion from the September meeting minutes.

Ms. Saunders asked clarification regarding why Criterion A was not included in the nomination. Ms. Scofield responded that some background text that could be used to form a narrative under Criterion A was distributed to the SRB for the September meeting, but SHPO and the author chose to focus on the architecture, which is a stronger area of significance.

Mr. Wigren requested that the author put this house in a broader architectural context; there are a lot of houses that look like this along the Connecticut shoreline.

A motion was made by Mr. Edwards, second by Dr. Feder to list the Hubbell Carter House on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

5. Hartford: Neiditz Building (Criterion C, local)

Mr. Edwards introduced the nomination and Ms. Scofield read the SRB's discussion from the September meeting minutes.

SRB members discussed ways to research the architect of the building. Dr. Feder asked if there is a comprehensive listing of architects. Mr. Edwards responded no, the AIA directory depends on who signs up. Dr. Feder asked if the architects had to be licensed; Mr. Herzan responded that it was a good idea to check architectural license records to find out more about this architect.

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Dr. Feder to list the Neiditz Building on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-6, N-0, Abstained= 0).

B. Other Activities on the September 15, 2017 Agenda

1. Revision of Approved Stonington Cemetery National Register Nomination

Ms. Scofield summarized that this nomination was presented on June 23, 2017. The consultants subsequently made revisions and the SRB discussed the nomination on September 15, 2017, but no vote could be taken. Ms. Scofield read the September minutes, which involved discussion amongst SRB members to edit a specific paragraph. This discussion was subsequently completed by email and the new paragraph inserted in the nomination.

Mr. Wigren clarified that the discussion was about the meaning of the term ornamental.

A motion was made by Ms. Saunders, second by Mr. Wigren to list the Stonington Cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-7, N-0, Abstained= 0).

2. Hoyt-Barnum House Relocation, Stamford

Mr. Edwards introduced the item and Ms. Scofield asked the SRB to vote on whether to recommend that the relocation Hoyt-Barnum House remain on the National Register. Ms. Scofield read from the September minutes. No additional comments were heard. Jeffrey Pardo, City of Stamford Construction Manager, attended the meeting in support of retaining the National Register-listed status of the building.

A motion was made by Mr. Herzan, second by Dr. Feder to recommend that the Hoyt-Barnum House remain listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-7, N-0, Abstained= 0).

C. Completed National Register Nominations (December 1, 2017)

All registration forms are subject to changes made by the board and by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff.

Ms. Scofield reported that for 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. All nominations were posted on SHPO website for download.

1. Hoyt-Barnum House, Stamford (Criterion C, local)

A new nomination was presented for the Hoyt-Barnum House to supplement information in the 1969 nomination and reflect the relocation of the building. Staff recommended the relocated Hoyt-Barnum House for listing at the local level under Criterion C in the category of Architecture as a rare surviving example of an early eighteenth-century Cape. The building retains its feeling and features as a Colonial Period House, specifically through its plan, mass, and post-and-beam structure.

Ms. Scofield reported that the City, Stamford Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, and Stamford Historical Society were involved throughout the relocation process. The Certified Local Government response to the nomination was positive. Charlotte Hitchcock attended the meeting as consultant for the nomination and Jeffrey Pardo, City of Stamford Construction Manager, attended the meeting in support of the nomination.

Dr. Feder asked about the building's current use. Mr. Pardo responded that the building functions as a museum and is open on a regular basis for tours.

Ms. Saunders asked about the posts on the west elevation of the building. Mr. Pardo responded that the City maintained building features that were extant prior to the move, including the posts. Ms. Hitchcock added that the roof was re-shingled in 2004.

Mr. Wigren opened discussion regarding the construction date of the building. Without reading the chain of title, it does not seem like a seventeenth-century house. Ms. Hitchcock explained that she took the deed research completed by the Stamford Historical Society at face value; Samuel Hait acquired the original property from his father in the 1690s and married in 1700. Mr. Wigren asked that if a house was built on the original site around 1698-1699, how do we know it was this house? Mr. Hitchcock asked why the building appears later than 1699. Mr. Wigren responded that the frame is not chamfered; there is no evidence of double-hung sash with plank frames; most circa 1700 buildings you see are only one room deep; nothing looks specifically 1700 versus 1730, 1740, or 1750. Ms. Scofield noted that there was a trend to have the earliest building in the area and attribute construction dates before 1700. Mr. Wigren stated that many buildings in Connecticut are dated before 1700, but have later features. Mr. Pardo commented that he read through the information that the Stamford Historical Society has; there is no evidence in their records that a house was taken down and replaced. Mr. Edwards suggested that dendrochronology could be done, but may not be accurate because houses like this often used parts from other buildings.

Mr. Wigren asked whether to call this building early colonial or just colonial. Mr. Edwards asked if this is the only colonial house extant in Stamford. Ms. Hitchcock responded that that Stamford Historical Society has plaques for early homes, but no one has made a list; she could do that if desired. Two other early houses in Stamford are the salt box type. After talking with the architect for the relocation project, she learned that the roof beams in this house are continuous. Mr. Herzan asked how the nomination could open the question about dating the house. Explain that it was originally dated as 1699, but provide additional information that the date was not confirmed. He recommended that since this is a nomination update, the false 1699 date should not be perpetuated. Dr. Feder added that the nomination should note that there are multiple interpretations of the construction date, which would indicate that further research could be done. Mr. Wigren noted that the WPA survey dates the house at 1750.

Ms. Scofield asked if the SRB recommended a date range for the period of significance. SRB members responded yes; the construction date should be based on the multiple dates we know of – ca. 1699 to 1750. The text should be changed to say colonial.

SRB members asked since one room inside the house was stripped, how did the author decide on the Hall versus Parlor naming of the rooms? Different room names are used in the Historic Structure Report. Ms. Hitchcock answered that she was referencing the parents' room; the names are a little arbitrary and can be changed. She wanted to use names that didn't depend on the building's orientation, since the orientation has changed.

A motion was made by Ms. Saunders second by Dr. Tucker to accept the National Register of Historic Places nomination amendment for the Hoyt-Barnum House (Y-7, N-0, Abstained= 0).

2. Bridge Street Historic District, Westport (Criteria A and C, local)

Staff recommended the Bridge Street Historic District for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the category of Community Development and Criterion C in the category of Architecture. The period of significance extends from 1809, the construction date of the earliest building to 1945, when the development pattern of the neighborhood began to change.

Ms. Scofield reported that a public information meeting was held at the beginning of project on June 6, 2016, following a public walk-through of the neighborhood with her, the Historic District Commission (HDC), and residents. A second public information meeting was held on October 18, 2017 during the noticing period. Property owners were notified of the public information and State Review Board meetings by direct mail approximately 60 days before the State Review Board meeting. The draft nomination was available on the SHPO and Town websites during the noticing period. The Certified Local Government response from the chief executive office and HDC was positive. No written responses or phone calls were received from property owners. Virginia Adams of PAL, Inc. attended the meeting as consultant for the nomination.

Mr. Herzan stated that he is not familiar with the New Traditional and Minimal Traditional style terms (p. 7-11 and 7-15 of the nomination). Ms. Scofield clarified that these are current national terms and are acceptable to the National Park Service. Ms. Adams noted that it is helpful to use these references to describe twentieth century architecture; everything used to just be called modern. A suggestion was made to define the terms in the nomination text.

Ms. Saunders commented that the reference to 28 Bridge Street on p. 7-7 is probably wrong. It appears to be 32 Bridge Street.

Ms. Saunders noted that the property shown in photo 18 has changed. A garage is now constructed [it was under construction at the time of fieldwork]. She requested that the nomination be updated to reflect this change.

Mr. Herzan noted that the district maps are cut off in the SRB copy of the nomination. Ms. Adams responded that this is a printing error.

Mr. Wigren commented that on p. 8-26, there is a discrepancy in the style discussions and examples provided.

Mr. Wigren stated that he was pleased to see the mention of the stone walls. More could be made of them as an element of community design and the traditional notion of public versus private property (Olmsted comes in and gets rid of walls in his designs).

Mr. Wigren noted that in Section 8, there is a very clear outline of the history of the neighborhood, but the text is not as strong on how the neighborhood compares to others or fits into a larger town context. What is the relationship between transportation and the neighborhood? What was the demand for middle-class housing? He asked that the author address the pattern of land speculation; the donor gave the land for the neighborhood, but it also probably made her other land more valuable. Also, if the district is locally significant for its architecture, how does it compare to other buildings in town?

Mr. Herzan stated that he liked the detail in the description about features that are often missed such as the road surface material and sidewalk material.

A motion was made by Dr. Feder, second by Dr. Tucker to list the Bridge Street Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (Y-7, N-0, Abstained= 0).

VI. Discussion
A. 2018 Meeting Schedule

The SRB agreed to the 2018 meeting dates previously distributed and chose a meeting start time of 9:30 a.m.

B. Project to Update National Register Nominations, 1966-1982

Mr. Edwards opened discussion regarding the need to update National Register nominations written between 1966 and 1982. Ms. Scofield provided an outline of the need for this project in the SRB packets and a spreadsheet of nominations completed from 1966 to 1982.

Mr. Edwards stated that the project would begin with an evaluation phase. What information is missing from the nominations? He suggested that the SRB convene ad-hoc to work on the evaluation.

Ms. Scofield asked the SRB to consider priorities for updating; it would be helpful to use the spreadsheet, identify which nominations have already been updated or included in other nominations, then identify the condition of properties. A project could be outlined, but likely only a select group would be updated each year. Ms. Scofield noted that many districts need clear inventories; there are also districts where current integrity could be an issue. Mr. Herzan noted a previous effort to place lists of the properties included in districts in the SHPO nomination file. SRB members discussed the need to update the earliest nominations and properties of state or national significance. Ms. Scofield provided information about the format of National Register nomination updates and amendments. Mr. Edwards noted that the update could align with SHPO's statewide plan.

VII. New Business
A. State Review Board Bylaws and Policy Statement

Ms. Scofield introduced the need for an update of the bylaws and SRB policies. An outline of the issue was distributed in the SRB packets. Ms. Shapiro and SRB members briefly discussed the difference between the content bylaws and policies/general standing rules.

Mr. Edwards requested examples of bylaws from other SHPOs. Ms. Scofield handed out a few and noted that she would collect more.

Ms. Scofield asked that the SRB vote to reaffirm the current bylaws from December 3, 1987. She asked the SRB to identify sections or features of the existing bylaws to retain, delete, or modify; and to identify additions needed. Ms. Scofield noted that the editing could be done in sections and that she would type up the existing bylaws and begin modifications.

A motion was made by Mr. Edwards, second by Dr. Feder to reaffirm the current bylaws (dated 12/3/1987) as a baseline. The bylaws will be updated over the next year (Y-7, N-0, Abstained= 0).

VIII. Staff Report

Ms. Scofield reported that SHPO will host a meeting on December 8, 2017 with the National Association for Olmsted Parks to discuss a joint project. She also noted that the SHPO's second annual statewide conference is planned for mid-May, 2018. SRB members would be invited to a conference planning meeting.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:35 p.m.