

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Approved Meeting Minutes

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

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Town Communications and Media Specialist J.D. Hawks and Selectboard Liaison Erik Krauss.

A hybrid meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 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 January 21st HHPC Meeting Minutes:** Jonathan asked if there were any comments regarding the meeting minutes of January 17th. There were none. Dennis made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Pat seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.
- 3. Promoting HHPC Openings:** Matt introduced Town Communications and Media Specialist J.D. Hawks to the Commission. J.D. was present to offer his assistance promoting the openings on the HHPC. J.D. is a lifelong resident of Hartford who has worked for the Town 1 ½ years. J.D. noted that he is available to publicize the HHPC openings and events. He stated that people want to know about the work that the HHPC is doing. Jonathan noted that we are looking for community-minded people who have a sense of history. Dennis stated that he has learned a great deal by serving on the Commission. J.D. noted that we can promote the openings on the Hartford List Serv and social media. Dennis noted the work of the 250th Committee and the Monument Committee and asked J.D. if he was aware of the groups. J.D. responded that he has communicated with 250th Committee chair Gwen Tuson. Jonathan thanked J.D. for attending the meeting.
- 4. Victory Circle/Highland Park Historic District Nomination:** Matt reported that he hasn't heard anything from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation about the timeline to address comments from the National Park Service regarding the historic district nomination.
- 5. 2026 CLG Grant:** Matt reported that he had a follow-up meeting with the State Archaeologist Jess Robinson to talk about a possible archaeology project. Jess had previously suggested doing a phase 1A archaeological survey of Town parcels or choosing one of the Town's rivers for a phase 1A survey. Matt asked Jess about doing a townwide broad stroke Phase 1A survey. Jess responded favorably. Matt asked Jess for assistance in developing a scope of work and budget. Jess agreed. Matt noted that a Phase 1A survey includes background research, environmental context review, a desktop sensitivity assessment and optional site visits. There was discussion about whether to focus on a Phase 1A survey of one of the rivers or a townwide broad scope survey. The consensus was to conduct a townwide survey. Pat made a motion to submit a CLG grant application for a townwide broad stroke Phase 1A archaeological survey of Hartford. The motion was seconded by Dennis and unanimously approved. Matt stated that he will contact John Moody of the Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions to get his thoughts on the work plan.

Matt reported that the CLG grant application deadline is March 12th. He noted that due to Town Meeting and the Town election, the Selectboard will not have a regular meeting until March 17th. He asked State Architectural Historian Elizabeth Peebles if we could submit the CLG application with

everything except the signature page. She responded yes. Matt noted that if the Selectboard do not approve submittal of the grant application, we would withdraw the application.

6. **Railroad Row Kiosk:** Matt reported that he plans to meet with the Downtown Business Association about the Kiosk panels at their March 2nd meeting to seek their input on a kiosk map to replace the Connecticut River Scenic Byways map. He will also seek input from the Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce. Dennis stated that he will ask Veterans groups if they would like to provide input. Matt noted Pat's list of the panels. There was discussion about the different types of history to be covered in the panels and agreement to continue discussion at next month's meeting.
7. **Historical District Signs:** Matt reported that he is still waiting to hear from sign maker Bonnie Arnold about a timeframe to repair the two damaged historic district signs. He agreed to follow up with Bonnie.
8. **Railroad Station Weathervane:** Matt reported that he hasn't heard back from State Curator David Schutz about the weathervane pedestal. Matt will reach out to him to get an update.
9. **US 250th Anniversary Commemoration Committee:** Dennis reported that the Committee is planning events this spring and fall. He also noted that two of the 250th banners were taken down by an unauthorized person. Dennis will follow up with that person.
10. **Monument Committee:** Dennis reported that the project is on schedule. The Committee is gathering names for the bricks. With the recent deployment of the Vermont Air National Guard, he is unsure of their request for a military flyover or marching band for the Memorial Day Monument dedication. Dennis noted that an Eagle Scout is taking on the new flagpole and park bench improvements.
12. **Announcements:**
 - a. History of West Hartford Book Signing: Pat announced that on Sunday, April 12th, there will be a book signing at the Hartford Church on a new book on the History of West Hartford written by West Hartford resident Cameron Clifford.
13. **Next HHPC Meeting:** Jonathan noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18th at 5:15 p.m.
14. **Adjournment:** Pat made a motion to adjourn. Dennis seconded the motion which was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.
15. **HHPC Member Terms:** Dennis Brown (3/11/27), Vice-chair Pat Stark (3/17/28) and Chair Jonathan Schechtman (1/5/29).