

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
STATE HISTORIC PRESERATION COUNCIL

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

9:30 am

One Constitution Plaza, Second Floor

Via Go To Meeting:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/830548389>

Dial in

United States: +1 (224) 501-3412

Access Code: 830-548-389

Meeting Minutes

- Present: Ms. Gilvarg, Dr. Jones, Dr. Faber, Chairwoman Nelson, Dr. Glaser, Ms. Maher and Dr. Partridge
- Absent: Dr. Woodward, Ms. Kane and Ms. Maher
- Staff: Mary Dunne, Deborah Gaston, Todd Levine, Doug Royalty, Elizabeth Rairigh, Jenny Scofield, Alyssa Lozupone and Cathy Labadia
- Guest: Mr. Daniel Mackay, Erin Marchitto, Jordan Sorensen - CT Trust

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Historic Preservation was called to order at 9:45 am.

II. Review of Public Comment Procedures

Chairwoman Nelson read the public comment procedures.

III. Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest

Chairwoman Nelson asked the members if there were any potential perceived conflicts of interest with any agenda items being brought before the Council.

None reported

IV. Review and Approval Minutes

February 1, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The Council agreed to have the February minutes tabled due to corrections which needed to be made.

On a motion made by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Glaser, the Historic Preservation Council approved the motion to table the February 2017 minutes. (Y-6, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)

V. State Historic Preservation Grants – Action Items

a. *Vista Life Innovations, Inc. Historic Restoration Fund Application for Captain Spencer House*

On a motion made by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Glaser, the Historic Preservation Council approved the Partner in Historic Restoration Fund Grant in the amount of \$50,000.00 Hearing no further discussion, motion passed. (Y-6, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)

Ms. Dunne noted staff recommends funding for this application. Vista is currently undertaking a historic tax credit project and are past recipients of a Historic Restoration Fund grant. The property is under a current easement and the work being conducted on the property is under on-going inspection by the Historic Preservation Office. This is the second phase of work in the historic portion of the house which will meet the needs of Vista's programs and goals, and essentially be ADA compliant.

Ms. Maher noted this is approximately the third grant Vista has received and was wondering if the Historic Preservation Office was satisfied with their final reporting and accomplishing all of the previous HRF survey and planning? Ms. Dunne stated Vista was meeting all the requirements and both she and Ms. Carmelich made a site visit last spring. Vista is paying attention to the actual historic fabric of the house with making the interior of the home livable space rather than occupied space. Currently, Vista Life still has an active tax credit application.

Chairwoman Nelson commented that the style of the home is Greek revival and the interior panel doors being installed are not the typical style door used for Greek revival homes. She was wondering what their [Vista's] philosophical approach was/is for this project? Ms. Dunne noted it was not stated in the application but she would check with the client.

Ms. Carmelich mentioned the exterior is Greek revival, but the interior has received considerable alteration. There was a late 1900-20th Century renovation when it was privately owned and certainly in its adaptation as a home for children and has received its own other upgrades to the building. The late 19-20th Century work has been preserved and is worthy of its preservation.

VI. State Register Nominations

a. Masinda Ocean Pearl Button Company, Willington

The Historic Preservation Council approves the Masinda Ocean Pearl Button Company to the State Register of Historic Places.

On a motion made by Dr. Faber, Second by Dr. Jones, the Historic Preservation Council approved the motion. (Y-6, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)

Ms. Scofield mentioned this is an exciting project and the homeowner has started a major stewardship effort a few years ago for a large restoration project. SHPO staff has been out to view the property multiple times and are pleased to advocate to have this property listed.

This is very unique since there are few cottage-gale style structures left that are completely intact with landscaping, waterway, and the mill pond/dam. Across the street there is the main house and attached to the house was the Coffin Factory.

Ms. Maher mentioned – reading through the narrative background and referencing footnote number 21 it notes – “fashions copied from European runways.” During that time European runways did not exist – they were commonly known as fashion parades and exclusive to Paris. In referencing to the context it further notes, “we acquired” our information from fashion plates from ladies magazines. In looking at footnote 21 the information appears to be gathered from a clothing/manufacturing/retail site which doesn’t give the impression as a credible footnote.

Dr. Jones responded the driver for the button industry at this time was the shift to ready-made clothing as opposed to the hand-made clothing. This created a large-scale industrial demand for buttons that hadn’t existed prior.

A question was asked if there was any evidence of the turbine being in place – turbines generally get buried by sand and debris. It was noted – during a site visit the area where the turbines would be were not visible. However, given the impact nature of dam and the penstock and the mill building the SHPO staff has every reason to believe it is still there but not visible.

VII. *State Historic Preservation Office Report*

There is no formal report at this time. The office is still in the process of interviewing for the vacant Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer’s position. A newly hired HP staff member has taken a leadership opportunity and the office will be reposting for this position.

The office has received three proposals from our potential (authors) for the historic preservation’s state-wide plan. The proposals are being reviewed today and it is anticipated to have a consultant in place by the end of the month.

The Governor’s budget proposes full restoration of CIA by allowing the legislation to sunset as of June 30 2017 – which will result in full restoration of the funds.

During the Commerce Committee hearing a proposal made to raise the cap of the tax credits doubling the tax credit cap limit. The hearing was well attended by many, including developers who spoke in-favor of the proposal.

The Arts Division is holding its 2nd Annual Connecticut's Arts Day at the Capitol. Members of the Historic Preservation are invited and encouraged to attend. Last year's Arts Day had over 300 attendees and the division is hoping for a larger turnout this year.

Ms. Carmelich mentioned there is state-wide SHPO Conference in May 18, 2017. Members of the Council are encouraged to attend. If you are not receiving our monthly newsletter please let the staff know as updates about the conference will be posted in it. A request for Nominations went out this week. Two awards will be given out during the Conference. The event is free to the public and will held at the Nathan Hale Inn in Storrs. Registration is required.

VIII. *Old Business*

a. Norwich – Reid and Hughes (update) Todd Levine

Mr. Levine mentioned he and the team - developer, CT Trust, local Historic Preservation Trust, Norwich City Manager met to go over the gaps in each group's understanding to have a clearer sense of how the process will work.

The City Council made a vote of 5-2 to demolish the building. SHPO thinks it important that the staff recognizes there is a path for preservation. The City Manager will speak with members of the City Council to see if the members would be open for a discussion and presentation. If the City Council is opposed to a discussion/presentation, then the process for legal proceedings will commence.

IX. *Liaison with Public and Private Agencies – Daniel Mackay*

Mr. Mackay mentioned to echo what was said earlier, if there is no change to the budget, the CIA funding will approve fully into the CIA account beginning on July 1st. There is an active effort by the CIA Coalition to protect and defend funds.

We had an excellent day of testimony with the Commerce Committee at the State Legislature on the Historic Tax Credit Allocation, the increase to \$60 million. Many gave testimony to the Finance and Commerce Committees. We are all working together to achieve the final goal of complete funding.

Next week is National Preservation Lobby Day the week of the 13th. A small group is going to Washington, D.C. to lobby and support the Historic Preservation Fund and state national funding sources for state historic preservation offices. There is new legislation at both the senate and the house at the federal level to improve and reform the rehabilitation tax credit. There has been contact with all seven members of the CT Congressional Delegation and they [members] have been asked to co-sponsor in the Senate and the House respectively.

The Federal Railroad Administration is in a "waiting period" and this is an opportunity to comment publicly on the proposed final environmental impact statement project. Feedback has

been extensive from Connecticut communities up state and down the state. Rhode Island has commented extensively as well, and all are in opposition. Senators Murphy, Blumenthal and Courtney have submitted extensive opposition to the new routes proposed for Connecticut.

A motion was made by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Jones to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no further discussion – meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m. (Y-6, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)

Respectfully submitted by:
Leigh Johnson