



CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD
P.O. Box 10152
STAMFORD, CT 06904 -2152

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

Date: Regular Meeting held: May 2, 2017
Location: Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Blvd., Stamford, CT 06901
6th Floor Safety Training Room
Present: Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse. Elena Kalman

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:05)

A motion was made to request that R. Shannonhouse and Elena Kalman serve as voting members for the meeting.

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

II Approval of Minutes

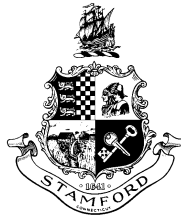
A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 4th meeting.

(The motion was moved by A. Goslin and seconded by R. Shannonhouse and carried unanimously.)

III. New Business

A. Review of sale agreement for Pacific St. Firehouse

1. The project was introduced by A. Goslin. She said HPAC was sent draft of the agreement that was written for the purchase and sale of the building to BLT. The draft was distributed to HPAC for review.
2. A. Goslin says that in her review it lacks an easement to preserve the facade. An easement should insure that it will remain. B. Hersh agreed about the point of the easement. E. Kalman asked if the project will be required to be restored according to the secretary of the interior standards?
3. Jill Smyth of HNP said that the secretary standards are not included in the agreement. The group needs to be sure that the building will not be demolished. There also needs to be some statement about stabilizing the building so it will not be damaged by neglect before the new owner take possession. There needs to be some agreement that it will be stabilized. Maybe use a dollar value for the work in the agreement. Or, there needs to be a requirement that the owner stabilize it within 90 days of signing the agreement
4. Renee Kahn of HNP also added that that in the event they agree that it is not restorable they should then agree that it should be offered for sale to a person that will restore it. Mark Diamond of HNP also believes that the contract is unusual because it allows the purchaser to do nothing. He added that there is nothing that safeguards the building. He further noted that it says that the seller has no obligation to maintain or stabilize the building after the contract and before the delivery of the deed. He asked, why doesn't it say that the purchaser is responsible for stabilizing the building? It does not say the buyer has any obligation.



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 2

5. J. Smyth says that it is up to the Zoning Board to review renovation plans that may mean that nothing may be done.
6. Ed Czesck said that he looked at a land swap deal to try to obtain the property and has had resistance from the city. He does not want to see it crumble. He wants to use to store his company excavation equipment etc. He believes that he can maintain it. He wants to see if there is a contact at the city so he can view the building. He also wants to see the contract. All said that the contract language may be available from the city.
7. D. Woods said that there may be allot of work needed to stabilize the building. He said there will probably be hazardous materials. The roof stabilization may be more complicated that just putting a roof over the existing. Jill added that the 90 day request is to get the stabilization "started". She does not expect that the maintenance work should be completed in 90 days.
8. A motion was discussed that A. Goslin will provide a memo/letter to Ralph Blessing at COS noting the HPAC review of the contract and that additions to the contract should be: (a) The building needs to have a preservation easement; (b) The building needs to be "mothballed" or stabilized; and (c) There should be a stipulation that if restoration will not be provided by the owner then the building should be offered for sale to another party and the contract is voided. E. Kalman also suggested that there be a time limit for initial stabilization.

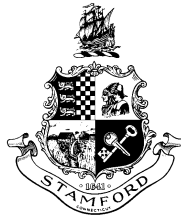
All generally agreed that the letter should include the three points that include the importance of stabilization and the major points that are needed to strengthen contract.

(The motion was made by B. Hersh and seconded by A. Goslin and carried unanimously)

B. Hubbard Heights signage

Participants: Lina Minelli, Rebecca Shannonhouse, of Hubbard Heights

1. The project was introduced by L. Minelli. The committee has come up with a final design and a place for three initial signs. The proposed sign will be 18" x 24" and it will be dark brown with gold or silver painted letters. It will be cast aluminum. Lina added the first order for the signs will cost about \$1,300.
2. The group generally discussed that that the sign should state that it is listed by the National Register. They will look at the text and they may replace the text: "the United States Department of the Interior", with the text, "as listed on the National Register of Historic Places". David added that the Association should double check to be sure that the phrase or title: "on the national register", is the official language of the neighborhood historic designation.
3. R. Shannonhouse asked if there is an issue of a logo? She thought it was presented before. All generally agreed that a logo is not needed. Rebecca also asked if HPAC has a requirement that the sign be coordinated with others in town, now or in the future. All generally agreed that they do not need to coordinate it with other neighborhoods.



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 3

4. The locations will be at Bridge and Hubbard. The next will be at West Broad, where you make a turn onto Hubbard. The third will be in front of the Beacon School. The Hubbard association will continue to look at, and finalize locations.

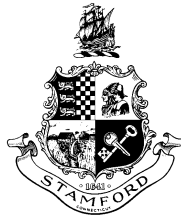
A motion was made that HPAC should agree with the proposed design sign as designed and will support the Hubbard Heights Association in finalizing the language, including checking the language on "National Register listing" and the placement of the signs.

(The motion was made by A. Goslin and seconded by E. Kalman and carried unanimously)

C. Demolition Ordinance, assistance request.

Participants: Lisa Feinberg and Jay Klein of Carmody, Torrance, Sandak, & Hennessey.

1. The existing demo ordinance was introduced by J. Klein. He said they have studied the ordinance in their office and have come up with some suggestions and changes to the language. There are two primary goals: (a) to avoid unintended consequences of the demo delay and the filing requirements; and (b) make sure the ordinance is true to its intended purpose.
2. He noted that there have been some consequences. He has three case studies. Those are first: 64 Sunnyside Ave. This is an industrial building more than 50 years old. The client wanted to open a new factory. The site complied with zoning. They wanted to demolish the front corner to make room for parking. It was subject to the 20 day appeal period to filing. Someone did appeal. It was an individual competitor to the proposed owner that wanted to delay the project.
3. The second example is at 483 West Main St. It has been used as a Mattress store. The city needed to widen the street to alleviate traffic issues. That required that a corner be shaved off. He said that this could have been delayed by any individual, but there was no "delay" filed and the city's work proceeded.
4. The Third example is a multifamily "house" at 251 Gray Rock Place. It is in the shadows of the high rises downtown. The person (resident) that was selling was having difficulty with money and health. It was also in the historic survey of the Gray Rock district. The individual could not afford to stay in the home and a delay to the demo caused a hardship on the owner. The person that filed the objection wanted more affordable housing. There was also no information on who that "objecting" person was.
5. They propose changes to the demo ordinance that will help to prevent these things from happening in the future. The changes are not scheduled for a public hearing and this is just an information review and discussion session. This is an opening of the dialogue about the need for changes.
6. Jay went through line by line items with special note of a few issued of importance to HPAC:
 - a. Definitions of structure. There are some definitions such as "stone walls" that they propose removing.



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 4

- b. Notification of a demo request should be sent to “adjacent neighbors” and should not be required to be sent to owners within 300 ft. They say this is a standard that is too difficult for some owners, and is a hardship.
 - c. Mailings or notifications are required by "certified mail receipts", Jay says this is an old requirement and a “certificate of mailing” is a simpler process and is not difficult for owners, and it costs less.
 - d. Jay noted that there is an issue about “who” should be allowed to object. They noted that anyone can file a delay, even a non-resident or a competing business. They propose that a resident of the city or a listed historic commission association etc., or a government entity should be the only entities that are allowed to file a delay.
 - e. They are proposing that the age standard of 50 years for a building that must notify for the intent to demolish should be removed. They further suggest that the standard should be a “listed” property or a property within a listed neighborhood.
 - f. The length of a delay request filing is proposed to be 90 days. The ordinance is currently 180 days. Jay noted that the language is confusing and needs to be cleaned up because it currently allows a person to file a second delay for a “historic structure” for an additional 90 days. Jay will look this section over again to check the language. He then corrected the statement to say that they do not want to reduce the time from 180 days. They just want to delete the section that allows for a second request for delay. More work is needed to review this.
7. There was some general discussion. HPAC was generally not in favor of the changes suggested. Lisa Feinberg also proposed that there should be an appeals process added to the ordinance. All generally thought that an appeals process might be of some value. Some items are noted here. There will be ongoing discussion of these points:
- a. Many of the changes proposed can be solved by building department administrative procedure revisions.
 - b. The demo ordinance should not be weakened by reducing the delay periods. The 180 days are frequently taken into account by developers that can file early, and wait out the time period. Time is needed to do the research on important properties. Time is also needed to do research for property that was not previously recognized by historic standards.
 - c. Lisa noted that there should be a city wide master list of historic properties. Delays and notifications would not be required as everyone would know what the important properties or structures are. All agreed that this is an impractical request. It is too hard to document all the properties or structures in town that have value.



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 5

- d. The group generally does not see the issue of hardship in the three cases that were presented. They noted that a delay can be lifted at any time by the filing party. The issue of who can file for a permit does not cause an undue hardship.
- e. The initial filing period and delay period is too short as it is, to allow time to do the research needed.
- f. The definitions should not be removed, such as the item of stone walls. They are important to the community.

As this was a preliminary and general review of suggested changes to the ordinance, there was no motion from HPAC members.

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

IV. Old Business

A. Devon John Davenport House

A. Goslin noted that the owner plans to put the house back on the market. It is understood that the owner will not file for the demolition, and is open to tax credits and other options. She is not going to tear it down. She does plan to do some landscaping including repair of the stone walls.

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

B. Jonas White House, MLS Listing

A. Goslin said that this is an old house that is up for sale. It dates to 1775. Lynn said that HPAC may want to work with realtors to assist them in understanding when there is an older valuable house on the market. This one may have been for sale for a few years.

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

C. South End Historic District Transportation Study

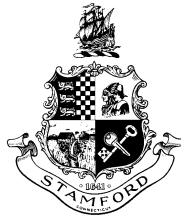
B. Hersh was involved with the review of proposals and the selection process with the city. There were some 15 submittals. The city had very good choices. The city has not released the results as of this meeting date.

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

D. South End National Register Historic District, BLT Redevelopment

A. Goslin said there is no report or changes at this time.

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



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 6

E. City Bridge Projects update

A. Goslin said there is no report or changes at this time.

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

F. Demolition committee update

D. Woods said there have been a few demo requests that were not sent around for review. There are no further notices to report or other changes at this time.

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

G. Historic Neighborhood Surveys in Stamford progress

A. Goslin noted there is nothing new. Surveys are ongoing.

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

D. Other items of note

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

V. Adjournment

Ms. Anne Goslin adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Drafted by: David W. Woods AIA - Secretary - May 26, 2017
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 will be Tuesday, June 6, 2017.