

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members Present & Date their Term is Up: Susanne Walker Abetti (3/21/25), Pat Stark (3/7/25) and Chair Jonathan Schechtman (1/9/26).

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: None.

A hybrid meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, September 11, 2024 in Meeting Room 2 at the Hartford Town Hall. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- 1. Public Comments:** Jonathan asked if there are any public comments. There were none.
- 2. HHPC Minutes:** Jonathan asked if there are any corrections to the Minutes of August 21st. Pat noted a correction. There were no other corrections. Pat made a motion to approve the HHPC Minutes of August 21, 2024 with the noted correction. The motion was seconded by Susanne and approved 3-0.
- 3. HHPC Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget:** Matt Osborn noted that it is budget preparation time. He stated that it is expected to be a tight budget year. He went over the current fiscal year budget:

<u>Category</u>	<u>2024/2025 Budget</u>
Travel & Meetings	\$265
Advertising	\$300
Memberships (NAPC)	\$100
Materials and Supplies	\$400
<u>Grants & Appropriations</u>	<u>\$2,200</u>
Total	\$3,265

There was discussion and consensus to request level funding. Pat made a motion to propose level funding for the HHPC for FY2025/2026. Jonathan seconded the motion which was approved 3 to 0.

- 4. Taft's Flat Historic District Nomination Update:** Matt reported that as the project winds down, the next step is to proceed with the formal nomination process. Since the two historic districts are so small, he suggested sending out copies of the historic district nomination to property owners in the two proposed districts. It was suggested to provide a link instead or make copies upon request. Matt will be working on letters to the property owners.
- 5. Section 106 Reviews:** Matt Osborn reported that he submitted a letter on the Railroad Station platform improvements to the Federal Railroad Administration. Pat asked about the location of the tunnel exit on the west side of the tracks. Matt responded that he is seeking information on the railroad tunnel from reporter Eric Francis and railroad enthusiast Chris McKinley.
- 6. Performing Arts History (PAH) Project:** Matt reported that he received a formal proposal from consultant Neil Silberman to interview Bill Bittinger about the origins of the Indie Film Festival, record and transcribe the interview and update the PAH report. Matt stated that he thought the proposal was reasonable. The HHPC emphasized that this is a high priority for them and would like to see the item streamlined.

7. **Historic District Signs:** Matt reported that he contacted the Jericho Community Association about repainting the Jericho Historic District signs and is waiting for a response. He noted that he could paint the Hartford Village Historic District sign and the two West Hartford Historic District signs. Matt also noted that we still need a sign for the Terraces Historic District and replacement signs for one Wilder Village Historic District sign and one Hartford Village Historic District sign. Matt noted that the signs are not eligible for CLG funding, only the design. He also stated that we will have to find a sign maker since Steve Arkwright has retired. Jonathan suggested getting quotes from several sign makers. The HHPC agreed. Susanne suggested contacting the Preservation Trust of Vermont to see if they might help know of reputable sign makers.
8. **Railroad Row Kiosk:** Matt reported that the kiosk project will get under way this fall.
9. **HHPC Opening:** Matt reported that he expects that an application will be submitted soon.
10. **US 250th Anniversary:** Matt reported that the Hartford Historical Society (HHS) formed a committee to work on the US 250th anniversary (Semiquincentennial). Gwen Tuson, chair of the HHS committee met with Town Manager John Haverstock and Matt last month. That meeting was followed with another meeting with Lori Hirshfield, Gwen Tuson, Linda Miller and Matt to discuss ideas and strategize about recruiting members for a townwide committee. Matt noted that it was agreed to focus first on contacting organizations and then focus on membership and then a formal town resolution as suggested by the Vermont 250th Committee. Pat noted that the Historical Society thought the committee should be under the Town purview. Pat stated that the Historical Society would like to create a driving tour of Hartford's pre-1800 houses. Pat noted that the Historical Society applied for a small grant to help with costs. Matt stated that he will discuss developing a budget with Lori Hirshfield. Susanne stated that it is hard to get people to identify with historical events.
11. **Announcements:**
 - a. Hartford Historical Society September Program: Pat reported that the Hartford Historical Society is featuring a program on the Hotel Coolidge featuring David Briggs on Wednesday, September 18th at the Methodist Church.
 - b. White River Junction Railroad Station Weathervane: Pat reported that now that the Railroad Station weathervane was recovered, there is an effort to return it to Hartford. A committee is being formed to look at where it should go. The weathervane is currently being housed at the Shelburne Museum.
 - c. Wilder Village: Pat would like confirmation if Wilder was in fact the first planned village in Vermont? If so, she would like to see a historic marker erected in the Village. Susanne suggested contacting the University of Vermont Preservation Program. Pat reported that the State Historic Marker Program is currently backlogged.
 - d. October Selectboard Presentation: Matt reported that the HHPC is scheduled to go before the Selectboard on October 15th to present an update of the HHPC's work.
12. **Next HHPC Meeting:** Jonathan noted that the next HHPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16th at 5:15 p.m.
13. **Adjournment:** Pat made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Susanne and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.
14. **HHPC Member Terms:** Susanne Walker Abetti (3/21/25), Dennis Brown (3/11/27), Vice-chair Pat Stark (3/7/25) and Chair Jonathan Schechtman (1/9/26).