

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Susanne Walker Abetti, Robin Adair Logan and Chair Jonathan Schechtman.

Selectboard Liaison: Dennis Brown.

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

A remote meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission in compliance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law was held on Wednesday, May 19, 2021. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. He proceeded to read the “Remote Public Meeting Script for Opening a Meeting” related to Act 92. Robin Adair Logan requested that Matt Osborn e-mail to the HHPC with the meeting link the day before the meeting. Matt agreed.

1. Additions/Changes to the Agenda: Jonathan Schechtman asked if there are any additions to the agenda. There were none.
2. Minutes of the April 21, 2021 HHPC Meeting: It was decided to hold off on review of the Minutes of the April 21st Meeting until the June 16th Meeting.
3. Demolition Standards: Matt Osborn reported that the 5/10 joint workshop with the Planning Commission went well and he thinks there is consensus to go forward with a demolition delay proposal. Jonathan Schechtman agreed and noted that he was pleased that there is agreement to proceed with a town-wide approach. Matt noted that a community meeting to solicit public input is scheduled for Thursday, June 3rd. He will work on promotion of the meeting.

Matt Osborn suggested that the HHPC provide a brief presentation at the beginning of the meeting about the rationale for demolition delay. The HHPC would like to present photos of 8-10 historic building that have been taken down. It was also suggested to provide some photos of buildings that were almost lost and others that have been rehabilitated. Matt noted that Pat Stark volunteered to provide photos. Jonathan Schechtman suggested contacting consultant Brian Knight for photos since Brian presented some during the update of the White River Junction Historic District. Jonathan volunteered to do the presentation.

4. Taft’s Flat Intensive Level Survey: Matt Osborn reported that he has been instructed from the Finance Department that we have to close out the grant and get reimbursed from the state by the end of June (the end of the fiscal year) due to accounting reasons even though the grant agreement has a deadline of August 1st. Matt stated that he is working to meet that requirement and has contacted Devin Colman of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Devin provided Matt with the date that the close out materials are due to the State in order to meet the deadline. Devin also noted that the community meeting can occur after the close out materials are submitted to the state. Matt will coordinate a date for the community meeting with consultant Brian Knight which will likely occur in late June.

Matt Osborn reported that the draft survey forms for Taft’s Flat have been completed. He sent the HHPC the link to the files and asked them to review the files.

Matt Osborn reported that the May 16th Taft’s Flat Walking Tour was a success. There were twenty attendees and the weather cooperated. Matt noted that consultant Brian Knight did a very good job

and people seemed pleased. Dennis Brown reported that he attended the Walking Tour and thought it went very well.

5. Announcements:

a. HHPC Opening: Matt Osborn asked the HHPC how they would like to proceed with filling the current opening on the Commission. Matt read the qualifications section of the HHPC Bylaws. Dennis Brown noted that the Planning Commission has a good process for recruiting new members. Chair Bruce Riddle meets with the candidate and attends the Selectboard Meeting where the candidate is considered for appointment. Jonathan Schechtman agreed to do the same for the HHPC. Dennis stated that it would be nice to find a young person to fill the opening. The HHPC agreed to seek a qualified candidate for the opening.

b. UVM Historic Preservation Program: Robin Adair Logan reported that she heard that the University of Vermont has proposed eliminating the historic preservation program. Jonathan Schechtman responded that the alumni are actively opposing the proposal and he is hopeful that the program will be retained.

6. Next HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman reported that the next HHPC Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 16th.

7. Adjournment: Robin Adair Logan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Susanne Walker Abetti seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.