

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Approved Meeting Minutes

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

Selectboard Liaison: Dennis Brown.

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: None.

A meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 in Room 2 of the Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, Vermont. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. The meeting was also accessible remotely via Microsoft Teams with three members attending remotely. Jonathan read the hybrid meeting script followed by a roll call.

1. Minutes of the December 15, 2021 HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman asked if there are any revisions to the minutes of December 15th meeting. There were no corrections. Robin Adair Logan made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15th meeting as written. Pat Stark seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.
2. 1195 VA Cut-off Road: Matt Osborn presented a Lister's photograph of the 1890 farmhouse that was recently demolished. Matt noted that the Fire Department did a training at the building before it was taken down. Pat Stark reported that Arthur Peale took exterior photos before the building was demolished. Susanne Walker Abetti expressed sadness that the building was taken down and asked why it was demolished. Matt Osborn responded that he didn't know but speculated that the building did not meet the needs of the current business.
3. 160 Gates Street: Matt Osborn reported that Pat Stark and he conducted two separate site visits to photo document the main building and barn. He shared the photos with the HHPC. He reported that the barn appears to be in decent shape and there is a possibility that the barn might be relocated. Matt noted that he went by the site today and demolition work on the main building has begun. Susanne Walker Abetti asked if any attempt is being made to salvage some of the historic features of the building. Jonathan Schechtman responded that during the Design Review Committee site visit of the main building that he attended, he didn't think that there is much that could be salvaged.
4. St. Paul's Rectory: Matt Osborn presented the architectural report on the St. Paul Church and rectory. St. Paul's is working on a project with the Twin Pines Housing Trust and the Haven to build affordable housing on the site. The project will require taking down the rectory. Since the project will utilize federal funds, a Section 106 review is required. An architectural report and a Determination of Eligibility on the church and rectory was prepared by Architectural Historian Brian Knight. The report indicates that the Church is eligible for listing on the National Register, but the rectory isn't. Matt noted that State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Laura Treischmann signed off on the project. Susanne Walker Abetti expressed disappointment that demolition is proposed. Robin Adair Logan agreed stating that the rectory and surrounding trees are lovely. Jonathan Schechtman responded that with SHPO approval, there is little recourse. Pat Stark noted that the rectory no longer serves as a residence. Instead, it serves as an office and meeting space for the church. Susanne suggested asking that the rectory be incorporated into the design of the housing project. The HHPC agreed.

5. HHPC & Planning Commission: Matt Osborn reported that he has spoken to Zoning Administrator Jo-Ann Ells about Jonathan Schechtman attending the February 14th Planning Commission meeting to talk about the role the HHPC has advising the Planning Commission and other boards. Jonathan agreed to either attend the meeting in person or write a memo to the Planning Commission.
6. Announcements:
 - a. HHPC Opening: Matt Osborn stated that he hasn't heard back from a resident who contacted him last month about applying to fill the present HHPC vacancy. He agreed to follow-up.
 - b. CLG Grant: Matt Osborn reported that the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation will be meeting tomorrow to decide on awards for the CLG grant. Given the lack of applications this round, Matt is hopeful that the Hartford Performing Arts History project will be funded.
 - c. 3210 Jericho Street: Matt Osborn reported that Jericho resident Steve Sass has plans to renovate a c.1790 farmhouse in Jericho. Matt noted that Pat Stark and he visited the farmhouse with Steve in 2020 to photo document the house. Matt presented a c. 1900 photo of the house as well as photos taken from the 2020 site visit. The house is listed as a contributing property on the National Register. Matt reported that the interior of the house hasn't changed since the 1940s. The HHPC expressed their appreciation that Steve is renovating the house. Susanne Walker Abetti suggested developing a photo album documenting the renovation work. Matt agreed to talk to Steve Sass about the idea.
 - d. NAPC Webinar: Matt Osborn reported that the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions is sponsoring a webinar "Advocacy and Grassroots Preservation: Fighting the Good Fight" tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. As NAPC members, the HHPC may attend for free. If folks can't make the webinar tomorrow, the recording will be available to watch later.
7. Next HHPC Meeting: Jonathan Schechtman noted that the next HHPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 16th at 5:00 p.m.
8. Adjournment: Pat Stark made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Susanne Walker Abetti and approved. The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.