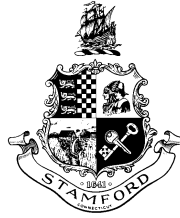


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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: December 6, 2016
Location: Stamford City Hall, 888 Washington Blvd., Stamford CT 06901
6th Floor Safety Training Room
Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse, Lynn Villency Cohen, Elena Kalman

REGULAR MEETING

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

A motion was made to request that R. Shannonhouse serve as voting member for the meeting, as the Commission has just 4 voting members.

(The motion was moved by Barry Hersh and seconded by Lynn Drobbin and carried unanimously.)

II Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the November meeting.

The following correction was requested by R. Shannonhouse to edit the text of a correction to the October minutes. She asked that we update prior notes on the issue of federal credits available. She has done some research that federal credits can be granted for both "hard and soft" costs and the state credits are for "hard costs" only. The correction is noted here and is not required to be revised in the October minutes.

(The motion was moved by Barry Hersh and seconded by Lynn Drobbin and carried unanimously.)

III. New Business

A. City Sale of Property 165 Haig Street, City of Stamford Civil Defense Building

Participants: Michael Handler of COS, Rick Peterson representing the Civil Defense Building, Lawrence Davidoff of Davidoff Realty, an interested party of the building, and Jill Smyth, HNP Executive Director

1. Mr. Petersen introduced his past relationship to the building. He said the building closed circa 1992. Civil Defense is essentially now Homeland Security. Rick requested that a plaque be placed on the property or the building if it is sold or demolished. M. Handler added that the City is pursuing selling the building or tearing it down. HPAC can forward the request for a plaque to the City.



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2. M. Handler went on to explain that the property is residentially zoned. The City has an interest in selling the property including the building. The City is also looking at selling a number of other parcels that are adjacent and nearby. COS has done some research finding that the building is not on listed on a state or federal registry. The City is looking to HPAC for guidance on what to do with the building. He said it is in "tough" shape. There are volumes of books - old COS records - stored in the building. There may also be Heath Department and land records. The books, soggy and wet in some areas, need to be saved by the City and stored in another location. The City will be responsible for getting the books out, but does not have a location right now. Mike would like HPAC to determine if it is a historic structure. If HPAC suggests that it should be taken down then the City can also pursue that. The City intends to have a bid "auction sale" as they have done for other projects.
3. L. Davidoff said that if it is sold then it should be done with an RFP process. The only way it can be saved is if there is zoning and neighborhood support. He noted that the property could be used for residential. He has taken other contractors through the building. He says that if there is a way to save it, then HPAC should support it. The interior is plaster and in bad shape. He thinks that the building can be split in the middle and made into two units. L. Davidoff said that there should be some bonuses or density additions granted by the Zoning Board that can help save the building. His concern is that the bonuses do not go far enough to help save older buildings. He believes public uses will not be able to come up with the money to save and restore the structure.
4. Elena asked what the square footage is. There was an old note that it is about 5,500 Sq. Ft., including the basement. The exact square footage will need to be confirmed. The lot may be under two acres. There would also be issues with the remaining parcel of land. A study needs to be done to see if there is enough land to divide it into residential lots. And if there is an RFP for the adjacent lots, then the proposals will probably be for single family residential structures.
5. D. Woods asked if the City has done a study to see if the building could have a public use. Mike said no; it doesn't want to do studies until there is some direction on saving the building. Lynn said that the City is asking HPAC to determine if the building should be saved. There is also a question if a protective easement should be placed on the building? Should there be an incentive of some sort added to the sale option?
6. B. Hersh asked what the process is. Mike said the City will undertake a closed bid auction. They have appraisals and they will set a minimum bid. He said that COS will consider if the buyers should take the responsibility for the abatement, or should the City complete it before the sale. But before they do that, the City still needs to determine if the building should be saved.
7. D. Woods noted that he has some concern that the City is asking HPAC to provide a report or extensive evaluation that should probably be done by an outside consultant. He noted that HPAC does not have the manpower to provide such a report. HPAC also cannot evaluate the environmental or contamination issues that may be with the building. All



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generally agreed that HPAC can only offer an “opinion” of the value (or merit) of the building as it is now. David also said that he thinks the City should pursue evaluation of hazardous materials as soon as possible. Mike responded that the City will not do that until they have some opinion if the building should be saved or not. They do not want to evaluate hazards until they know if the building will be demolished. David stated that the responsibility for abatement should be with the City regardless of whether the building is restored or demolished. Mike did not agree with that. He said they (COS) may still ask a developer to do the abatement, if they are the winning bidder.

Jill Smyth said she has taken a brief look at the building. She thinks it is dated later than the 1920s and may have been built in the 1930s. The Springdale Neighborhood Association may have some interest in the building. It was noted that most of the members of HNP have not seen the building yet.

M. Handler explained again that COS is just asking HPAC to provide an opinion of the merit of the building. D. Woods noted his concern that the group may not be able to provide a level of analysis that the City is looking for. Such analysis should be done by a professional under a paid study.

All generally agreed there should first be a HPAC site visit to the building and it should be scheduled so the group can give a general opinion to the City at the next meeting date in January. A. Goslin also said that she will check on the history at the Historical Society. D. Woods asked M. Handler if the discussion can be tabled until the next meeting in early January. He said yes.

(The item was tabled until a walk-through of the building can be scheduled with the City. Review of status will be on going.)

IV. Old Business

A. South End Historic District Transportation Study, RFP Review

1. J. Smyth and HNP noted that they have made comments on the RFP. B. Hersh has made his comments and reviewed them with David Woods (COS). Barry noted that the City should put out an RFP and select a proper consultant. The State DOT still needs to review it. Jill also said that HNP still has some problems with it. There is not enough language for historic evaluations to be made as a part of the study. Jill will send a copy of their comments to HPAC for review.
2. Jill said that the City of Stamford (COS) will put out the RFP sometime soon but they are still waiting for DOT notes. This may happen in January. Jill also noted that HNP and HPAC should be on the selection committee. L. Drobbin will review that with COS. Lynn will draft a letter supporting HNP review comments on the RFP. All generally agreed.

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



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B. South End National Register Historic District, BLT Redevelopment

J. Smyth said that they are still discussing the reuse of various buildings with BLT. They still have concern about the Blickensdorfer Building and the Henry Street residential buildings.

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

C. South End Fire House, Pending Sale to BLT

J. Smyth said that there is no new news on the project. The sale is still pending with BLT. Jill thinks that there was preservation language included with the sale language but has not seen it. Lynn suggested that HPAC send an e-mail to the City to see what has happened.

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

D. Cedar Heights Bridge - Revisions

L. Drobbin noted that there was an email from Paul Gionotti stating that the public hearing scheduled for December will be delayed. The email was distributed to HPAC members. CT DOT noted that it needs to look more closely at the hydraulics of the bridge and stream. It is on hold at this time. Lynn will inform everyone when she hears an update.

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

E. Sacred Heart, School and Barn Updates

D. Woods said there is no new information about the barn and/or the school building and there has been no contact with Perkins Eastman about their progress.

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

F. Hoyt Barnum House Update

B. Hersh noted that the two halves of the house have been put back together. There is no indication that they will meet their target for completion before Christmas. Many questioned if the grades and the height of the foundation are correct. It was assumed that they are. It was also assumed that the restoration work will take a number of months and the grading and landscape work will be done in the spring. The protection of the roof over the winter was also questioned, without resolution.

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



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G. Atlantic Street PO – Tax Credit Update

L. Drobbin noted that she heard that SHPO is reviewing the Part III Tax Act application. E. Kalman said that she understands that the tax application has been sent in, but does not have any further information.

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

H. Demolition Committee

1. D. Woods noted that the demo request for 251 Grey Rock Place was sent to HPAC members for review. There is an assumption that it is a contributing structure to the downtown historic district. The building appears to have many additions and is in fair shape. It is located in the downtown and the neighborhood has been built up around this older “house” structure. David asked if the group would like to place a demo delay on the building. It can still be done in the next two days.
2. J. Smyth asked about the original question from D. Woods about the time frame for a demo delay to be filed. It appeared that that City had rushed this demo notice and response time to be faster than normal. Jill said that she thinks the timing was correct and will forward a copy of demo ordinance.
3. Lynn said that she does not know if a delay is appropriate for this building. She noted that there are several unsympathetic additions, vinyl siding and a loss of historic context for it in the neighborhood. Anne asked if HPAC should request the owner to contact Urban Miners to ask if it would be interested in salvaging any historic material. It was agreed that Anne could suggest this to the owner. Lynn made the motion that HPAC should not object to the demolition. All generally agreed.

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by R. Shannonhouse and carried unanimously.)

I. Historic Neighborhood Surveys

A. Goslin said the Rachel Carley is working on the Glenbrook survey. J. Smyth added that Wes suggested that she should look at the Phillips area and some others. A HNP group is looking into suggestions for other potential districts to review. HNP may also ask Rachel to get involved with an East Main Street area survey.

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



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J. Land Use Bureau Applications

Anne Goslin did not have any new items to report

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

K. Other Items of Note

Barry Hersh said that he had a few items. He said that the Cove Island Park clam shed is almost done and it looks good.

Barry also said he had a chat with the new Land Use Bureau Chief, Ralph Blessing, who asked a few questions as noted here. What are the main goals of HPAC? He also asked what tools HPAC has for preserving buildings, such as incentives?

Rebecca asked if there has been any discussion about special historic style street signage for the historic districts. All generally noted that Stamford does not have much at all, and it should be considered for the future.

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

V. Adjournment

Ms. L. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Drafted by: David W. Woods AIA secretary – December 20, 2016
Stamford, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 p.m. in the 6th Floor Safety Training room. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 10, 2017.