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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: November 1, 2016  
Location: Stamford City Hall, 888 Washington Blvd. Stamford CT 06901  
6th Floor Safety Training Room  
Present: Lynn Drobbin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman, Rebecca Shannonhouse, (missing), Anne Goslin, Lynn Villency Cohen

**REGULAR MEETING**

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

A motion was made to call R. Shannonhouse and E. Kalman to serve as voting members for the meeting, in place of Jill Smyth who has stepped down, and A. Goslin, who was absent.

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

**II Approval of Minutes**

L. Drobbin asked if there are any corrections to the October 4th minutes. R. Shannonhouse noted that on Page 4, the last sentence under Atlantic St. PO, state credits should be noted to include both hard and "soft costs." The words: "and soft costs" will be added.

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the October meeting with this change:

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin seconded by D. Woods, and carried unanimously),

**III. New Business**

**A. HNP CEPA Action Against BLT**

Participants: Jill Smyth, HNP executive Director, Wes Haynes of HNP.

1. The background for the CEPA action was introduced by J. Smyth. She noted there are five houses posted for demolition at Henry and Garden Streets in the South End. The demolition delay was running out on the Henry Street houses. HNP started a CEPA action in the summer and in October there was a presentation to the CT State Council. After the presentation, BLT met with residents and discussed how the properties can be saved. BLT has withdrawn the demo request. The city has also told BLT that going forward they need to review their intentions before the demo starts at the sites and before requests are made. W. Haynes said BLT is now in the process of evaluating these properties. He also noted there is good economic incentive to keep all the buildings.
2. Lynn asked if BLT will try to move their development to other adjacent sites. Wes said no; they can still get about 300 units on the sites and keep the buildings.



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3. The CT Trust is doing initial evaluations of the properties along with HNP. They will also do a quick review of unit density options. SHPO will keep this on their agenda every month while the review is taking place. The studies are moving forward at this time. HNP has not seen the resulting information yet. They will keep HPAC informed as they proceed.

It was determined that there was no need for a motion at this time as this was an information presentation only. No action is required.

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

#### **IV. Old Business**

##### **A. Cedar Heights Bridge Project Update**

Participants are: Brian Jecker, of engineering firm Dewberry. Domenic Tramontozzi, of COS Engineering.

1. Lynn Drobbin introduced the project. She noted there are some revisions to previous review and approvals many months ago. B. Jecker, from Dewberry, is here to update the commission. Lynn said the bridge is circa 1930's. It is a stone arch bridge. There was a prior report that this bridge is eligible for listing.
2. B. Jecker said there was an application for funding several years ago. There is some more coordination that is required because of the federal funding. The bridge is rated as "poor condition" at #49. Federal government will provide funding for projects with a number below 50-"at risk category."
3. Dewberry has brought the project up to 30% preliminary design. They want to use a steel beam structure, encased in concrete similar to the original. They want to talk about the span arrangement. It is a constrained site. There is private property and a pump station adjacent. The original design for the replacement bridge is a 24 ft.-long span. Hydraulically it works. They want to add a sidewalk. For the first proposal, the alignment with the road is the same as the existing. This design is with a 24 ft. span and is evaluated to handle a 10 year storm. This is better than the existing bridge.
4. A new option is to build a 26-ft. span. This will allow the bridge to align closer to stream orientation. If they do that, they can make it a 25 year "peak flow" bridge. If they make it wider they can make it have even more flood protection. The concern is also that they will need to do other flood protection measures upstream and downstream to handle a larger peak flow. These trade-offs will need to be reviewed and approved by the community and neighbors. They intend to have a public information meeting in December. They have not spoken to the neighbors yet.
5. Brian noted the design will have a stone veneer. They will replicate as many of the original features as possible including the stone wing walls, piers and parapet walls. A 42" high parapet is required as a part of the required hand rail heights. They have not developed that detail yet. There are some neighboring properties that are close by that will see the lower sections of the bridge.



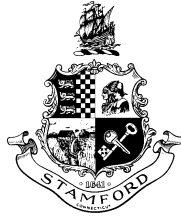
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6. E. Kalman said that she sees two issues. One is the size of the bridge. The other is that they need to do much more with the design work and evaluate the stream issues before decisions can be made. She noted she would like to see more detail of the parapet and the railing. The aluminum rails may not look right. She is not as concerned with the profile of the arch that is only seen below the bridge. She asked what is a long term benefit for the neighbors and issues that they might have with the hydraulics/flooding. Brian noted that they will seek right of ways for any improvements that are made to the stream flow.
7. L. Casolo of COS engineering said they always need to look at the hydraulic impacts upstream and downstream. They will look at the hundred year storm. Brian noted the hundred year floodway review will not change the design that much. There is not much difference between a 25 year storm and a 100 year storm. They said that the bridge proposal for the 26-ft. span is the largest that can fit on the site. There is concern about the neighbors and the easements for that work on the stream.
8. Lynn said she is hesitant to review the bridge as it has such an important impact on the neighbors. HPAC does not want to make a recommendation. It should be the property owners that have the most input in regards to the design. She said that once they go to the community, they can come back to the commission for additional review and confirmation of the design materials.
9. Lou further noted that the budget is about 2.3 million. The funding is about 80% federal and 20% city.
10. The commission generally agreed that the original stones should be used as much as possible. Brian noted that with a bigger bridge design they may not have enough stone and may need new stone to fill in.. It will be difficult to match. D. Woods said that they should use the original stone and fill in with a stone that is as close as possible. Stone has natural variations and a range of color is OK. Form liner was not recommended for the new stone,
11. Judy Norinsky added that all the safety and hydraulic issues are very important. The bridge is historic in this setting. It is one of a number of reinforced concrete bridges in Stamford that were made to look old with natural stone. She thinks it is important to keep an arch shape. She also thinks it is best to keep as much of the original stone as possible.

It was noted that the public review meeting will be in the middle of December. COS will send an alert email with the exact date. **(Update: As of 11/8/16. The public review meeting was scheduled for November 17, 2016)**

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



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**B. Sacred Heart (Classroom Building and Star Barn) update**

Participants are Joe Banks Perkins Eastman, Lou Casolo COS Engineering, J. Smyth of HNP

1. J. Banks handed out a hard copy of the cottages report. He presented the list of improvements and review issues that he is asking HPAC to consider. This is a review of the walk through that took place a few weeks ago with D. Woods and J. Smyth.
2. He said that the School is open. There has been some rearrangement of the site for traffic. They are working on CD's for the two additions and for the barn. They have contacted SHPO. They will need a sign off from the state for the approval to bid the work. The schedule is to have a review set of the docs ready soon. There is an outside 3rd party reviewer that needs to sign off, as a part of the city and state requirements.
3. J. Banks discussed the barn first. They found considerable structural degradation. They removed most of the finishes on the interior. There are indications that the barn was added onto (to the south, in the width of the building). They removed some portions of the floor around the perimeter to see the conditions of the sill beams on all outside walls. Elena asked if the intention is to keep the building listed. All agreed - yes. D. Woods noted that any comments they have will be subject to Department of Interior and state review. The commission does not intend to jeopardize the landmark status. National Park Service standards will rule.
4. J. Banks of Perkins Eastman (PE) handed out the bullet point list for all to consider. The issues are presented for HPAC review and are on the PE handout.
  - a. Replace decayed roofing material. He suggests using plywood sheathing with cedar shingles above that. They have a concern with warranties and long term durability of cedar. There may be options to use a composite shake material in place of cedar. PE will consider options. A composite "shake" can be better durability and still look the same as the original.
  - b. Augment existing rafters at the roof. They want to sister rafters where needed and add insulation to the cavity. They will consider acoustic options for the ceilings. (Some comments noted below)
  - c. Augment the exterior wall construction by adding an interior stud wall with insulation. D. Woods asked Joe if he can take a look at this wall using wood studs. He also asked PE to review if this is a structural wall. It will not fall on the foundation. It may not be assisting the exterior wall framing. He also asked to reconsider the space between the existing framing and the new insulated wall. There is concern that space will be lost in the room if the wall is too big. David expressed concern that the added inside wall is over-engineered and may cause other detail issues to add costs to the project.



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- e. Remove and number existing exterior sheathing and add plywood and then replace sheathing in-kind. D. Woods said that adding the sheathing on the outside may work. He asked PE to consider using a “rain screen” air gap detail using a ventilation mesh over the WRB and plywood layers. Joe said that the wall will expand by an inch. Most expressed concern with expanding the outside wall. It was noted that the details at junctions and at the brackets will need to be considered. Most want PE to return with their details and direction.
  - f. Existing sill beams to be replaced where damaged or aged. (No comments)
  - g. Strengthen existing steel beams and girders (No comments)
  - h. Existing wood floor in open area to be retained and replaced with new boards to match. Joe noted there is an area of stamped concrete that will not be removed. (No comments)
  - i. Windows will be replaced with “clad” exterior and wood interior. PE wants to use a clad product with the ability to place muntins to match the original. The group recommended using a true divided lite. Joe also noted they do not intend to make new openings along the 5th St. elevation. All generally agreed.
  - j. Doors on the eastern side will be revised slightly to allow for a handicapped entrance and code exiting. (No comments)
  - k. The building will be sprinklered. (No comments)
  - l. Note: There was also some discussion about the ceiling finishes. D. Woods suggested using horizontal boards below the new insulation with battens placed over the top to look like the roof rafters of the barn construction. The horizontal boards can also be spaced with some acoustic liner in between the spaces. This may help the acoustics and still look like barn framing. PE will explore this option. The same details may be used on side walls.
5. Joe also asked the group to review some outstanding issues with the 1925 classroom building. He did not have time to go through the entire list. The list is repeated here from the hand out. There was some discussion about the exterior wall as noted.
- a. Decorative plaster ceilings will be maintained and restored. They will try to keep ducts below it and as small as possible. Joe noted the second floor (entry floor) has special ceilings. They will be maintained. (No comments)
  - b. Exterior walls will be furred out with insulation added. There was some concern about making a furred wall at the exterior at each of the classrooms. D. Woods said that he did not like the idea. PE should consider getting any modifications from the energy codes so they can preserve the original wall. He said that this wall is a heavy thermal mass and may not need added insulation. The new energy model software may not address the conditions properly. J. Smyth also said she does not like the idea. L. Casolo said that he will discuss it with the building department. PE seems to generally agree.



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- c. Exterior windows will be replaced with new windows to match original. (No comments)  
This was approved in previous presentations.
- d. Corridor will remain as is. There will be limited introduction of new door openings. They will reuse old doors as much as possible. (No comments)
- e. A “guard rail” will need to be added to the central stair “hand rail” to meet codes. It will be in a glass detail set behind the existing railing so the original is visible. (No comments)
- f. Floor finishes will be continued or extended from the 1925 building, where possible. They want to use terrazzo where they can. (No comments)
- g. End of corridor transoms will be retained. There will be new fire doors as required by codes. (No comments)

Joe concluded that the next step is to complete the docs and send the package out for state review. This is a 90% package. HPAC was not asked to make any formal replies. This meeting was for review and comment, to assist the COS engineering department.

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

**C. Hoyt Barnum House Update**

- 1. D. Woods provided an update of a meeting that was held on site last week. The letter was written with Wes Haynes in support of the removal of the addition under the porch. The letter was previously emailed to everyone and a copy was handed out. The letter will be used to support the listing of the house after the move.
- 2. There was some review of the addition and how it was constructed and the decay that was found. David noted that the addition sits under the existing roof and was probably added in the 20th century. The Historical Society wants to reconstruct it after the move. The historical consultant has suggested that it is not original to the building and can be deleted from the reconstruction.
- 3. W. Haynes added that this is a change to the original plan that was presented and approved by SHPO. By taking the addition off, it does make the move easier and cleaner. He said everyone wants to keep the building listed on the national register after the move. All agreed. The letter serves to provide some documentation of the approval before the move takes place. He further said that the National Park Service will comment after they receive the letter. All agreed that it is in the best interest of the city and group to do whatever is necessary to keep the building listed. Wes also said that the issue of reconstruction and the methods will be considered after the move is complete.



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5. Two other issues were briefly discussed.
  - a. The siding on the building at this time is not original. There is an option to replace the siding with a board size and shape that is closer to the original. They have some of the original boards on site that they can replicate. Wes thinks that some of the siding was replaced in the 1970 restoration or at the time of the 1920 renovations. Wes suggests that we let the Park Service weigh in on the issues and provide some direction. It is assumed that the Park Service will respond soon after the move.
  - b. There will also be a consideration of how the addition part will be reframed. It will be possible to use dimensional lumber that is closer to the original sizes. The discussion was tabled as this can be considered after the move is complete.
6. The move is still on target for November the 6th starting at 5:00 a.m. High Ridge Road will be closed until mid-morning on Sunday.

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

**D. Atlantic Street Bridge, MOA**

1. Lynn Drobbin noted that Dr. David Woods (COS) emailed a document about the Atlantic Street Bridge for which an MOA was submitted very early when HPAC was formed. Wes offered to do a first tier review.
2. Wes described the issues. This project originated before HPAC was created. It was determined that the demolition of the Atlantic Street Bridge would have an adverse impact. They really do not want to widen Atlantic Street south of the station. They want to see if there are alternatives. There is also the transit oriented development that is nearly complete. At first there would be a 50,000 dollar study. COS transit rolled that into a larger study. They then developed an RFP and asked the historical community to comment. Again maybe let Wes see this to review??
3. Wes made some additional points on a combined traffic and planning study. He does not want to disrupt the Historic district and wants the quality of the community to be a more prominent part of the study. He further said they don't need to resurvey the south end. Jill has already updated the survey. They know that about 28 buildings have been demolished since 1986. He also wants an analysis of how to leverage the national register status through grants and tax credits. Affordable housing is an important part of that mix. Can there be other options for affordable housing. Land banking may be an option. Maybe a study of "Transfer Development Rights" is needed. There may also be options for owner occupied and constructed double units. And there may be options for training owners and neighbors to rehab buildings. There should be more in the RFP about social planning for the community.



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4. This draft of the RFP will be distributed to HPAC to see if there are other things that should be added to the study. David said it might be best if one member of HPAC reviews it for the group. Barry volunteered. All generally agreed that Barry should review the document. He said that he will circulate his comments. There needs to be two separate letters in support of the RFP: - 1 from HPAC and 1 from HNP. Emily Provanche (sp?) is reviewing it from the COS transportation.

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

**E. Atlantic Street PO, Tax Credit Update**

Lynn Drobbin said that he has not heard anything and does not have an update.

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

**F. Demolition committee**

D. Woods noted there was some discussion about 375 Fairfield. Renee has been given the name of the owner. She may want to go through the building. There are no other demo requests that need to be reviewed at this time.

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

**G. Historic Neighborhood Survey, National Register Nominations (Sandy grant update)**

There may be neighborhood meetings in the winter and before the spring for the survey of Shippan. Wes is involved in coordinating that.

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

**H. Land Use Bureau Applications**

Anne Goslin did not attend and there were no new applications reported.

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

**I. Other items of note**

There was a short discussion about reaching out to Pam Murphy about the use of her offered donation for digitizing photos at the historical society. There is also an option to use it for the survey of Shippan. David said that he will contact Pam to review the proposed gift of \$5,000 for Silver Beach that was discussed in the fall.

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

**V. Adjournment**

Ms. L. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Drafted by: David W. Woods, AIA Secretary – November 2, 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, December 6th.