

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Robin Adair Logan, Pat Stark and chair Jonathan Schechtman.

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Selectboard Liaison Dennis Brown and Town Manager Leo Pullar.

A meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held in Meeting Room 2, Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction on Tuesday, November 22, 2016. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. He noted that P.J. Skehan of the Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce was invited to today's HHPC meeting, but had to cancel. Jonathan will reschedule the meeting.

1. Additions/Changes to the Agenda: Jonathan Schechtman asked if there are any additions to the agenda. Matt Osborn requested that the 2017 HHPC Meeting Schedule be added. The Commission agreed.
2. HHPC 2017 Meeting Schedule: Matt Osborn presented a draft meeting schedule for 2017. Robin Adair Logan made a motion to accept the meeting schedule. The motion was seconded by Pat Stark and approved 3 to 0.
3. Minutes of the October 19, 2016 HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman asked if there are any corrections to the Minutes of October 19th. Robin Adair Logan noted a correction. Pat Stark made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 19th with the noted correction. The motion was seconded by Robin Adair Logan and approved.
4. 2017 CLG Grant Project: Matt Osborn reported that he has been working on the grant application for the public outreach/education project. The application is due December 19th. Matt noted that the project will develop a booklet that has information on Hartford's architecture, past restoration projects and the importance of historic preservation. The project also will have an on-line component. He stated that we are going before the Selectboard this evening for approval to submit the grant application. Jonathan Schechtman noted that he will be joining Matt at the Selectboard meeting. Matt reported that he has been in touch with Devin Colman of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation about ideas for our public outreach/education project. According to Devin, there are no recent examples of similar projects in Vermont. Devin sought out examples from elsewhere and to date, we received information from Bangor Maine, Pittsburg Pennsylvania and Fresno, California. Matt stated that although these communities are very different from Hartford, there are bits of information that we can benefit from. Matt stated that the concept is a work in progress. He noted that with additional volunteer time of the HHPC, we are able to leverage more grant funds this year.
5. Update of the White River Junction Historic District: Matt Osborn reported that consultant Brian Knight e-mailed him an update on the project. Brian has visited the district twice. He walked through the district building by building and photographed each resource. Brian is presently going through the building descriptions and assessing changes/alterations. He is also writing tentative/brief descriptions of potentially new resources (i.e potential boundary increase).
6. Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District Nomination: Matt Osborn reported that he is waiting to hear from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation regarding notices to the Advent property

owners before scheduling a meeting with the Hartford Selectboard regarding the historic district nomination. Matt will follow-up on it.

7. Village Center Application for Hartford Village: Matt Osborn reported that he has been working on an application to the Vermont Downtown Board for village center designation for Hartford Village. He distributed a flyer for a community meeting to be held at the Hartford Village Library on Monday, December 12th at 6:00 p.m. Matt noted that White River Junction became a designated downtown in 2006. He stated that in 2011, the Town sponsored a village center project holding meetings in the other four villages. There was strong community support for establishing village centers in the four villages. However, Tropical Storm Irene arrived in late August that year and put the village center project on hold. A few years ago, Quechee Village became a village center. Recently, Martha Knapp of the Hartford Historical Society approached the Town and requested that the Town submit an application for village center for Hartford Village. Jonathan Schechtman stated that he was unaware that Quechee Village was a village center. He suggested greater promotion of the designation. He also requested details on the benefits of being a village center. Matt stated that he will provide the information to the HHPC. Pat Stark requested a map of the Quechee Village Center and the date Quechee became a village center.
8. Dinsmore House & Upper Valley Waldorf School: Matt Osborn reported that he was notified last week that the Upper Valley Waldorf School contacted the Town about their plans for a school expansion. They also plan to improve the access on Bluff Road, which is a narrow, hilly road with a sharp curve at the bottom of the hill. This would involve removal of a garage and residence at 1815 Quechee Main Street. Matt reported that the home is a contributing structure in the Quechee Historic Mill District. The approximate date of construction is 1851. Matt stated that he contacted the architect from Breadloaf Corporation and requested that they consider removing the garage, but retain the house. Matt thinks that by removing the garage, there should be enough room for the road improvements. Matt distributed a photograph of the house, garage and road. Jonathan Schechtman noted that the Dinsmore House is very unusual since it is of plank construction (uses horizontal boards) and possibly could be the only plank house in Hartford. Robin Adair Logan noted that this type of construction was later discontinued since it required large logs that became increasingly rare as the forests were cut. Jonathan noted that there was a saw mill in the village at the time. He stated that removing the house would have considerable impact on the village since it will leave a large opening in the streetscape. Robin Adair stated that the proposed demolition demonstrates the need for a demolition ordinance. Town Manager Leo Pullar entered the meeting room. Jonathan explained the proposal to demolish the house. Leo stated that he knows the architect and will talk to him about the possibility of saving the house. Jonathan thanked Leo.
9. Historic Homeowner Workshop: Pat Stark reported that Historic New England will be holding a homeowner's workshop in White River Junction on Saturday, September 16th for historic homes if they can find a location here.
10. Next HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman noted that the next HHPC Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 21st. Pat Stark noted that she will need a ride to the meeting.
11. Adjournment: Pat Stark made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Robin Adair Logan and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.