

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL MEETING
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
450 Columbus Boulevard, 2 South, Room H
Wednesday, January 8, 2019 @ 9:30 am
Meeting Minutes**

- Council: Ms. Marguerite Carnell, Mr. Tom Elmore, Dr. Leah Glaser, Dr. Margaret Faber, Chairwoman Sara Nelson, and Ms. Kathy Maher
- Call in: Dr. Fiona Vernal and Ms. Karyn Gilvarg
- Staff: Mary Dunne, Erin Fink, Deborah Gaston, Cathy Labadia, Todd Levine (10:05 a.m.), Marena Wisniewski
- Guests: Ms. Jane Montanaro, Preservation Connecticut

Call to Order

The meeting of the Historic Preservation Council was called to order at 9:44 a.m.

Chairwoman Nelson introduced SHPO's newest staff member, Ms. Erin Fink, to the Council.

On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second, Dr. Faber to add "Council Appointment and Terms" to XIV. New Business, item b for discussion. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – S. Nelson)

I. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Chairwoman Nelson did not review public comment procedures, the rules and procedures for public meetings. No one from the public was present.

II.

Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest

Chairwoman Nelson reviewed the conflict of interest policy.

III. Review and Approval Minutes

December 4, 2019 Minutes

The decision was unanimous to approve the December 4, 2019 meeting minutes with corrections. (Y-6, N-0, Abstaining - 2)

V. **State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items**

a. ***Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Town of Southington (Barnes Museum)***

On a motion by Ms. Gilvarg, Second by Ms. Maher, the Historic Preservation Council votes to award a Historic Restoration Fund Grant, funded by the Community Investment Act and administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development, to the below-listed applicant in the amount of \$60,000. All grant guidelines and state requirements shall be met by the below-listed applicant upon receipt of a grant as administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

(Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – S. Nelson)

Ms. Dunne presented and noted staff recommended approval of this application. The applicant is the Town of Southington, though the property in question is the Barnes Museum. The Town of Southington will administer the funding if approved. Ms. Dunne noted that SHPO already holds a restriction on the Barnes Museum until 2022 as a result of a previous Historic Restoration Fund Grant (HRF) they received for replacement of the slate roof. The current proposed scope of work is the result of a Survey and Planning Grant previously awarded to assess the condition of the veranda roof and the adjoining wood balustrade.

Ms. Gilvarg asked if the condition of the columns supporting the veranda was investigated. Ms. Dunne replied the repair of the columns are part of the scope of work, but noted that she would clarify this with the applicant, to ensure that they will be included.

Ms. Gilvarg also asked if the library collection would be affected by the project. Ms. Dunne replied that the library is part of the collection within a room in the Barnes Museum. Ms. Maher further clarified that the room in question is not a functioning library, but rather a reflection room of its historic use and referred to as “the library”.

Dr. Faber asked if this project had gone to bid already. Ms. Dunne replied that in this instance, as the applicant had demonstrated that they followed state procurement policy, they were allowed to bid the project prior to the awarding of the grant.

Chairwoman Nelson asked for drawings associated with the application. Ms. Dunne replied there are 3 pages of preliminary drawings within the scope document and that she would check for additional drawing in the application addendum and share them through Dropbox. Ms. Gilvarg was asked by Chairwoman Nelson if she was satisfied with the application as-is. Ms. Gilvarg replied yes, she can agree to move it forward with the material presented.

Dr. Faber asked if they were repairing or replacing the balustrade due to the word “new” in the application. Ms. Dunne replied the balustrades are being repaired, with selective replacement to match the original.

- VI. State Register of Historic Places Nominations
- VII. Local Historic District/Property Study Report/s
- VIII. Archaeological Preserves
- IX. Threatened Properties
- X. Preservation Restrictions
- XI. **Report on State Historic Preservation Office Museum Activities – Marena Wisniewski in Liz Shapiro’s absence**

SHPO:

Personnel:

The job posting for Liz’s former position has been fully approved, and the introduction and the preferred qualifications have been submitted to HR. We are waiting for approval. With luck, the posting will be live in the next ten days. As a reminder, the successful candidate will have the qualifications to fill the position of Deputy SHPO. It is Liz’s intention to remain the primary liaison for the museums.

There were 124 applicants that passed the basic qualifications for the position of Museum Assistant at the Eric Sloane museum. In order to whittle down the candidates, additional follow-up questions were submitted to HR yesterday. Liz should have access to the pool of applicants next week, but scoring to determine interviews cannot begin until the applicant pool has had the opportunity to answer the follow-up questions.

David Kooris’ last day was January 3. Until that position is refilled, Liz will be reporting to Assistant Commissioner Thames.

Jenny Scofield has updated (and will continue to update) the SHPO consultant list. She created a form to collect updated information from the people who are currently on the list. The updated information will enable us to better serve our constituents.

As a reminder, SHPO is working with Preservation CT and the UCONN Law School to present a one day conference to discuss issues surrounding sustainability and historic preservation. It will take place on Friday January 24, at the UCONN law school. Registration is open, and we hope HPC members will be able to attend.

Museums General:

Staff meetings continue as the museums work through improving and updating the collections management policies and associated forms. Staff are working on this at the same time as DECD is preparing for the next audit, so all have been busy answering questions.

Sloane Museum:

Recent rainy weather and delays on orders have delayed the project at the Sloane museum for 40 days. The expected substantial completion date is now March 1. Morgan Bengel has been working with curator Barb Russ to ensure that we have a smooth transition at the museum. Liz has been working with Jim Mauk, president of the Friends of the Eric Sloane Museum, to create a new interpretive exhibit about Eric Sloane’s life that will be open for the grant re-opening on June 27.

New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine

Morgan Bengel has been working to rewrite the exhibit panels for the museum. Summer staff has done extensive testing of the labels that were installed when the museum reopened in July 2018, and the changes in the new panels are based on visitor input. We are also beginningOk thank you, maybe this is old, it was on my calendar.

with a brand-new partnership with the Re-Entry Hall of Change, a new program to recognize 8 individuals who have been incarcerated and are now making outstanding contributions to their communities. The first installation of the Hall of Change will be at the visitor center at Old New-Gate Prison. This is a collaborative of multiple public and private partners, including the nine reentry collaboratives, Hang Time and Her Time, the Office of the Arts, and the Department of Corrections.

Prudence Crandall Museum:

Joanie DiMartino, curator at The Prudence Crandall Museum, continue to document and move the collections to prepare for the construction. We have the final signatures to move ahead to the bidding process for the restoration, and hope that we will have the pre-bid meeting by mid-February.

Henry Whitfield State Museum:

Staff at Henry Whitfield are taking the lead on the rewrite of the collections management plan. The Firelight Festival took place on Friday, December 6, and attendance was strong.

XII. Report on Museum Properties

XIII. Old Business

a. CEPA Updates – Mr. Todd Levine

95 and 97-99 Howe Street, New Haven

Mr. Levine updated the Council on the Status of 95 and 97-99 Howe Street, noting that an agreement between owner and the Attorney General’s Office (AG) had been reached. However, the agreement is still with the Attorney General’s office, awaiting signature.

Bridgewater Grange, 11 Main Street South, Bridgewater

Mr. Levine notified the Council that though an agreement had been previously been reached with the town of Bridgewater regarding the demolition of the Grange, the First Selectman was interested in pursuing demolition once again. Mr. Levine spoke with Assistant Attorney General Alan Ponanski, who believes that the AG may pursue legal action against the town for violating the original agreement.

Chairwoman Nelson asked Mr. Levine if he had a time frame of events. Mr. Levine replied he had just spoken to Assistant AG Ponanski yesterday, and that the First Selectman presented his proposal to the community in September 2019, which included construction of a new building in back of the town library and demolition of the Grange. Within the next few weeks Assistant AG Ponanski will present a response to the First Selectman and set up a time to meet and discuss an alternative, which could include transferring ownership of the building to the town's Grange Organization.

Mr. Levine also noted that, originally, the municipality passed a local bond of \$300,000 for either rehabilitation or demolition of the Grange building, and that these local funds could be used to match successive, phased HRF grants.

Cogshell-Robinson House, 43 Broadway, Colchester

Mr. Levine reported that Mr. Brad Schide of Preservation Connecticut, formerly The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, found a developer and is diligently working to save this property. The potential developer owns an adjacent site, and is working on retaining the historical building, while adding housing and commercial space to the property.

b. State Archaeologist Candidate Update – Ms. Cathy Labadia

Ms. Labadia mentioned the interviews in December at UCONN went well and that both candidates were extremely qualified. The search committee subsequently met and forwarded a recommendation to the Connecticut Museum of Natural History where the State Archaeologist's office is housed. A recommendation has been made, though the name cannot be announced as of yet. Hopefully the candidate will start employment on February 1st, 2020.

Dr. Glaser asked if the candidate will serve on the Historic Preservation Council. Ms. Labadia replied yes.

XIV. New Business

a. Presentation on Certified Local Governments – Ms. Mary Dunne

Ms. Dunne presented a PowerPoint to the Council on Certified Local Governments. At our last meeting, Dr. Faber was seeking more information on the process to assist her town if the need arose. The presentation was posted to Dropbox. Chairwoman Nelson mentioned that if anyone had any additional questions to please direct them to Ms. Dunne.

b. Council appointments and terms – Chairwoman Nelson

Chairwoman Nelson discussed with the Council terms, rules, appointments, attendance and stipulations.

XV. Liaison with Public & Private Agencies – Ms. Jane Montanaro, Preservation CT

Ms. Montanaro mentioned that as of January 1st, 2020 their organization transitioned to using their new name, Preservation Connecticut (Preservation CT). Ms. Montanaro also mentioned

that pre-applications were being reviewed for the maintenance and repair grant that Preservation CT conducts in partnership with the 1772 Foundation. These are small \$10,000 grants intended for museums and historical societies to perform maintenance on the buildings they are housed in. Repairs typically consist of window, roof and floor repair. Preservation CT has received 70 applications totaling about \$700,000 in requests. Ms. Montanaro noted that some applicants appear to be good candidates for HRF, and that Preservation CT will keep SHPO abreast of the process. Chairwoman Nelson asked where the link can be found. Ms. Montanaro replied she will send the link to anyone who requests it.

Registration for the UCONN conference is still open and filling up fast. More seats were recently made available, and Ms. Montanaro suggested anyone interested contact Preservation CT.

Chairwoman Nelson mentioned she wanted to speak with SHPO staff about mail addressed to her attention from the City of Stamford regarding a demolition notification. Ms. Wisniewski responded that she would assist Chairwoman Nelson. The demolition notice was passed around the table for the Council to view.

Ms. Maher asked if HRF was still at \$100,000. Ms. Dunne replied yes and that Ms. Fink is now handling all new HRF grants, while Ms. Carmelich is handling previously received HRFs.

XVI. Public Forum

XVII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Faber to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no further discussion – meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.
(Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – S. Nelson)

Respectfully submitted by:

Deborah Gaston, Secretary

*Next meeting:
Wednesday, February 5, 2019, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Call*