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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

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

Date: Regular Meeting held: March 6, 2018
Location: 6th Floor Safety Training Room
Stamford Government Center
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, CT 06904
Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh.
Alternate: Rebecca Shannonhouse,

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:10 p.m.)

A motion was made to have R. Shannonhouse sit in as a voting member for this meeting to make a full number of 5 Commissioners.

(The motion was moved by D. Woods and seconded by A. Goslin and carried unanimously)

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2017 meeting. There were no changes to the minutes noted.

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by A. Goslin and carried unanimously)

III. New Business

There was no new business on the agenda.

IV. Old Business

A. Review and Comments on CT DOT Bridges

Cedar Heights Bridge

Participants: Lynn Drobbin

1. Lynn noted that Mark McMillan provided some information in February of 2018. He also sent the adverse effect letter. He also sent the draft of the MOA for HPAC to review and add their requests for mitigation. He wants HPAC to sign the MOA. Lynn reviewed our notes from the last meeting. There are a few points that were discussed as follows:
 - New plaque text to be reviewed by HPAC is included.
 - Make sure language on the plaque will be reviewed by HPAC.
 - HPAC also asked to review stone work. Prior to construction.
 - HPAC has asked to review the design documents; and
 - Review of a mock up or the first instillation of the stone work is also requested.



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2. The MOA makes the note that the existing plaque will be restored. It should be installed on the bridge adjacent to the new plaque.
3. Lynn wants to make sure there is also the request that CT DOT submit a HABS type document with the history of the bridge. The document should be distributed to the public. A copy is to be placed at Ferguson Library and HNP, and other archive locations as may be important to SHPO or the city's engineering department.
4. Lynn asked to add a note that the interpretive sign be reviewed and located by the City Engineering Department, with HPAC overview.
5. Lynn noted that for the Main Street Lenticular bridge, HPAC has asked for an interpretive sign as well. The standard for these signs should be established by the City.
6. Lynn will add these changes to the MOA and forward to CT DOT.

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

Bridge at Route 137 over Rippowam River

Participants: Lynn Drobbin

1. Lynn noted that this "bridge" is the culvert near the Merritt Parkway. HPAC did review it at the meeting in November with Mr. McMillan. In the CT DOT report is listed as having no adverse effect. All were generally in agreement. Lynn added that it is not historic.

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

B. Review of Modified Text Amendment

Adaptive Reuse and Redevelopment of Office Parks

High Ridge Park Campus - Lifetime Fitness Proposal

Participants: Lynn Drobbin and Anne Goslin

1. L. Drobbin and A. Goslin noted the proposed Text Amendment that is currently before the Planning Board has been revised since HPAC commented on the first application. All generally agreed that it is important for HPAC to provide comment again.
2. There was broad discussion and the changes are generally as noted here:
 - Changes redefined a "cultural recreation establishment."
 - The setbacks have changed. Planning requested a 100-foot setback rather than the applicant's 50-foot setback as indicated in their preliminary site plans.



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- The term “Adaptive Reuse and Redevelopment” - It was noted that in the latest version they are just using term “redevelopment”.
 - The term “Compatible Design” - Comments may have been changed from the prior Text Change application. It is hard to tell if there is additional definition of what “compatible design” means.
3. Lynn has asked Vineeta Mathur, with the Zoning Board, about the latest version of the Text Change. She wanted to be sure that HPAC has it. Lynn noted that the date of the next meeting is March 20, 2018 and HPAC comments were requested from the Land Use Bureau by March 14, 2018. There was some discussion that HPAC should provide a new letter and restate the points that were in the first letter. All are still in agreement with the points that are already stated. Some requested that the language should be more direct or “stronger” in the new letter. Anne offered to draft the new letter and send a draft around to the group in advance of the March 14, 2018 deadline.
 4. The points that were discussed are the following. These were generally agreed by all.
 - HPAC does not support the planned changes to the text.
 - HPAC supports the historical significance of High Ridge Office Park.
 - HPAC is concerned that the Text Change sets a bad precedent for changes to other office parks with the same zone designation.
 - There is a note that the design shall be “compatible” with features of the existing property. It was agreed that this is hard to determine or monitor after the Text Changes are granted
 5. Jill Smyth suggested that the Text Change language may still not be in line with the Master Plan. Lynn also noted that she thinks the Planning Board is trying to add some language about “compatibility” so Text Changes for office parks can be supported by HPAC. David noted that it is very difficult to determine what is “compatible.” It is subjective term. There will be many opinions of what is compatible design. Lynn said that the City may be looking to HPAC to determine if a design proposal is compatible. David further said that will be nearly impossible for HPAC to do this.
 6. Lynn also proposed that the language on “compatibility” should reference the National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines. Jill said that the developers and the writers of the Text Change will want to make the point that the structures at High Ridge Park are not “registered “ now, so that compatibility is not required, or that it will be hard to use federal historic standards with this site. All generally agreed that it will be hard to administer. The discussion concluded with giving Anne some leeway with putting language in the letter to the Planning Board. It was agreed that a draft will be reviewed this week.



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A motion was made to authorize Anne to write the response and review it electronically over the next few days.

(The motion was moved by B. Hersh and seconded by D. Woods, and carried unanimously)

C. South End Study Progress Report

Participants: Barry Hersh

1. Barry noted that he does not have an update. He said there will be another meeting on Monday, March 19, 2018 and he cannot attend. He asked if others can fill in for him. There was no offer. Barry will check with the Planning Department about progress. Jill reported that the consultant team has been working on it. They came to the last NRZ meeting. They are still gathering information and input from the community.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

D. Other items

Hubbard Heights Signage

Participants: Michael DeMilt, Chairperson of the Hubbard Heights Association (HHA)

1. Michael provided an update on the signs for Hubbard Heights. They want to put historic district signage on the City's street name markers. Michael said it is City grant time again and they want to apply for funds. The City has a neighborhood grant program. The sign changes are something that can be done slowly throughout the Hubbard Heights district, depending on how much money they can get.
2. The proposed change is to have the district designation in small letters across a black strip over the street name. The sign name is proposed to be in "brown" as is the standard for historic districts. All generally agreed that the brown color is good and hope the City will allow this.
3. Michael further said they do not have prices on the cost of the suggested signage. There are probably 50 signs. They will try to get a grant to cover most of the cost. He also said there may be some contributions to the HHA. If the grant covers the fabrication and installation then it may have a better chance of passing. It will be determined later how many signs will be done in the first phase. Barry thinks that Hubbard Heights may want to start with their elected representative. He also said that HHA should contact the Mayor. He will probably be receptive.



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4. David asked if HHA is looking for HPAC to provide a letter of support for the signs or an endorsement. Michael said a letter will help with the grant application. Most were generally in agreement that some historic text on the top of the street designations is good and there is a good precedent in other historic districts. Jill said it is used in many historic districts.

There was a motion that HPAC supports the neighborhood association proposal for adding text to the street signs as well as the use of the brown color to designate the district. Anne agreed to write the letter.

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by B. Hersh, and carried unanimously)

V. Adjournment

Lynn Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Drafted by: David Woods - March 14, 2018

Secretary: Stamford, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 p.m. in the 6th Floor Safety Training Room. The next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2018.