



CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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STAMFORD, CT 06904 -2152

FINAL Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: March 10, 2015
Location: Stamford City Hall, 888 Washington Blvd. Stamford CT 06901
Land Use Bureau - 7th fl. conference Room
Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, David Woods, Lynn Villency Cohen,
Rebecca Shannonhouse. (no alternates for this meeting)

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:12)

II. Approval of minutes

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the February meeting with changes that were submitted by e-mail and noted here:

L. Villency Cohen asked for corrections to the description of the Curtain Call Theater location on the site. W. Haynes of HNP noted corrections to the description of the Mill River Bridge renovation options. HNP "supports the renovation option that the city has approved". Additions were approved by the group
(Moved by L. Drobbin, seconded by A. Goslin, and carried unanimously.)

III. New Business

A. Cedar Heights Road Bridge Replacement

1. L. Drobbin reported that FHWA provided a letter that supports the demolition of the existing bridge. It is in the early stages of planning. Norinski of HNPP is in the process of completing an inventory of bridges in town. She has done research on this bridge.

2. L. Casolo provided an overview of the city's bridge program. P. Ginotti is a city engineer who works on the bridge program. The following are bullet points of the presentation.

- The city does give regard to aesthetics
- The June Road bridge had public involvement
- Bridge projects can take ten years to design if they include federal and/or state funding
- Permitting takes a long time.
- The city is required to select contractors using the low bid system



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3. L. Drobbin noted that HPAC needs to be apprised of the bridge program. Many of the current projects were initiated prior to the formation of the commission. The following was noted.

- Cedar Heights Road Bridge was pre-approved by SHPO.
- There is interest for keeping the bridge look the same as the current structure.

4. J. Norinski said several stone arch bridges in Stamford were designed by Llwelllyn Bromfield Jr. in the 1930s.

5. L. Casolo noted that there are 2 design alternatives for the Cedar Heights Road Bridge that will be considered: They are:

1. Similar to Cold Spring Road - steel supports encased with concrete
 2. A precast concrete arch, with stone cladding
- Because of federal funding, the city will first conduct a Request for Qualifications.
 - Cost is a factor when the city hires design firms
 - The city wants the replacement to replicate the existing bridge.
 - There will be a public information meeting at the preliminary design stage.
 - The schedule is currently being negotiated and includes design work over 2 years
 - Preliminary design will be 5 months - then 2 months of state review.
 - The city is currently negotiating the contract with a design firm.
 - Updates regarding the project can be provided to the public with a web site.
 - The city will keep HPAC apprised of progress
 - A web site will be created and maintained by the selected firm. (Dewberry Consultants)

6. L. Drobbin noted HPAC 's concerns include the design, location of staging areas, the engineering and the removal and replacement of plantings. HPAC can assist with these issues. Generally, the salvage and reuse of the original stone is preferred over the use of form liners. It is understood that alternative construction methods may be required.

- The historic bronze plaque must remain on the bridge. It should be removed prior to demolition, cleaned and preserved, placed in storage and reinstalled in a suitable location.
- The contractor should be required to clean it using National Park Service approved products.

The HPAC group generally agrees with the city's design direction and will support the project. The city will keep HPAC updated with progress.

(the discussion was tabled and review of status will be on-going.)



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B Hunting Ridge Road Bridge and C. Riverbank Road Bridge

1. P. Ginotti presented two other historic stone bridge projects: Hunting Ridge Road and Riverbank Road Bridge near the Long Ridge intersection. Hunting Ridge Road Bridge is in poor condition as the parapet wall has collapsed. He noted the following.

- The professional design/engineering firms have not been hired.
- The city is currently scoping the projects for the RFP's
- They want HPAC information and concepts included in the scope
- The State inspected the bridges and has qualified both for state finding..
- The city recently sent these bridges to the SHPO for determinations of eligibility.
- Riverbank is a short span and ideal for "box culvert" construction; as an example, Chestnut Hill is a box culvert with a stone veneer parapet.
- They intend to keep the stone channel walls. They do not want to reconstruct the river channel beyond the bridge.
- Hunting Ridge is a 60 deg. "skew" bridge (road is angled to the stream)
- The material and construction has not been determined.
- Hunting Ridge had a stone parapet wall before it collapsed into the stream.
- The replacement bridge will likely use form liners to replicate the stone walls.
- Form liners have been developed to appear similar to stone. Mortar joints can be expressed and look more authentic.

2. J. Norinski of HNPP stated the following:

- Riverbank Road Bridge should be preserved.
- The stone work may be able to be salvaged.
- Favor the random stone pattern
- The upright stones on the parapet cap should be retained
- The stone work for Hunting Ridge Road may not be salvageable.
- Hunting Ridge Road is less visible and less important for design review.

3. The city requested HPAC guidance in the preparation of scope documents before issuing the RFP. HPAC issues of concern are:

- Riverbank Road Bridge is of high quality and is should be preserved; the stone material and appearance must be retained (rough/rounded rubble stone look)
- The vertical "dental" stones on the cap are important.
- The city will seek a determination from SHPO.
- Hunting Ridge Road Bridge has fallen apart.
- Hunting Ridge Road Bridge can utilize "less expensive" construction, if the money can be spent on Riverbank Bridge for preservation.
- It is OK for the city to develop the design for Hunting Ridge Road Bridge without HPAC design overview.
- The city will continue to keep HPAC informed of the progress with notifications of public meetings or presentations.



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The HPAC group generally agrees with the current direction of both bridge projects as described and will support the projects. The city will keep HPAC updated with progress. There was no request for written approvals at this time.

(the discussion was tabled and review of status will be on-going.)

D. West Main Street Bridge

1. Robin Stein of the City of Stamford presented the status of the rehabilitation of the West Main Bridge. He supports L. Casolo and he city's progress with the funding process. He noted the following history of decisions:

- The bridge is dated to 1880. It is a "lenticular" steel truss.
- Supports were added to accommodate trolley service.
- In 2002 it was closed to traffic.
- The Mill River Collaborative wants it to be pedestrian only.
- Mayor Malloy approved it as a pedestrian bridge and the BOR approved emergency vehicle use.
- The city has two grants for the pedestrian bridge for a total of about 2 million.
- Mayor Martin determined it will be a pedestrian bridge. It was also agreed that limited emergency vehicle access will be provided.
- Emergency services say they do not need it and will not use it.

2. R. Stein added information about current approvals, direction, and progress.

- The city is questioning if they can do the construction in the next three years.
- The bridge has an ally with the Mill River Collaborative. Robin Graham has said that the truss is worth saving.
- Mayor Martin is willing to incorporate trusses if there is cost sharing
- The current estimate is that \$150K is needed to keep the trusses - in addition to 3 million (+/-) allocated by the city for the project.
- There are a number of regulatory organizations and approvals that need to be addressed.
- Robin is working with the federal government to retain the current grant funds that are set to expire this summer.
- HPAC and HNPP should begin evaluating colors for the bridge.
- The suggestion of a strong color, such as red, has been considered. More colors will be reviewed before final approval.
- It is not clear who or what organization will approve the final color.
- The bridge will be illuminated. Details have not been worked out.

3. Other support for the project is in process, and is noted.

- W. Haynes says that there may be other financial support from historic sources.
- HNPP is helping with an effort to apply for grant funds.



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- L. Casolo says the Land Use Committee now supports the project.

HPAC generally agrees with the direction and will support the project. There are no requests, reviews or requirements of HPAC at this time.

(The discussion was tabled and review of status will be on-going.)

E. 104 Richmond Hill

Jerome Roberts of Shelter for the Homeless presented a house they intend to renovate at the corner of Mission Hill and Richmond Hill. The following was noted:

- The original house was built circa 1880 and has had many additions.
- The house will be used for the “formerly homeless” and their families.
- Rent is 30% of the normal rent in the area.
- There will be a 4 bedroom, a 3 bedroom and a studio apartment.
- The design interprets Victorian architecture.
- They intend to remove the rear addition
- The 7.3 zoning bonus will be used. The bonus requires renovation.
- They have requested a historic density bonus to allow three apartments and 3 spaces of parking.
- The building will house three families. It will need to add 500 sq ft. on the third floor to fill out the unit sizes as required.
- They are asking for an exemption from zoning to allow parking at 1 per unit.

2. W. Haynes (HNPP) reported that the bonus works well for this project - They support it. HNPP encourages the development.

- The zoning bonus also works with parking for three cars.
- HNPP will support the project at the next zoning hearing.

3. Plans and elevations and schematic documents by Elena Kalman were shown to HPAC (Elena was not in attendance). Comments were as noted.

- The paint colors and effort to restore the building to a Victorian” style is supported.
- The colors on the mock-up elevation, as shown, needed to be fine-tuned; D. Woods felt that the colors, as presented on the mock-up, looked incorrect. There are other computer prints where the colors appear different. The final selected paint colors need to be confirmed with HPAC.
- The hand rails at the porch should be worked out with the column details.

The HPAC group generally agrees with the direction and design of the project. No additional information or approval is requested from HPAC at this time. The zoning board may request a notice of support from HPAC. L. Drobbin will verify.

(There was no further discussion)

F. Hoyt Barnum House Discussion



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1. M. Levine of the city presented the following information regarding the city's progress with this historic house project:

- The house dates to 1699, and is the one of the oldest houses in Stamford.
- The adjacent police headquarters station is outdated and must be repaired or re-built new as there are environmental issues that must be remediated.
- Other locations for the police station were considered.
- The options are either repair or completely replace the station building.
- Location is the most important issue in the placement of the new police station.
- The current location is the best, as it is centralized in the city.
- The city wants to utilize adjacent parcels of land to expand e foot print.
- Two properties are on the same block – a historic house (Hoyt Barnum) and a parcel with a house owned by a law firm. The city has an agreement to purchase the law firm's property.
- The Stamford Historical Society (SHS), owns the Hoyt Barnum house. They have agreed to place the house at their headquarters property on High Ridge Road.
- The city continues to research if the Hoyt Barnum house can be moved and what the implications are. The city has asked a moving company if the roof can be removed so that the house can be moved with it's "body intact". More information is needed.
- There will be a savings for the city and the station construction project, if the adjacent site is cleared and the houses are out of the way.
- The city is willing to support the move of the Hoyt Barnum house. The cost is in the process of negotiation.
- SHS wants the city to pay for the move, plus some of the long term maintenance.

2. There are a number of opinions for the historic house relocation. A few of these were noted.

- W. Haynes of HNPP says there may be other options to moving the house to the High Ridge Road SHS site.
- Wes believes that it was originally a "city" house and it would be best if it can be kept downtown..
- Alternate locations have been researched, but a suitable alternative has not yet been found.
- A Mill River Park site is not supported by the Collaborative.
- Wes has reviewed the options with SHPO in a site visit last week.
- If there is no federal funding than SHPO is advisory only.
- Deconstruction and then reconstruction will be difficult. Todd Levine (SHPO staff) seemed less concerned about keeping the building downtown.
- It may be easier to keep the building intact if the future site is nearby.



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3. Wes wants to ensure that the footings and foundations for the new location are prepared before the house is moved. The house will deteriorate if it remains disassembled for a long period of time.

4. M. Levine is seeking the support of the historic preservation community. He may ask HPAC to provide a letter of support; the timing for this has not yet been determined. Other tasks and schedules are noted. .

- Marty does not want alternatives or additional sites or speculation to derail the project. The city prefers that an agreement can be worked out with the owner - SHS.
- It is a SHS building. They want to use it as a teaching tool. If it's on the same property as their headquarters, it is easier to maintain and staff.
- The time frame is "soon." The options for the police station need to move ahead.
- State OSHA authorities will want to see progress towards the resolution of the hazardous material issues.
- HNP is looking for alternative sites.
- HNP is not ready to comment on the plans until there are more details
- The SHS has not done a feasibility study to determine if a move will be financially viable for the house in the future.

The HPAC discussion was tabled. The group generally agreed with the direction of the city's work on the project. No additional approvals were requested from HPAC at this time. HPAC understands that it may be called upon to support the project in the future.

(There was no further discussion)

IV. Old Business

A. Sacred Heart property update.

1. L. Casolo of the city gave an update on the site visit with Todd Levine of SHPO. Todd will be preparing a letter. It was a very proactive meeting and Lou is encouraged with the progress. Some of the SHPO comments are noted below:.

- SHPO wants to preserve the context of the site.
- Lou learned that the 1925 building does not have original windows.
- Modest improvements will be allowable to the classroom building.
- The residence hall is not important to be saved
- The city will seek to renovate the later additions to the classroom building
- Preservation of the barn is very important (dates to 1880)
- The city asked if it is possible to put an addition onto barn. SHPO will make suggestions.
- The two wood frame cottage style dwellings are less important



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- Architectural firms that are in consideration for the project will need to possess experience in historic rehabilitation and will be required to conduct the process to comply with Section 106 or other historic reviews
 - The city wants a HPAC representative to come to building committee meetings “from time to time” to explain what is important and review design concepts. (schedule will be determined later)
 - Tree/landscape preservation will be difficult. SHPO did not have issue with that.
2. W. Haynes had a number of comments as noted
- A list was provided to the city from HPAC of potential mitigations to demolition. The city has not yet responded to the commission.
 - CT Trust for Historical Preservation can post details of the city’s offer to sell and remove the properties, (the two cottage style house structures) on It’s historic properties x-change website.
 - The next best thing would be deconstruction, where the buildings are offered to a salvager.
 - The city will need to assist with any salvage process.
 - HNP thinks there is a market for the houses
 - The south cottage is more intact. Todd (SHPO) agreed.
3. There was some discussion about the next steps in the process for the city.
- Wes asked if the city was open to an intermediate action to stabilize the barn..
 - There may be grant money for rehabilitation and stabilization.
 - There may be grant money for roof repairs.
 - HPAC will not write letter at this time.
4. L. Casolo said that he likes the idea of stabilizing the barn and will look into the options.
5. A non-profit organization that contacted HPAC wants to investigate the use of the house and the barn for a music school. More research is needed.

The HPAC discussion was tabled. The group generally agreed with the direction of the city’s work on the project. No additional support was requested from HPAC.

(There was no further discussion)

Ms. L. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.



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Meetings are normally on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm in the 7th floor conference room, number 7-C. The next meeting will be Tuesday April 14th

Respectfully submitted,

David W. Woods AIA Secretary
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission