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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 August 2, 2022

Location: Via Zoom

Present: David Woods, Chair; Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman, Rebecca Shannonhouse, Dee Davis Oberwetter and Claire Fishman, Alternate

I. Call to Order.

Mr. Woods called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and introduced the first item on the agenda.

II. Approval or Corrections to July 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

(Rescheduled from June 14, 2022)

The Commission considered the minutes of the July 12, 2022 Regular Meeting. There were no comments or modifications recommended.

A motion was made by Mr. Hersh to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Davis and the vote was carried unanimously. (Ms. Fishman was absent at the July 12, 2022 meeting and was ineligible to vote.)

III. New Business.

A. 0 Haig Avenue: Review of existing building historic status. Building on the northeast corner of Haig & Crestview Avenues (1.63 acres). Formerly the Police/Civil Defense building (165 Haig Avenue). To be sold with the requirement to maintain/restore historic building.

Mr. Woods made introductory comments explaining that Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner, City of Stamford and the Land Use Bureau had requested the Commission review the property and historic value of the existing building.

After some discussion, Ms. Davis made a motion to provide the following recommendations to the Land Use Bureau; seconded by Mr. Hersh and was carried unanimously:

It was noted the Commission toured the building on December 10, 2016, and it was on the Commission agenda at the January 8, 2017 public meeting. At that time, the Commission drafted recommendations stating that: **(a)** the building be preserved; **(b)** the building be cleaned out of the records which were stored within; and **(c)** any future RFP be forwarded to the Commission for review before issue.

The Commission, by unanimous vote, made the following additional recommendations:

1. Encourage the City to stabilize the building so that it does not deteriorate further.
2. Encourage the City to save the building by evaluating the options for adaptive reuse. In particular, encourage the restoration of the exterior façades and details.
3. HPAC requests that the Commission be a part of any RFP process that may be issued for the future development on the property and encourage the developer to investigate eligibility for State and/or Federal tax credits to help fund the building's restoration.
4. The City should contact Preservation Connecticut to see what assistance could be provided for the building restoration and for assistance with development proposals.
5. Encourage the City to add the building to the City's Cultural Resources Inventory as soon as possible.

B. ZB Application #222-25 - Walton Place, LLC & 80 Prospect Street Partners, LLC

First Congregational Church

0 Walton Place & 80 Prospect Street.

Presenter: Raymond Mazzeo, Redniss & Mead.

Applicant is proposing a comprehensive redevelopment of the site that will: **(a)** rehabilitate, preserve and repurpose an early 1900s church building; **(b)** remove a 1960s addition to the church as well as a former retail building; and **(c)** create a new multifamily residential building with a rich amenity package, quality building materials, ample green space, covered parking and a total of 224 new Downtown apartments.

Mr. Woods made introductory comments explaining the Commission would be reviewing this application in an advisory capacity and provide recommendations on the project.

Mr. Woods introduced Ray Mazzeo, Redniss & Mead.

Mr. Mazzeo, along with Richard Redniss, Redniss & Mead; Daryn Reymon-Lock, Principal, Sawdust and Strata and Seelan Pather, Principal, Beinfield Architecture, made a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

After considerable discussion, the Commission agreed the following recommendations be made to the Land Use Bureau:

In general, the Commission expressed its gratitude for the presentation and is encouraged that the development team has proposed to save the historic 1913 church structure. The Commission further supports the concept design intent, noting that it shows respect for the historic church building. The Commission further understood that the 1960s addition on the north side will need to be demolished in order to make way for the new residential tower construction

The Commission, by unanimous consent, made the following additional recommendations:

1. Request a plaque be provided that commemorates the historic church. The owners also offered to provide an interpretive panel within the immediate site.
2. Encourage the owners to submit the historic building to the City's Cultural Resources inventory. The owners indicated that this application is in process. It was noted that the owner may want to contact Preservation Connecticut to see if the project can fit into State historic grant programs.
3. HPAC requests that the owners provide further definition of the plan use areas that are labeled as "amenity spaces." That includes clarification of whether some of those spaces can be public gathering areas.
4. HPAC requests that the character of the interiors of the church be saved and restored with the understanding there may be an adaptive reuse of the main historic sanctuary space. The Commission encourages keeping the features of the sanctuary space intact, including many of the fixtures, and visible framing / ceiling features, and the historic windows.
5. HPAC supports the "public amenity space" requirement that is part of the development proposal, in coordination with the City's Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown) and the RH-D district. The Commission further encourages using those funds within the immediate area of the proposed development.
6. The Commission encourages the development team to work with the City to use those "amenity" funds for improvements to Latham Park and the Prospect and Bedford Street connections. The planning should include improvements to vehicular and pedestrian connections, safety and amenities.
7. The Commission requests that the development team return to a future meeting to provide progress plans for the adaptive reuse and restoration of the church's interior and exterior spaces.

IV. Old Business

A. Update: Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program, South End.

Preservation Connecticut

Presenter: Dee Davis, Commissioner

Ms. Davis provided an update stating everything is moving forward and would most likely have more details at the October 1, 2022 meeting.

B. Update: Historic Brochure Progress.

Presenter: Rebecca Shannonhouse, Commissioner

Ms. Shannonhouse stated she is keeping in touch with Sue Halpern, President, South End NRZ, so when the South End submits its study report, we can apply for the grant. Ms. Shannonhouse also mentioned there have been offers to assist with the application process, which includes a project narrative. Ms. Kalman and Ms. Davis offered to help with the narrative.

C. Update: Demolition Permit Applications.

Mr. Woods provided an update on 16 Remington Street stating the City has a “Stop Work Order” on the project and has erected a chain link fence around the entire site. Mr. Woods also stated he thought a multifamily dwelling is proposed and might fall under Section 7.3 so would most likely come back to HPAC at some point.

The Commission had some further discussion regarding penalties for demolishing the house illegally, what can be built on the site per Zoning codes and critical reconstruction.

D. Miscellaneous Future Projects.

No Future Projects or as may properly be introduced before the Commission.

Mr. Woods provided an update on the Hunt Center. Mr. Woods stated he received a call from Brad Schide of Preservation Connecticut stating he had been trying to enter the building with his engineer to evaluate the structure and was turned down by the City. Mr. Woods spoke to Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner, to see if she could assist with allowing Mr. Schide and his engineer to enter the site to evaluate the building.

Mr. Woods stated he has no further information on 200 Henry Street. Mr. Woods explained that the City is in the process of hiring an engineer to do their own assessment.

V. Adjournment

Mr. Woods adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m. (There was no further discussion.)

Respectfully submitted
August 5, 2022

Rebecca Shannonhouse, Secretary
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2022 via Zoom. (Meeting date adjusted due to Labor Day holiday)