

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members Present & Date their Term is Up: Susanne Walker Abetti (3/21/25), Dennis Brown (3/11/27), Pat Stark (3/7/25) and Chair Jonathan Schechtman (1/9/26).

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Robin Adair Logan, Harry Kendrick and Phil Sargent.

A hybrid meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 in Meeting Room 1 at the Hartford Town Hall. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Since there were no folks joining remotely, he did not read the hybrid meeting script.

- 1. Historical Sign for Kilowatt Park:** Harry Kendrick and Phil Sargent were present to talk about their interest in developing a historical sign for Kilowatt Park in Wilder. He noted that Bonnie Arnold was unable to make the meeting. Harry noted that the Wilder Village and the Kilowatt property have a rich history that should be shared with the visiting public. Harry noted that since they met with the HHPC in May, he has been working with Parks and Recreation Department Director Scott Hausler about the specific location for the sign. Scott suggested placing it behind the guard rail near the entrance by Passumpsic Road. Harry showed a photo of the proposed location. He noted that Scott Hausler suggested creating a break in the guardrail to allow pedestrians to access the sign and benches overlooking the park and Connecticut River. Susanne expressed concern about safety. Matt responded that the opening will not be very large and will be reviewed by the Department of Public Works.

Harry presented two draft sign proposals; one about Wilder Village history and the other about paper mill history. There would be one freestanding sign structure with two sign panels. Harry stated that QR codes will be used to access additional information such as F.X. Flinn's UTube video on the history of Wilder Village, a link to historic Wilder photos and to the Wilder Village Historic District brochure. Jonathan suggested organizing the photos in chronological order. The HHPC agreed.

Harry presented a spec sheet of the sign they are looking at. He noted that the cost estimate for the sign including shipping is \$3,800. He noted that sign maker Bonnie Arnold recommended this sign since it is heavy duty and will last a long time.

Harry noted that Scott Hausler said that we will have to get permission from property owner Great River Hydro (GRH) to erect the sign. Harry also asked if staff could investigate any other approvals that would be required by the Town. Matt agreed to look into it. Matt also agreed to talk to Planning and Development Director Lori Hirshfield about Town funds that could be used for the sign. Jonathan thanked Harry and Phil for attending. The HHPC agreed that this is an excellent project.

- 2. Public Comments:** Jonathan asked if there are any public comments. There were none.
- 3. HHPC Minutes:** Jonathan asked if there are any corrections to the Minutes of October 16th. There were no corrections. Pat made a motion to approve the HHPC Minutes of October 16, 2024 as written. The motion was seconded by Dennis Brown and unanimously approved.
- 4. Railroad Station Weathervane:** Jonathan reported that the HHPC will host a community meeting to solicit public input on the future use of the weathervane. Matt suggested holding the meeting after the holidays. The HHPC agreed.

5. **Historic District Signs:** Matt reported that with the mild weather this week, he spent the last three days working on historic district signs. He noted that he scraped, sanded, primed and finish painted the two West Hartford Historic District signs. He noted that the photo on the sign that faces the southeast is extremely faded and will need to be replaced at some point. Robin Adair Logan responded that there are some UV protection treatments that are available today that could help extend the life of photos. Matt also reported that he did some spackling and repainting of the tops of the two Jericho Rural Historic District signs since there was some bare wood exposed. Matt also scraped, sanded and primed the signpost of the Hartford Village historic district sign on the west side of the village. He will clean up and paint the sign that is in his office and mount it.

Matt reported that he heard back from Rule Signs in Randolph about creating additional historic district signs and the quote was high. He stated that he will reach out to Bonnie Arnold of Red Door Signs.

6. **CLG Grant Application:** Matt noted that the CLG grant application is due December 16th. He reported that he talked to Planning and Development Director Lori Hirshfield about a possible CLG grant and Lori suggested paying for the design of the replacement panels for the Railroad Row kiosk and the sign design for the historic district signs if that is needed. The HHPC liked the idea. Dennis made a motion to apply for a CLG grant to pay for the design of the replacement panels for the Railroad Row kiosk and the sign design for the historic district signs if that is needed. Pat Stark seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.
7. **US 250th Anniversary:** Matt reported that on Monday, he met with Gwen Tuson of the Hartford Historical Society and Parks and Recreation Department Director Scott Hausler to talk about the US 250th anniversary (Semi quincentennial). Scott is willing to work with the Town 250th Committee to incorporate the 250th theme into the many events that the Parks and Recreation Department sponsors. A resolution creating the 250th Committee will go before the Selectboard in the coming weeks. Pat noted that a tour of Hartford buildings built prior to 1800 is planned by the Hartford Historical Society. Robin Adair asked how many pre-1800 buildings are there in Hartford? Pat responded that there are 17.
8. **Performing Arts History (PAH) Project:** Matt reported that the Town accepted consultant Neil Silberman's proposal to interview Bill Bittinger about the origins of the Indie Film Festival, record and transcribe the interview and update the PAH report was accepted. Since all of the work is under \$1,000 and the work will be done remotely, a contract and insurance will not be required. Neil will complete the project by January 31, 2025.
9. **HHPC Opening:** Jonathan noted the current opening.
10. **Announcements:** There were no announcements or reports.
11. **Next HHPC Meeting:** Jonathan noted that the next HHPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18th at 5:15 p.m.
12. **Adjournment:** Pat made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Dennis and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.
13. **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).