

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Dennis Brown, Pat Stark and chair Jonathan Schechtman.

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Selectboard Liaison Erik Krauss.

A hybrid meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, in Room 2 at the Hartford Town Hall. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

1. **Public Comments:** Jonathan asked if there were any public comments. There were none.
2. **Approval of the November 19th HHPC Meeting Minutes:** Jonathan asked if there were any comments regarding the meeting minutes of November 19th. There were none. Pat made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Dennis seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.
3. **Demers Avenue and Victory Circle/Highland Park Historic District Nomination:** Matt reported that the National Park Service (NPS) approved the Demers Avenue Historic District Nomination. He presented the certificate from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP) to the HHPC. The next step is for the VDHP to work on revisions to the Victory Circle/Highland Park Historic District Nomination. He noted that he is very grateful that the VDHP assisted with the revisions to the nominations after they were sent back from the National Park Service for further documentation since our contract with Hartgen Archaeologic Services expired. Jonathan suggested that in the future, we should include a provision in contracts that the consultant is responsible for revisions to the nomination if requested by the VDHP or the NPS. The HHPC agreed.
4. **2026 CLG Grant:** Matt reported that the CLG grant application deadline is March 12th. He stated that this will give the HHPC time to figure out the type of archaeological project to pursue. Matt reported that he had a meeting with the State Archaeologist Jess Robinson and Elizabeth Peebles to talk about a possible project. Matt suggested doing a little research on the types of archaeology projects and then follow-up with Jess Robinson. The HHPC agreed.
5. **Railroad Station Improvements:** Matt reported that the improvements to the Railroad Station have been completed and they look nice. He noted that both the south and east canopies were removed as planned. He noted that the HHPC requested that the south canopy be replaced but VTrans has not indicated whether that will happen.
6. **Railroad Station Weathervane:** Jonathan reported that he will follow-up with State Archivist David Schutz about the weathervane project. Matt reported that he emailed VTrans Historic Preservation Officer Judith Ehrlich about the status of the loan agreement with the State and is waiting to hear back from her.
7. **Railroad Row Kiosk Certified Local Government Grant:** Matt reported that we received the grant agreement from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. As a result, we are authorized to begin work on the project including tracking staff and HHPC volunteer time to go toward the local match requirement. Matt noted that the HHPC and the Parks and Recreation Department will determine content with input from the public and the Downtown Business Association. Dennis stated that Veterans and the Monument Committee may want to provide input as well.

Matt distributed copies of the kiosk panels noting the panels are about twenty years old and outdated. He stated that this is our first discussion and that it is likely to take several discussions to figure out what changes to make to the panels. The CLG grant provides funds to hire a copy writer and graphic designer once we have a solid idea of what we would like to see on the panels.

Erik suggested using a QR Code to provide access to additional information. Others agreed.

Jonathan asked if we want to have the Connecticut River Scenic Byway map that extends from the Massachusetts border north to the New Hampshire border with Quebec. He noted that railroad lines are not shown on the map. Pat agreed and suggested a map that focuses on transportation and includes historical information on log drives. Pat also suggested providing historical information on the railroad warehouses. Dennis also agreed that we should rethink the byway map. He suggested providing information on railroads and turntables.

Matt noted that park rules are listed on a separate sign in the park.

Matt agreed to discuss with Zoning Administrator Jo-Ann Ells whether the panels will require design review approval. The HHPC agreed to continue discussion at the January 21st meeting.

8. **Historical District Signs:** As a follow-up to the sign discussion last month, Dennis commented that we should obtain the longest lasting plywood whether it be pressure treated or marine grade. Matt offered to investigate the difference. Matt reported that we are waiting for Bonnie Arnold to repair the two historic district signs. Pat suggested contacting Joe Trottier to see if the Advent Camp folks would like to have a historic district sign. Matt agreed to contact Joe.
9. **US 250th Anniversary Commemoration Committee:** Dennis stated that there is nothing new to report on. Matt commented on how nice the 250th banners look.
10. **Monument Committee:** Dennis reported that everything is on track and the Committee is still taking orders for the bricks.
11. **HHPC Openings:** Matt noted that the Communication Specialist JD Hawks is available to meet with the HHPC to talk about ways to promote HHPC openings. Matt suggested inviting JD to an HHPC meeting. The HHPC agreed. Matt will invite JD.
12. **Announcements:**
 - a. Local Options Tax Warrant Article: Erik reported that the Selectboard authorized a \$5,000 warrant article to go to the voters on March 3rd for the Alumni Parade and 250th Committee.
13. **Next HHPC Meeting:** Jonathan noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 21st at 5:15 p.m.
14. **Adjournment:** Dennis made a motion to adjourn. Pat seconded the motion which was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.
15. **HHPC Member Terms:** Dennis Brown (3/11/27), Vice-chair Pat Stark (3/17/28) and Chair Jonathan Schechtman (1/9/26).