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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

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Draft Minutes of Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: June 10, 2014

Location: Stamford City Hall, 888 Washington Blvd. Stamford CT 06901
Land Use Bureau - 7th fl. conference Room

Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, Jill Smyth, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse, (alternate) and Lynn Villency Cohen, (alternate). Martin Levine, (Mayor's office)

REGULAR MEETING

OLD BUSINESS

(Meeting called to order 7:10)

1. Approval of Minutes
Minutes of May 13, 2014 were approved without comments additions or deletions. The Commission voted to approve the minutes: (Moved by A Goslin, seconded by J. Smyth, and carried unanimously.

2. Update on application referral, Zoning Board Appl. 213-44 Rich-Cappelli, LLC & Louis R. Cappelli Family LTD, 425 Atlantic Street, U.S. Post Office Building

A. Goslin gave an update on the zoning meeting she attended on May 19th at Town Hall. She presented a letter / recommendations with the HPAC endorsement for the plans as submitted. A. Goslin provided the following notes

- The architects changed the color of the tower glass to a "richer brown".
- There is still no resolution of the post office law suits - ownership is not determined.
- It is anticipated that the application for the post office will be returned to the HPAC once ownership is resolved and once the interior and exterior architecture improvements are advanced.
- A tenant or user of the post office has not been determined
- The presenter of the post office plans indicated that SHPO and HPAC will continue to review the design progress.
- The zoning board commented about the format for submitting letters. Letters are to be submitted in advance. HPAC will verify requirements
- M. Levine indicated that HPAC letter head will be provided so that future correspondence can be submitted in a more formal way.

3. Discussion, Historic preservation elements of the Stamford master plan.

L. Drobbin indicated that the review of the master plan is on going. The following points were discussed.

- The draft chapter on neighborhoods was provided by Norman Cole.
- Public hearing on the master-plan has been rescheduled for September.
- There is time available to review the chapter and offer any improvements.
- Any further comments or drafts should be brought to the next meeting for HPAC committee review.
- It was noted that the city has a not done a survey of historic and cultural character buildings since 1979.
- An updated survey will need to be a priority of the HPAC. Until that time HPAC needs to establish standards for city review procedures - such as all properties over 50 years – even those without a specific designation.
- HPAC will need to do a new survey in an organized manner.
- The standard for HPAC review also needs to be coordinated with other city agencies.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Woodland Cemetery

Richard Bergman, Architect and Mary-Kate Smith, of Wofsey Rosen Kweskin & Kuriansky were invited to make a presentation of plans for alterations to the Cemetery The following review items were noted in the presentation:

- The City provided to HPAC recent background materials concerning alterations to the Woodland Cemetery
- The cemetery is a contributing resource to the South End National Historic District
- Original grave markers and original plantings will not be disturbed.
- Enhancements are planned for the Section - "F" , that abuts Stamford waterway. It is underutilized land now including landfill area. Some of it is currently wetlands and salt marsh - but above the costal area flood zone.
- A CAM application is under review currently
- The changes will continue the tradition of "stroll" cemeteries with rolling hills and trees with historical character.
- New plantings are planned along with better drainage for storm events.
- As the plan calls for removing and relocating more than 10,000 sq ft of earth. It is required to go to zoning and thus has been referred to HPAC.
- The improvements are adhering to historic guidelines.

A Neighborhood objection occurred over the winter when trees were thinned. Since then the owner and design group met with neighbors and the restoration plan has been presented. There are no current Neighborhood objections.

The HPAC voted on the following resolution: (Moved by A. Smyth, seconded by B. Hersh, and carried unanimously.) it is agreed L. Drobbin will draft a statement with the following guidelines.

- There are no adverse effects on the existing historical character of the cemetery
- The new plan supports better storm water management practices and enhanced landscaping, with new plantings, in both the new and historic portions of the cemetery
- The new landscape plans will enhance the historical character of the existing cemetery.

2. Discussion of the HPAC's role in City of Stamford's acquisition of the Sacred Heart Academy

L. Drobbin noted that the Sacred Heart School building site is under consideration for purchase by the city of Stamford. M. Levine confirmed, but indicated it is a long way from finalization. L Drobbin wants to sure that the HPAC to be aware of potential changes to buildings. The following were noted.

- There may be additions to the building if the city wants to use it as a school (to be determined)
- CJ Star Barn & Carriage House is listed structure. HPAC to verify.
- There is a question about the listing of the main school building. (1922 ?)
- There is an indication that the city will seek to preserve the school building

The HPAC voted on the following resolution: (Moved by A. Goslin, seconded by B. Hersh, and carried unanimously.) It is agreed L Drobbin will draft a statement for the city with the following guidelines. The draft statement will be available at the next meeting.

- The HPAC should be apprised of the future use and changes to the site and buildings.
- The HPAC considers the buildings to be historically significant. Including the CJ Star Barn & Carriage House.
- The HPAC encourages the adaptive reuse of the building

3. Discussion about drafts for adoption of by-laws and adoption of rules for speakers.

J. Smyth is working on the by laws and will work on a draft for the next meeting. L. Villency Cohen will assist in the review and edit of the draft.

4. Discussion of draft press release for the formation of the HPAC

R. Shannonhouse agreed to work on a draft of a press release for review at the next meeting by the full commission. The following thoughts were noted.

- The draft for review will reference current successes and efforts by the group.
- HPAC will support the important P&Z process
- There is a potential for HPAC programs in the city
- HPAC will support economic development while keeping a sense of the historic character in the community

5. Report on CT Trust for Historic Commission session in Southport on May 15,2014

D. Woods reported on attendance at a conference provided by the CT Trust for Historic Preservation. The following was noted.

- Copies of a Trust handbook of "Historic District Commissions and Historic Property Commissions - 2010" document were provided to all members
- Copies of the handout "Model Historic Preservation - Ordinance PA 13-181" were handed out to all members.
- The conference covered enabling legislation by the state to allow for formulation of Local Historic Districts (LHD's) and Local Historic Properties (LHP's) and the creation of a local advisory commission to carry out those tasks.
- The model ordinance language that was provided by the Trust was reviewed. It was noted that the draft language of the HPAC/Stamford ordinance closely follows the state guidelines.
- D. Woods will review the model ordinance with the HPAC Stamford ordinance to see if there are any conflicts,
- D. Woods will also review language that might be added to the HPAC by-laws or commission rules.

6. Report by R. Sahannonhouse on June 5th. community conversation conference about "Power of Place" and historic efforts.

R. Shannonhouse noted that groups discussed examples of successful historic preservation. The following was also discussed

- Groups see the importance in embracing economic development while keeping a sense of the "soul" of the place
- Reference to potential historic programs that have been provided in other communities.
- Importance of advisory role to the zoning board and other city agencies.
- Importance in saving both for-profit and non-profit owned structures.

R. Shannonhouse presented the Hubbard Mansion as a case study. Further discussion revealed some issues facing HPAC in potential support of restoration with the building and property. The group agreed there is further research needed to see if the building is eligible for listing. The HPAC also needs to find out if the building will be altered or restored by new owners.

- The property is not currently listed but it has a SHPO "Opinion of Eligibility"
- The property is progressing toward state and local listing
- The Hubbard Heights neighborhood may also be eligible.
- W. Haynes noted that a nomination is being prepared . HPAC will review that status at the next meeting.
- L. Drobbin will contact Norman Cole for more information.
- Discussion was tabled for further review at next meeting

7. Demolition of 39 Woodland Ave.

It is understood that the building was demolished with a permit issued in January of 2013. The following discussion items are noted.

- The property was not listed but was older than 50 years.
- The historic part of the building was demolished in 2013. The newer portion of the building was just demolished recently.
- HPAC needs to notify the building department to get demolition notices.
- D. Woods offered to have the notices delivered to his office address downtown. L. Drobbin will make that contact with the city.
- it is understood that Mr. DeMarco will provide notice about a demolition request for structures over 50 years old.

Ms. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Submitted by: David W. Woods AIA secretary
Stamford, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

The next meeting will be on the second Tuesday of the month in July, starting at 7:00 pm in the 7th floor conference room, number 7-C.