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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

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FINAL Minutes of Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: July 8, 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). Elena Kallman (alternate)

REGULAR MEETING

OLD BUSINESS (Meeting called to order 7:10)

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

2. Update / discussion, Historic preservation elements of the Stamford master plan.
L. Drobbin indicated that the review of the master plan is on going. L. Drobbin expressed concern about the draft that was provided by Norman Cole with the following points

- The chapter needs to have two sections:
  1 – A brief introduction discussing the current state of preservation in the city/ Why the preservation ordinance was needed / discuss the formation of the HPAC/discuss the future
  2 - A copy of the ordinance.
- There is other information that should be added as well, but it should be done by a consultant, such as:
  a. Goals for HPAC, 5, 10, and 15 year,
  b. Policies,
  c. Maps of historic districts
  d. Need for environmental resources assessment,
  e. Need for cultural survey
  f. Historic preservation tools.
- B. Hersh noted it is best to make a modest effort with these sections of the chapter and not wait for a consultant.
- The list of properties of the national and state register should <u>not</u> be in the chapter, (All agreed) .
- The chapter should also note that an updated survey will need to be a priority of the HPAC. Until that time, HPAC needs to establish standards for city review procedures.

The HPAC voted on the following resolution: (Moved by L. Drobbin, seconded by J. Smyth, and carried unanimously.) It is agreed L. Drobbin will draft an outline and will forward it to B. Hersh and A. Goslin for review and drafting. The draft statement will be available by email to the committee and will be discussed at the next meeting. The committee will ask W. Haynes of HNPP to review the draft as well.

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

L. Drobbin noted that the city has moved forward with the purchase of the Sacred Heart School building site. L. Drobbin read a draft statement from HPAC including comments from B. Hersh. The following discussion items are noted:

- CJ Star Barn & Carriage House is a National Register listed structure.
- The HPAC considers the Sacred Heart building to posses architectural and historic significance.
- There is need to get a statement to the city as soon as possible.
- J. Smyth indicated that the statement needs to be longer and more direct. (all agreed)
- HPAC statement should say the city should seek to preserve the school building with adaptive reuse.
- Other examples of successfully preserved school building projects exist; J. Smyth will add that information.
- The HPAC should be apprised of the future use and changes to the site and buildings, including the CJ Star Barn & Carriage House.
- The HPAC encourages the adaptive reuse of the building
- Statement should indicate that HAPC understands improvements to the interiors will need to comply with codes and education requirements and therefore would not review the interior renovations.
- Any additions to the building should be designed sympathetically.

The HPAC voted on the following resolution: (Moved by D. Woods, seconded by J. Smyth, and carried unanimously.) It is agreed L. Drobbin will revise the draft statement. A. Goslin will do some additional research at the historical society. J. Smyth will research examples. The draft statement will be e-mailed to the group for review. It is requested any comments be provide in two days.

4. Update on Request for Hubbard Mansion zoning application

R. Shannonhouse presented the progress with the Hubbard Mansion. She noted an application was submitted to the zoning board to convert the building to a "church" use. There was a "negative review" by the city as the application was incomplete and lacks an engineering study. The following was also noted:

- The application was vague on the intended use.
- The neighborhood opposes the project for "intensity of use" and for "endangerment of health and welfare".

- The community also opposes a large parking lot requirement, and believes a variance is needed. Traffic studies have not been done.
- L. Drobbin has asked for a copy of the application from the city, but has not received it.
- The project is currently on the agenda for the July 23rd meeting of the zoning board.
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- The Hubbard Heights historic district has a SHPO "Opinion of Eligibility" and is currently preparing historic district designation for the State Register of Historic Places. ; the property is most likely eligible as a contributing resource to the district.
- L. Drobbin will contact Norman Cole to find out the status of the application.

The HPAC voted on the following resolution: (Moved by L. Drobbin, seconded by D. Woods, and carried unanimously.) It is agreed L. Drobbin will request a referral to the HPAC from Norman Cole, for review of the project and the application.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion about drafts for adoption of by-laws and adoption of rules for speakers.
J. Smyth submitted a draft of the by laws at the meeting for review. The HPAC will review the draft and make comments via email - or at the next meeting. The following requirements were noted and may need to be included in the draft.

- Time requirements -- such as 2 days for committee members comments.
- Submission time requirements - such as 2 weeks or 10 days.
- Submission requirements - type and quantity of copies and visual materials i. e. photos and plans for members review.
- Presentation requirements - such as duration of speakers
- Empower the chair to limit speakers and move the discussion along.
- Duration of public comment

The committee agreed to review the draft and bring comments to the next meeting.

2. Demolition delay ordinance
Cynthia Reeder provided an update of the demolition delay ordinance that is currently in review. The following ordinance review items and considerations were noted:

- The draft revisions of the demolition delay ordinance will be submitted to HPAC in the next month or two.
- It will take a few months to review.
- HPAC should expect discussion in the Fall.
- The notification language is being tightened.
- The penalty clause is being reviewed.
- Certified mail requirements for announcements and for responses are under review.
- Consideration for hazardous materials needs review.
- The importance of historical "fixtures" or "equipment" in each building is in review.

• Language about referral to HPAC will be added.

W. Haynes of HNPP provided some additional guidance about the history of the demolition delays with the city. He handed out a spread sheet of the recent requests for 2014. He noted 19 demolitions have been requested this year, HNPP has intervened on 4 of those, and 1 has been saved.

HPAC looks forward to the review of the revisions to the ordinance and will provide comments as quickly as possible

3. Creation of a demolition application permit committee
L. Drobbin asked the group to consider creating a separate committee to review demolition requests and delays, or come up with procedures for the HPAC to review demolition requests. HPAC may need to complete the following.

• Standards for HPAC response to demolition requests.
• How the town should work with HPAC. (procedures)
• The process and procedures may need to be included in the revised ordinance.

Until the ordinance is revised D. Woods will continue to get the certified mail of the demolition requests. D. Woods will take a photo of the site or building and forward to the HPAC members. HPAC will ask a member to do a quick "initial" review/ investigation at the historical society (HS) to see if there is significance to the structure. After this quick check overview, an e-mail will be sent to the committee for any comments. Any e-mails should include W. Haynes of HNPP. (all agreed) More discussion of the procedures may be needed at the next meeting.

4. Status of cultural resource survey
L. Drobbin asked W. Haynes to give an overview of the surveys that exist.

• The 1978 survey was done with some money that was available at the time.
• The 1978 survey was split into 2 sections: the South End, and town collar residential areas. These surveyed some neighborhoods but have left some unattended.
• Copies of these he surveys are in Ferguson Library and the Stamford Historical Society.
• 1980's reviews / surveys were districts with applications for designation. Those include the Revonah Woods and the Old Long Ridge historic districts.
• There was an 2004 update of the South End and Waterside Historic Resources Survey
• There is a 2013 Hubbard Heights Historic Resource Inventory.
• A windshield survey of Glenbrook was done a few weeks ago.
• A. Goslin indicated that Glenbrook needs a survey and is supported by the community.
• Glenbrook may be broken into 4 sub districts that could have 4 grant applications. (more discussion is needed)

W. Haynes noted there are some tasks that need to be completed:

• An e-file of the surveys and the photos needs to be completed so they can be available to the public and can reside all in one place.

- There is also a need to put the surveys on a web site.
- Photos are in the process of being converted to positives, but will also need to be scanned and an e-file.
- HPAC needs to discuss how the work can get done.
- HPAC needs to get a plan together for how to update the surveys.

W. Haynes also indicated that the HPAC should look into getting grants and funds for these tasks

- C. Reeder suggested using the city of Stamford grants writer for assistance in filing applications for grants. (More discussion is needed)
- W. Haynes indicated the "Historical Resource Inventory" money may be available.
- Can the information be put onto a web site and who will manage the site?

More discussion is needed to come up with a process for updating surveys for both neighborhoods and individual structures. (tabled to next meeting)

5. Discussion of draft press release for the formation of the HPAC
R. Shannonhouse provided a handout of a draft of a HPAC press release for review at the next meeting. The following were noted.

- R. Shannonhouse will provide the text in word format to all.
- The circulation list will be determined later.
- L. Drobbin will review the next draft with the city (Normal Cole first)
- The release may go out in the early fall after Labor day.

6. Discussion of progress with adoption of bi-laws and rules for speakers.
J. Smyth provided a draft of the bi-laws and rules for the HPAC. Please note Item 1 above. these will be reviewed over the next month. (discussion on adoption was tabled)

7. Discussion of HNPP newsletter column
L. Drobbin has been asked by W. Haynes to determine if HPAC members would be interested in posting HPAC news, issues, etc. in a featured column in the HNPP quarterly news letter. Some issues for a column might be:

- The need for surveys, events, etc. to support preservation
- Successes and progress with saving local structures.
- Issues facing the HPAC in the future

L. Drobbin noted that HPAC members are welcome work with Wes Haynes to present ideas for HPAC articles in the HNPP news letters. The committee will discuss any future letters or column submittals at the next meeting.
(discussion was tabled)

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

Submitted by: David W. Woods AIA secretary - July 29th 2014
Stamford, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

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