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

(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

REVISED FEBRUARY 27, 2020

Date: Regular meeting held: February 4, 2020
Location: 6th Floor Safety Training Room
Government Center
888 Washington Blvd.
Stamford, CT 06901
Present: Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse, Elena Kalman
Alternate: Dee Davis Oberwetter.

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order 7:04 p.m.

Rebecca Shannonhouse and Elena Kalman have been sworn in as full voting members. Anne Goslin (Vice-Chair) will Chair the current meeting. Dee Davis Oberwetter has been sworn in as an Alternate by the City.

II. Approval of January 7, 2020 meeting minutes.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2020 meeting. There were no changes to the minutes noted.

(The motion was moved by E. Kalman and seconded by R. Shannonhouse and carried unanimously)

III. New Business

A. Review of proposed Section 7.3 Text Changes by Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief

Applicant: City of Stamford

Participants: Ralph Blessing

Presented: Ralph Blessing noted he has received all the comments as requested from the January meeting. He is at this meeting to review those questions and respond to any additional comments.

1. Ralph further stated the point of the changes is to broaden the scope of protections for historic properties. They want the section to apply to historic structures that are not currently protected and in more zones. They want to strengthen our tool, the demolition delay. There is currently a 180 day delay. They want to add a demolition review that will occur during those 180 days. They tried to streamline the zoning bonuses with these changes. He can go through the comments received from HPAC.



2. *The first question had to do with vacant land.* Ralph said if there is vacant land within a certain distance of a historic property, a site plan is required for review. As this could pertain to an archaeological resource, there needs to be something added to the text.
3. Next question: *The role of the “qualified historic preservation expert” and HPAC has been questioned.* The role is not meant to replace HPAC. A preservation expert’s role is to provide technical assistance. A project must be presented to HPAC. Next question: *Rebecca asked if the expert can make a determination if a property can be exempt.* He agrees this should be taken out. Anne stated that currently an owner can engage an expert to develop plans well before an application is submitted. Ralph noted the expert does the technical work. He also said HPAC will make the final determination. Barry asked if a list will be developed of those who will qualify as an expert. Ralph said he did have a specific person in mind when writing this section. Elena said SHPO has a list of approved architects. Ralph further noted the Zoning Board has the final determination if a property will be exempt. Generally speaking, HPAC first gives a recommendation and then Zoning Board makes final determination.
4. The Land Use Bureau intends to also get comments on the proposed changes from the Law Department.
5. Next question: *Cultural resources inventory and the standards to get on that list.* Ralph said it should be the role of HPAC to develop those standards. The State has a nomination form. That may be a template. There is work that has been done already on this. It is an opportunity for HPAC to develop standards. Anne volunteered to draft a procedure. State and national registered properties, districts and Local Historic Districts will be automatically added. Ralph’s concern is for the properties not on the registers or within a Local Historic District. Eventually there will be one list maintained by the City.
6. Next question: *Clarification about Overlay Districts.* It was suggested to add a definition. Ralph said the purpose is to work with the underlying Zoning Districts. The overlay can freeze the historic character of the buildings within an area or zone. To add a carrot for certain zones there is a density bonus for Section 7.3 projects. An Overlay District will be required to be established just as any other district is established in the City through presentation to the Zoning Board. To change the map there is a Public Hearing, etc. It could be initiated by various entities. This is different than a Local Historic District. The overlay works within the Zoning Code.
7. Next question: *Ralph said he thinks it will be a good idea to add historic definitions which may not be clear now.*
8. Next question: *Adjacency to a historic building.* A 100 ft. buffer has been created. A historic project has to be within that limit. One-hundred feet is the furthest extent that the historic section of the Zoning Code might apply. It can also be across the street. Then it will be subject to historic plan review.
9. Next question: *Clarification of site plan review for new buildings on the same site as a historic structure.* Ralph will look at this.



10. Next question: *Elena suggested creating a score sheet for historic buildings.* Ralph thought the proposal was interesting but does not know where to implement that at this time. Elena also noted that Section 7.3 often works better in smaller structures in tighter neighborhoods. Ralph will wait for the parking study to come back. Based on the data, they can revisit those issues of using Section 7.3 in other areas where parking interfaces with historic buildings and increased density. Elena and Ralph also asked who will establish standards for historic structures and such a rating system.
11. Next question: *Protection of views and landscapes.* Ralph said that issue does need to be better defined. Ralph was concerned about view sheds. They need to go back to drawing board to define those. View of a historic building is important. We do not want a new structure to block views of important City buildings. Ralph added view corridors will need more research.
12. Next question: *Requested use changes to a building or historic structure. What does HPAC have to do with the requested uses?* Ralph noted that if a building only has a change of use, it probably will not come before HPAC but will be subject to the underlying district uses. Approval by the Zoning Board will still be required.
13. New question about procedure. Ralph wants to make it as easy as possible and simplify the application process. And, what will the fee be for the application? Fees are determined by the Board of Representatives. Ralph will need to submit an ordinance.
14. Next question: *Anne asked about demolition protections.* We have 180 days to delay by filing an objection. Even if there may be alternatives, after 180 days, a property can still come down. Can we add an option so an applicant may get a pass, rather than waiting out the period? Ralph stated that proving there is no feasible alternative would be the only way to pass. Next question: *Anne asked about easements and the definitions.* Ralph said the easements are required to be reported on Land Records before an owner can get a Certificate of Occupancy. This provides permanent protection.
15. In conclusion, Ralph will let HPAC know if the Law Department has any changes after their review. All thanked Ralph for attending and answering the important questions.

(The item was Tabled without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

B. ZBA Application #004-20 - 296 Hubbard Avenue

Applicant: Owner

Participants: Rudy Ridberg, Architect for the owners.

Presented: Rudy Ridberg presented the project.

1. Rudy noted this property is in the Historic District. They are proposing to extend second floor and add a dormer and gables to the existing roof line. Most of the houses in the area are two or two & one-half stories. This may be the only small cape left in the neighborhood. Will maintain the two trees in front. They will rebuild the back deck and make a new entrance with a new deck.
2. Anne asked what the siding will be. Rudy said they will use a product like Hardie-Plank or shingles. They will use Anderson windows. David asked if the project is "as-of right." Rudy noted there is a



variance for a non-conforming front set back. The ground floor is a few feet closer to the road than what is allowed now in the code. They are seeking a variance where the front roof and small bit of 2nd floor area is added above the first story roof line. It will align with the existing ground floor.

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All agreed to support the project.

(A motion was made by E. Kalman and seconded by R. Shannonhouse and carried unanimously)

IV. Old Business

A. SHPO Public Presentation - Wednesday, February 25, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Presented: Anne recommended everyone should attend. HPAC is a stake holder.

(The item was Tabled without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

V. Adjournment

A. Goslin adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m. (There was no further discussion)

Drafted by: David W. Woods AIA, Secretary
February 14, 2020
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday March 3, 2020 in the **Board of Finance Conference Room - 4th Floor.**

NOTE Added February 27, 2020: The meeting scheduled for March 3, 2020 has been cancelled.