

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, December 18, 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: Selectboard Liaison Lannie Collins and Valley News reporter Christina Dolan.

A hybrid meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, December 18, 2024 in Meeting Room 2 at the Hartford Town Hall. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 5:22 p.m. Since there were no folks joining remotely, he did not read the hybrid meeting script.

1. **HHPC Minutes:** Jonathan asked if there are any corrections to the Minutes of November 20th. There were no corrections. Pat made a motion to approve the HHPC Minutes of November 20, 2024 as written. The motion was seconded by Susanne and unanimously approved.
2. **Public Comments:** Jonathan asked if there are any public comments. There were none.
3. **Demers Avenue and Victory Circle/Highland Park Historic District Nomination:** Matt reported that we are ready to move forward with the Demers Avenue and Victory Circle Historic District nominations. He presented the Final Review and Recommendation Report form for both historic district nominations. He provided background information that started with the 2016 Historic Sites and Structures Survey followed by the 2021 Taft's Flat Intensive Level Survey and culminated with the current draft historic district nominations. Matt noted that this is the fourth community meeting for the historic district nominations and there hasn't been any opposition.

Jonathan made a motion to approve the submission of the Demers Avenue and Victory Circle Historic District nominations to the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation for approval by the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The motion was seconded by Pat and approved 4 to 0. Matt noted that the next step is going before the Selectboard sometime in early 2025.

4. **Historical Sign for Kilowatt Park:** Matt reported that Harry Kendrick and Phil Sargent requested a meeting with Parks and Recreation Department Director Scott Hausler and Planning and Development Director Lori Hirshfield in early January to discuss funding for the sign. Matt will work with Zoning Administrator Jo-Ann Ells to discuss permitting requirements for the sign. Scott Hausler will be working with the Department of Public Works to determine what is required for the cut in the guard rail. Susanne said that she would like to see the sign installed in the coming year.
5. **Historic District Signs:** Matt reported that he reached out to Bonnie Arnold of Red Door Signs about a cost estimate for historic district signs and is waiting for a response. He agreed to follow-up. Jonathan suggested contacting Sign Depot in Lyndonville. Dennis suggested contacting Horst Dresler at Anything Printed. Matt agreed to reach out to both companies.
6. **Railroad Station Weathervane:** Matt reported that the HHPC agreed to host a community meeting to solicit public input on the future use of the weathervane and invite the State Archivist and VTrans Historic Preservation Officer. Dennis commented that he thought the HHPC had already agreed to place the weathervane in the Town Hall. Matt responded that we need to solicit community input. Matt suggested holding the community meeting at the regular January HHPC meeting (1/15) if that works for State Curator David Schutz and VTrans Historic Preservation Officer Judith Ehrlich as well

as Hartford residents Judy Barwood and David Briggs who have expressed an interest in the project. The HHPC agreed. Jonathan requested that the meeting be well-promoted.

7. **CLG Grant Application:** Matt reported that he submitted the CLG grant application last week for the design of the replacement panels for the Railroad Row kiosk and design of the HHPC webpage. The grant request amount was \$4,500. Matt noted that fabrication of signs is not eligible for CLG funding. Lannie went to the CLG website and thinks signs may be eligible for funding. Matt will inquire. Jonathan reported that Matt and he went before the Selectboard on December 10th to obtain Selectboard approval to submit the grant application. Next month, we will hear if the project was funded.
8. **US 250th Anniversary Commemoration:** Jonathan reported that on Monday, December 9th, Pat, Dennis, Matt and he attended a 250th meeting at the Hartford Historical Society. He also noted that the 250th anniversary (Semi quinquennial) resolution establishing a Town Committee (Selectboard appointed ad hoc committee that will end its work in 2027) was presented to the Selectboard. Lannie noted that the Selectboard decided to get a legal opinion about the Committee before signing the resolution and review the Committee charge. Matt noted that the Town Manager asked him to prepare bylaws for the Committee. Dennis reported that he contacted the Boy Scouts and they are interested in participating in the 250th commemoration. He added that it would be nice to invite a Medal of Honor recipient to speak at one of the 250th events.
9. **HHPC Opening:** Jonathan noted the current opening.
10. **Announcements:**
 - a. Hartford Historical Society Donation: Pat reported that Arthur Peale retired from his cemetery stone restoration business and donated his tools to the Historical Society. A local businessman Rich Landry purchased the tools from the Historical Society and is donating his services to repair any headstones of revolutionary war veterans.
 - b. Performing Arts History (PAH) Project: Matt reported that consultant Neil Silberman completed the interview with Bill Bittinger about the origins of the Indie Film Festival. Neil will now work on the transcription. Once completed, he will update the PAH report.
11. **Next HHPC Meeting:** Jonathan noted that the next HHPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 15th at 5:15 p.m.
12. **Adjournment:** Pat made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Jonathan and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 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).