

HARTFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Bruch Lehmann, Pat Stark and chair Jonathan Schechtman.

Staff Present: Town Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: Earl Hatley, John Heath and John Moody.

A hybrid meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, in Room 2 at the Hartford Town Hall. Chair Jonathan Schechtman called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

- 1. Native American History & HHPC:** Jonathan welcomed Ethnohistorian and Project Coordinator for the Winter Center for Indigenous Traditions John Moody to the meeting. Jonathan noted that the Selectboard recommended that the HHPC explore a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to learn more about the Native American past in Hartford. The HHPC supports that and invited John to discuss possible projects. Pat agreed and stated that the HHPC would like to document the Abenaki community in Hartford. Jonathan noted that typical CLG grant allows for a \$14,000-\$16,000 project. John noted that Abenaki people have lived here for 13,000 years. He added that many people with Abenaki heritage still live here today and the number is much higher than the 1% of Native Americans identified by the US Census. He noted that when the sewerage treatment plant expanded, Native American artifacts were discovered, and the expansion plans were revised to avoid impacting the artifacts. John noted that State Law dictates protection of Native American Burial Grounds. He also noted that there were many small Native American villages in Hartford. He estimates that there are 15-20 Native American sites that have been confirmed in Hartford. Jonathan stated that he understands the delicate nature of archaeology of Native American sites and the potential for scavenging. Jonathan stated that a typical CLG grant allows for a \$14,000-\$16,000 project. John noted that 1/3 of the Town has potential for Native American Sites. John responded that it could support a project for a small area such as Jericho or White River Junction. Jonathan thanked John for attending the meeting. John offered his assistance to the HHPC in developing a project for a CLG grant.
- 2. 173 Connecticut River Road:** John Heath of Cover Home Repair was present discussing work done on a residence at 173 Connecticut River Road. The building, which was originally built in Hanover, New Hampshire, was moved to the Connecticut River Road site by Cover in the early 2000s. Matt distributed several photos of the building from the last twenty years and a copy of the 2013 Hartford Historic Sites and Structures Survey (HSSS) form for the building. The circa 1900 building was included in the HSSS as having local architectural significance and local level of significance. John noted that a federal grant for the work on the building requires that if the building is historic, the work shall not impact the historic integrity of the building. He reported that 90% of the work was interior work and the exterior work included normal maintenance and minor repairs. He concluded that the work doesn't detract from the historic integrity of the building. The HHPC agreed. Jonathan made a motion confirming that the building is historic and the work done by Cover does not detract from the historic integrity of the building. He directed Matt to write a letter to Cover on behalf of the HHPC. The motion was seconded by Pat and approved 3 to 0.
- 3. Approval of the March 18th HHPC Meeting Minutes:** Jonathan asked if there were any comments regarding the draft meeting minutes of March 18th. There were no corrections. Dennis made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Pat seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.
- 4. Public Comments:** Jonathan asked if there were any public comments. There were none.
- 5. Railroad Row Kiosk:** Matt distributed a list of items that have been discussed for the kiosk panels over the past year by the HHPC, Downtown Business Association and the Hartford Chamber Executive Director. He noted that we need to release the RFP as soon as possible to execute a contract prior to the end of the fiscal year. He stated that it would be helpful if the HHPC could hold a special meeting or establish a subcommittee to firm up ideas for the kiosk panels. There was discussion and agreement to hold a special meeting next Wednesday, 5/27 at 5:15 p.m.

6. **Historical District Signs:** Matt reported that there are enough funds to purchase five new historic district signs. He is waiting for a quote from sign maker Bonnie Arnold to obligate funds. He also hopes to install the repaired signs in the coming weeks. Jonathan asked about the security screws to prevent sign theft. Matt responded that he obtained some but will need more.
7. **Railroad Station Weathervane:** Matt reported that David Schutz responded that the pedestal and plexiglass bonnet for the weathervane are on their list. However, they currently do not have available funds and asked if we have funds. They contacted a metal fabricator and were told he is fully booked and cannot build it. Matt noted that as the current fiscal year winds down and funds obligated, we can determine if funds will be available in the next fiscal year beginning July 1st.
8. **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. He will get an update.
9. **US 250th Anniversary Commemoration Committee:** Matt reported that the 250th Committee will be participating in the Memorial Day event at Veterans Park, a reenactment event in Wilder in May and the 4th of July event.
10. **Monument Committee:** Matt noted that the dedication of the Post WWII monument will occur as part of the Memorial Day celebration on Monday, May 25th.
11. **Annual Downtown/Historic Preservation Conferences:** Matt reported that Bruch, Jonathan, Tom and Matt will be attending the annual Downtown/ Historic Preservation conference on Thursday, June 4th in St. Albans. Matt noted we can carpool. Bruch noted that she won't need a ride. Matt agreed to contact Tom and Jonathan about carpool arrangements.
12. **June 17th Hartford Community Coalition Block Party:** Matt noted that he signed the HHPC up for a table at the June 17th Block Party. Pat said she will be there for the Historical Society booth and can display HHPC materials. Matt agreed to provide HHPC materials and a table.
13. **Announcements:** Jonathan asked if there were any announcements.
 - a. Hartford Historical Society Annual Meeting: Pat reported that there will be an unveiling ceremony of the Hartford Woolen Mill Bell at 2:00 p.m. at the Garipay House on Maple Street with the Hartford Historical Society Annual Meeting starting around 2:30 p.m. at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ. The meeting will be followed by an ice cream social and Hartford Woolen Mill display.
 - b. Hartford Historical Society Talk on the Bell at the Hartford Mill: Pat reported that a talk on the Hartford Bell will be held at the Jericho Schoolhouse on Wednesday, June 10th at the Jericho Schoolhouse at 7:00 p.m.
 - c. Historic District Brochures: Pat reported that the Historical Society is running low on some of the historic district brochures. Matt suggested that Pat let him know the districts and he will gather them for her to pick up.
14. **Next HHPC Meeting:** Jonathan noted that a special HHPC meeting to discuss the Veterans Park kiosk panels is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27th at 5:15 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Wednesday, June 24th at 5:15 p.m.
15. **Adjournment:** Pat made a motion to adjourn. Bruch seconded the motion which was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.
16. **HHPC Member Terms:** Dennis Brown (3/11/27), Thomas Hankins (4/13/29), Bruch Lehmann (4/13/29), Vice-chair Pat Stark (3/17/28) and Chair Jonathan Schechtman (1/5/29).