

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERATION COUNCIL

Historic Preservation Council Meeting  
One Constitution Plaza, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT  
September 7, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairwoman Nelson, Dr. Faber, Ms. Gilvarg, Dr. Jones, Ms. Kane, Ms. Maher,  
Dr. Glaser; and Dr. Partridge

Absent: Dr. Woodward

Staff: Julie Carmelich, Mary Dunne, Leigh Johnson, Cathy Labadia, Todd Levine,  
Jenny Scofield, Kristina Newman-Scott, Doug Royalty

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting of the Historic Preservation was called to order at 9:37 am.

**2. Review of Public Comment Procedures**

Chairwoman Nelson read the public comment procedure.

**3. Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest**

Chairwoman Nelson asked the members if there were any potential perceptions of a conflict of interest with any agenda items being brought before the Council.

Ms. Kane – CT Humanities and Hartford Preservation Alliance.

Dr. Partridge – CT Humanities

Ms. Maher – CT Humanities

**4. Threatened Properties**

None at this time

5. **Nomination to the State Register**

a. ***New Britain Harold Building – New Britain***

*On a motion by Dr. Faber, Second by Ms. Maher, the Historic Preservation Council approved the Nomination to the State Register. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

b. ***Martha Culver House – North Haven***

*On a motion by Dr. Jones, Second by Ms. Maher, the Historic Preservation Council approved the Nomination to the State Register. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

6. **Historic Districts/ Properties**

*None at this time*

7. **State Historic Preservation Grants**

a. ***Historic Restoration Fund***

i. ***North Church, Woodbury***

*On a motion by Ms. Maher, Second by Dr. Faber, the Historic Preservation Council approved a grant in the amount of \$50,000 to the North Congregational Church of Woodbury. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

b. *Endangered Properties Fund – None at this time.*

c. *Certified Local Government Grants – None at this time.*

d. *Survey and Planning Grants – None at this time.*

e. ***Basic Operational Support Grant***

i. ***Hartford Preservation Alliance, BOS***

*On a motion by Ms. Maher, second by Dr. Faber, the Historic Preservation Council approved a grant in the amount of \$150,000 to the Hartford Preservation Alliance. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

f. ***Partners in Preservation Grant***

i. ***CT Humanities – Statewide***

*On a motion by Ms. Gilvarg, Second by Dr. Faber, the Historic Preservation Council approved a grant in the amount of \$250,000 to the CT Humanities. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-4, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

Ms. Kane, Ms. Maher and Dr. Partridge recused themselves from the meeting room at 10:02 am.

Mary Dunne addressed the Council and noted staff recommends funding for this grant. With the CT Humanities losing line item funding from the state – there are certain portions of their mission and activities that do align with our historic preservation mission and activities, and providing assistance for those programs helps further our mission and work.

Dr. Glaser asked if this was the first time CT Humanities received funding. The CT Humanities received two recent grants to conduct a museum study and a Hartford-based mobile application.

Dr. Faber asked three questions:

1. both boxes - yes and no were checked off in the section “has applicant received funding from SHPO in the past”
2. on the check list section – no items were checked and wanted to make sure SHPO received all necessary information, and
3. what comprises the staff’s overhead costs of \$37,500 in the budget?

It was noted there was a problem with the form preventing the applicant to uncheck the “no” category. SHPO did receive all the required information, and does allow for 15% admin for staff costs.

Mr. Doug Fisher – Executive Director of the CT Humanities addressed the members of the Council and provided a brief overview of the programmatic areas for funding and how the grant would further advance/promote these programs.

The state appropriations reduced CT Humanities operating budget by 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s. This funding represents one-seventh restoration which will allow CT Humanities to take back critical components that are in support of historic sites and buildings as outline, particularly the component for the STEPS program which will allow a modest resurrection of the grants associated with the STEPS organizations for CT Humanities previous and current class (50 small house museums across the state).

The other two components: the first is a high-profile teaching program with the State Department of Education – promoting and bringing Connecticut’s history into the classroom. In addition; the online program CTHistory.org is another component that funding will go to help support the continuing of the online program, and the marketing component continues the effort to promote

sites to let visitors and residents know what historic assets are located right here in Connecticut.

Ms. Kane, Ms. Maher and Dr. Partridge returned to the meeting at 10:12 am.

*g. Creative Arts Promoting Preservation Grants – None at this time.*

8. **Preservation Restrictions**

None at this time

9. **Archaeological Preserves**

None at this time

10. **Report on State Historic Preservation Office Activities: Kristina Newman-Scott Reporting**

***State Budget***

Ms. Newman-Scott reported during the last budget cycle the agency's budget was reduced by \$1 million. It is anticipated more reductions could happen which could place CIA funds in jeopardy if reductions to the budget are required.

The Historic Preservation's office was approved to refill three (3) vacant positions: Director of Historic Preservation and Museums; National Register Specialist Historian, and the Architectural Historian. It is anticipated that these vacation positions will be filled within the next three (3) to six (6) months. There is a slight possibility the office could be approved to refill the Museum Guide vacancy at Old Newgate Prison.

***National Park Service Grant***

The office has applied for a National Park Service grant in the amount of \$50,000 for under-represented communities and the team has put together a phenomenal grant application. The office is in the process of diversifying our programs to tell stories outside of the slave trade and Freedom Trail with a general focus centering on the presence of the African American community and its importance which would ideally lead to some national register nominations. The office will be working with the *Negro Green Book* and *The Guide to Travel*.

***UCONN Brown Buildings***

Regarding UCONN's brown buildings – a Facebook page was created and it is disconcerting to learn that misinformation has been posted on this site. The situation with UCONN was a year-long process with negotiations and meetings with our office and members of UCONN – this situation didn't present itself overnight. To have a great deal of negativity posted on this page is troubling especially when all of the facts are not presented – and; many of the

suggestions posted on the Facebook were suggestions SHPO repeatedly proposed and provided to UCONN. Unfortunately the State Historic Preservation Office cannot force nor does it have jurisdiction over UCONN to do what we [SHPO] feels is ideally what should be proposed for those buildings. Utilizing social media as a means to voice negative comments is counterproductive and not a means to a viable resolution.

Dr. Faber took responsibility for creating the Facebook Page and requested that if inaccuracies exist corrections be posted to the page.

The Commissioner of DECD and SHPO has encouraged UCONN to have a town-hall meeting with the community for those who feel so passionately about what is happening, but it is uncertain at this time if that meeting has been scheduled.

### ***North-East Corridor Railway – Cathy Labadia***

Cathy Labadia reported on the North-East corridor rail-way project and where SHPO has been involved to date. At the end of July, SHPO signed a programmatic agreement with the Federal Rail Authority (FRA). State Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) provides a way to identify possible environmental impacts that may result from governmental decisions.

FRA falls under the NEPA process – the federal version of that process and FRA is preparing their environmental documentation. In addition to NEPA, FRA must also file a National Historic Preservation Act - Section 106 as-well-as the 4F Transportation Act.

What commonly occurs during the NEPA process; a multiple-states Programmatic Agreement is drafted and as the process moves forward there is a Section 106 component which needs to be followed and the programmatic agreements outline the steps taken to fulfill the Section 106 obligations including background research, additional consultation, hiring of a consultant, surveys etc. With SHPO signing the programmatic agreement the office does not condone the project but rather than acknowledges recognition of the project to help them through the process. These are the steps that would be engaged for the 50 year plan. The important thing to remember about the way programmatic agreement is setup, it is not going to be a 100% consideration of everything at once, but a compilation of all recommended pieces.

A roundtable discussion ensued. Does the NEPA document cover the preferred routes or the other alternative routes? The NEPA document includes everything. There is a group of individuals who are interested in following the improvement of the rail service as this is a national infrastructure and very important to urban centers. One of the alternative routes now by-passes all of the shorelines – with very negative impacts. It is in the opinion of others that a decision has been determined for the preferred route.

### ***State Tax Credits Program – Julie Carmelich***

Julie Carmelich updated the members of the Council on the state tax credits program. In fiscal year 2015 SHPO launched a new tax credit program which essentially consolidated

two programs into one. Under Statute, SHPO has a per-project cap of \$1.5 million and an annual allotment to make reservations of \$31.7 million. Since the launch of the program we have reached the fiscal year annual cap, and we are reaching this cap earlier and earlier each fiscal year. Currently, applications that have been received to-date will expend the annual allotment for the rest of this fiscal year. SHPO is working with our state agency partners and reaching out to applicants and proponents of the program to see how to move forward.

There has been some internal discussions on launching a competitive process instead of accepting applications on a rolling basis as it is now, with very light requirements for proof of viable projects. When reservations are made for those projects that have never launched; those funds are lost with no means of retrieval. The thought process is to make the rating and review criteria for applications more stringent in an effort to reserve funding for maintainable projects, i.e. bank/supporter commitment letters.

***Old Newgate Prison Museum – Cathy Labadia***

East Granby’s Representative who is passionate about the museum has requested an Open House Day for the museum now that the construction has been completed. The Representative has pulled together a team of volunteers to assist with the Open House. It is scheduled for October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 – 4:00 pm.

***11. Report on Museum Properties***

None at this time.

***12. Report of Committees***

None at this time

***13. Program Review and Development***

None at this time

***14. Old Business***

None at this time

***15. New Business***

***a. Insurance for Historic Properties – Jenny Scofield Reporting***

There appears to be a problem nationwide with homeowners insurance for National Registered listed or historic properties. This problem is not necessarily new or unknown to staff, however; it is seemingly becoming more and more of a problem. Essentially there is a deep misunderstandings regarding coverage for national listed historic properties nationwide within the insurance structure. On occasion, the office

receives calls from homeowners indicating: they have been denied homeowners insurance or the company they have been using will be tripling the rate of their current policy because their property is listed on the National Register.

Depending on which insurance carrier and/or various location in the state - what has been conveyed to homeowners of properties listed on the National Registered from the insurance industry makes homeowners anxious, and this issue is progressing to the point where it could impact historic listings. Staff from the office is trying to ascertain from the group how/what exactly the underwriters are interpreting the policy language.

Based on the information provided – it was determined to create a sub-committee to possibility bring together DECD’s partners in the insurance industry from the Hartford and New Haven area to start a conversation on the issue at hand.

This taskforce’s focus and mission should be: research, education and establish dialog with insurance partners and possibility a representative from Consumer Protection, create a proposal on how to move forward and best practices around these issues for historic homes in Connecticut.

Ms. Maher, Dr. Glaser and Ms. Kane volunteered to be members of the sub-committee taskforce.

**16. Liaison with Public and Private Agencies – Daniel Mackay Reporting**

Mr. Mackay addressed the members of the council and acknowledge he was pleased to see the outreach with the Historic Preservation Alliance’s project for the Comet Diner as-well-as the overall re-development project in the Farmington Avenue area, and its importance for this section of the city.

The Trust is finalizing the making places grant of this multi-year grant to survey and position historical industrial properties and Mills for redevelopment in Connecticut. The database behind the project will be delivered to SHPO and it should be a great resource tool.

The Trust had a meeting with staff members from UCONN. It was important for The Trust to learn first-hand UCONN’s position. The houses have a special place on campus and it is disappointing that these are not deemed fit to be reused. The most important part of the Agreement between SHPO and the University should require UCONN to do better in their long-term master planning for historic resources on site and; it should not be a closed processed but rather than – one which includes the local community and Administration i.e. town hall format.

Regarding the proposed demolition in Stamford – and if the item remained on the agenda there would have been a number of people from Stamford to voice their concerns about what is happening in the South End District.

Chairperson Nelson provided clarification the item was pulled from the September agenda because the developer was not prepared, but the item would be placed on the October agenda. In advance of the meeting, the Chairperson cautioned Mr. Mackay that the council needs to be limited on conversations pertaining to the item so the Council is not prejudicial. Mr. Mackay thanked the Chairperson and provided a map of the South End to be included in the minutes.

### **17. Review and Approval of Minutes**

At the last meeting – several prior sets of minutes that were presented included tracking-edits. The May minutes was still missing information which included the actual language of the revised motion. In the processing of editing those minutes – the minutes with the actual changes were lost. Chairperson requested Mr. Levine to review the transcript to pull the revised motion language for clarification to approve the May minutes.

#### **Approval of the May 4, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Chairperson Nelson requested a motion to table the May 2016 meeting minutes.

*Ms. Maher made a motion to table the May minutes, Second by Ms. Kane. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

#### **Approval of the July 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

The July 2016 meeting minutes were not distributed for review. Chairperson Nelson requested a motion to table the July 2016 meeting minutes. *Ms. Maher made a motion to table the May minutes, Second by Ms. Kane. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

#### **Approval of the August 3, 2016 meeting transcript.**

*Dr. Jones made a motion to accept the August 3, 2016 transcript, Second by Dr. Faber. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-3, N-0, Abstentions – Nelson, Kane, Partridge, and Gilvarg)*

### **18. Public Forum**

A discussion was held as when the Public Forum section should be held either at the start of the agenda or later in the meeting. The Chairperson thought it was important to give the public an opportunity to be heard on any item even if not a subject to Council's voting agenda. A discussion ensued. It was decided to leave the Public Forum item at the end of the agenda.

### **19. Correspondence**

None at this time

20. **General Discussion**

*Housekeeping items:*

Chairman Nelson requested Dr. Partridge and Dr. Glaser to provide their contact information to Leigh Johnson. In addition, the Council will be scheduling a State Office of Ethics and Protection Act training session, and the Protection Act training session should be scheduled at the end of September for the October meeting. The State Ethics meeting can be scheduled in mid-late October.

A suggestion was made to have name badges for the staff as it would be helpful for new members to the Council along with the public to identify the staff members by name.

21. **Adjournment**

*Ms. Maher made a motion to adjourn, Second by Dr. Faber. Hearing no further discussion motion passed. (Y-7, N-0, Abstaining – Nelson)*

Respectfully submitted by:  
Leigh Johnson