

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Roy Black, Pat Stark and chair Jonathan Schechtman.

Staff Present: Matt Osborn, Town Planner.

Others Present: Selectboard Liaison Dennis Brown.

A meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held in Meeting Room 2, Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction on Wednesday, June 15, 2016. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

1. Additions/Changes to the Agenda: Jonathan Schechtman asked if there are any additions to the agenda. There were none.
2. Minutes of the May 18, 2016 HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman asked if there are any corrections to the Minutes of May 18th. Roy Black made a motion to approve the Minutes of May 18th as written. The motion was seconded by Pat Stark and approved.
3. Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District Nomination: Matt Osborn reported that he spoke with Reverend Mike Gantt of the Advent Meeting Grounds about holding the community meeting at the Meeting Grounds in July. Reverend Gantt agreed. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 20th at 6:30 p.m. in the tabernacle. Matt stated that a mailing about the meeting will go out to the cottage owners. He will also post a notice on the website and Hartford List Serv and place an ad in the Valley News. Jonathan Schechtman suggested talking with Valley News reporter Matt Hongoltz-Hetling about doing a story about the nomination. Matt noted that the meeting is the same day as the regular July HHPC meeting. Jonathan suggested providing some refreshments for the HHPC since they will have meetings back-to-back. The Commission agreed. Matt noted that Reverend Gantt was pleased with the Draft Nomination.
4. Update of the Downtown White River Junction Historic District Nomination: Matt Osborn reported that two proposals were submitted for the White River Junction Nomination update. The Commission proceeded to discuss the proposals. The HHPC agreed to decide on the consultant following the July 20th Advent presentation.
5. Annual Historic Preservation/Downtown Conference: Matt Osborn reported that he enjoyed the Annual Historic Preservation/Downtown Conference in Waterbury on June 10th. He noted that the Preservation Trust of Vermont awards presentation is always impressive. He also reported that he was impressed with the reconstruction of the State Office Complex and preservation of many of its historic buildings. Many buildings were removed from the 100-year flood zone. He added that the new construction complemented the historic buildings and used many materials from Vermont. Roy Black stated that he attended the tour of the State office complex and was very impressed as well.

6. Certified Local Government (CLG) Program: Jonathan Schechtman reported that he attended the mandatory CLG training that was part of the Historic Preservation/Downtown Conference. Matt Osborn reported that Devin Colman indicated that there are 5-6 communities interested in becoming CLG's. This would make the grant program much more competitive. Dennis Brown asked about the grant application process. Jonathan responded that the CLG program provides a list of priority projects. Matt added that there are questions in the grant application that are reviewed and scored by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation staff and the Vermont Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. Applications are ranked and the highest scoring applications receive funding.
7. Demolition Ordinance: Matt Osborn noted that the HHPC has discussed demolition ordinances, but to date hasn't made any decisions. Jonathan Schechtman stated that the priority should be documentation. Pat Stark agreed. There was discussion about demolition of the Benjamin Wright House on Maple Street and the Maplewood Terrace residence that would be impacted by reconstruction of the Fairview Terrace retaining wall. Regarding the Benjamin Wright House, Pat said documentation prior to demolition would have been nice. She also suggested a historic plaque for the site. Jonathan said a demolition permit would allow additional time for alternatives in addition to documentation. Matt indicated that an in-house procedure is being developed for building demolitions. It was agreed to continue discussion at the next meeting.

Matt reported that Planning Commission chair Bruce Riddle spoke briefly on the HHPC's interest in demolition ordinance at the June 6th Meeting. Bruce suggested a future joint workshop with the HHPC.

8. Quechee Community Church: Pat Stark reported that the Christ Redeemer Church in Hanover has purchased the Quechee Church. Matt Osborn stated that this is great news. He distributed a Valley News article about the purchase.
9. Town Cemeteries: Matt Osborn reported that Arthur Peale attended the June 7th Selectboard Meeting to discuss the state of conditions in the Town Cemeteries. Arthur was pleased with having the opportunity to discuss the issue with them. Dennis Brown stated that he prepared a powerpoint presentation for the meeting with materials provided by Arthur Peale. He noted that the Selectboard was unaware of the cemetery issues. Interim Town manager Pat MacQueen met with Arthur recently to discuss solutions. Pat Stark noted that there has never been a cemetery commission in Hartford. The Commission agreed that it may be time for one.
10. Next HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman noted that the next HHPC Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 20th at 4:30 p.m. Pat Stark announced that there will be a tour of the Theron Boyd House on Saturday July 23rd.
11. Adjournment: Roy Black made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Pat Stark and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. Jonathan thanked Dennis for attending the meeting.