

MAYOR  
**David R. Martin**



DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS  
**Mark McGrath**

LAND USE BUREAU CHIEF  
**Ralph Blessing**  
(203) 977-4714

**CITY OF STAMFORD**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD  
STAMFORD, CT 06904-2152

**(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)**

Date: Regular meeting held: April 7, 2020  
Location: Via Zoom  
Present: Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse,  
Elena Kalman and Alternate, Dee Davis Oberwetter.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**I. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order 7:05 p.m.  
Anne Goslin will Chair the current meeting.

**II. Approval of February 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes.**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2020 meeting. There were no changes to the minutes noted.

(The motion was moved by E. Kalman and seconded by B. Hersh and carried unanimously)

**III. New Business**

**A. CSPP # 1089 - 0 Shippan Avenue**

Applicant: Owner

Participants: Did not attend

Presented: Anne Goslin introduced the agenda item. She noted the owners are not in attendance on the Zoom call. She stated the project is a cottage in the Shippan neighborhood. It was referred to HPAC for review by the City's Land Use Bureau as a part of their review. Anne will forward any materials to the Commission which are submitted.

(The item was **Tabled** without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

**B. Demolition Notices: 644-650 Atlantic Street / 130 Henry Street / 79 Garden Street**

1. Anne Goslin announced that demolition notices were posted at the above properties. No applications had been received. She asked David Woods to report on the conference call of March 25, 2020 with Todd Levine of SHPO, Judy Norinsky of HNP, and members of the South End Neighborhood Association.



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2. David said there was a large conference call by various parties concerned about the possibility of demolition of these three (3) properties. It is not clear if a demolition application was submitted and when it was proposed. David said he contacted Bharat Gami's office (Building Department) to find out and did not get a response. It is understood by Shelia Barney that a demolition delay was submitted. It was agreed, at the time of the call, that HPAC should also submit a demolition delay. That was submitted on March 26, 2020. It was dropped off at the Government Center. (Closed to the public due to the Coronavirus)
3. David added there are a few issues. The Blickensdorfer Building is comprised of two (2) structures. One dates to 1896 and the other dates to 1935. It is believed the applicant may want to tear down the newer part, but not the older 1896 section. That is not clear at this time. The application for demolition may be for the street widening project for Garden Street. More research is needed on the widening project.
4. The other two (2) properties at 79 Garden Street and 130 Henry Street appear to be in the same category of demolition for a proposed street widening project. Henry Street would need to come down because it is at the corner and there will be a need to accommodate the turning radius for the street changes.
5. David noted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) may pursue a CEPA action against the demolition of these properties. David noted there are some next steps for HPAC that we can discuss after this meeting. The suggestions for HPAC were in an e-mail from David last week. One will be to understand the street widening project. The other will be to research the South End Study to determine what is stated about these street projects. There is a petition in progress that HPAC should support. SHPO asked HPAC to provide a letter of support. Anne asked if these properties were part of the CEPA action from 2016 that HNP initiated?
6. Anne Goslin asked Ted Ferrone to comment on behalf of BLT. Anne further asked if plans have been drawn for these changes and demolition requests. Ted said he will be happy to attend the next HPAC meeting and present their progress to-date. He further noted the project is being developed in coordination with the City and the planned widening of Henry and Garden Streets.
7. Ted added that BLT has an agreement with the City to restore 118 and 120 Henry Street and 122 and 126 (Henry Street) and an understanding that 130 Henry Street and 79 Garden Street would be taken down. He said they had struck a deal with the City and the community for the widening of these two streets. They intend to provide 17 units in these small house structures.
8. Anne asked Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, if he can clarify the City's project for the street widening. Ralph said we should ask Jim Travers (Transportation Bureau Chief) to also come to the next meeting with BLT. He understands there has been a study for the street widening. He believes it is only a study at this time. It suggests the street widening as a part of the overall plan for the South End and will add bike lanes. Barry noted he believes the South End Study mentions preservation of the Garden Street buildings and not the demolition of the houses. Ralph said he understands the South End Neighborhood Study recommended as many South End buildings as possible should be protected. Anne also stated the Study recommended the Preservation District be bounded by Atlantic Street to Pacific Street and Henry Street to Dock Street. Ralph again said the Study did recommend protecting Henry Street and said the Blickensdorfer Building is of real importance.



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9. Elena said BLT should identify how they will restore the Henry Street buildings; they will need to show the details. All generally agreed the houses are in very bad shape. Ralph added a condition of any approvals is that BLT will return to HPAC for review. Barry asked again about the Blickensdorfer Buildings and what kind of shape they are in. Ted verified there is on-going remediation of contaminated land by Pitney Bowes. He added there are PCBs requiring further remediation.
10. Anne mentioned that unlike the firehouse, the rehabilitation of every National Register District contributing building should be reviewed by HPAC. HPAC has not been sent anything formal. Anne will request BLT make a formal presentation at the next meeting.

(The item was **Tabled** without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

**C. High Ridge Office Park Building No 3 - Lifetime Fitness**

Presented: Anne Goslin introduced the agenda item. There are news reports regarding the allowance of demolition of Building #3 in High Ridge Office Park and neighbors were seeking assistance with this. She asked if a demolition application has been filed. She noted the court in Hartford had disagreed with the neighbors and have given the owners approval to move ahead with their Lifetime Fitness Proposal.

1. D. Woods noted he has not seen a demolition application. He also noted a letter was sent out by the owners to the neighbors stating they intend to demolish Building #3. It is also understood the City's Board of Representatives is making an appeal of the Hartford decision.
2. Ralph Blessing asked if the building is 50 years old. David replied it is now 50 years old. Elena added that a 50-year-old criteria should not be a deciding factor. David further asked if demolition permits had been requested many months ago, when was the proposal first presented? In which case, is a prior demolition application still in process? Ralph noted a demolition application will normally have an expiration. He said he will check on the status.
3. Anne noted the Office Park was determined to be National Register eligible two (2) years ago. Anne contacted Todd Levine about possible tools to prevent demolition. Todd said without National Register status we do not have much on our side, but perhaps we could schedule a teleconference with the owner to suggest alternatives to tearing the building down. Anne will pursue this. Anne will check on that again. Ralph intends to notify HPAC about the status of any demolition application.
4. All noted with the Government Center closed to the public for the quarantine order it is unlikely there has been any progress with a demolition application or with the Board of Representatives' appeal to the court decision.

(The item was **Tabled** without further decision. Review of status will be on going)



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**D. Elections: Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary**

Participants: Anne Goslin

Presented: Anne noted HPAC will need to have elections for the positions noted. This has been deferred for a number on months now until full members were appointed.

David said this can probably wait until the group is together again in person at the next regular meeting. Rebecca agreed saying it can probably wait. Ralph asked about the bylaws. Anne said she will check and confirm with Mary Levine.

All generally agreed to Table the discussion until the group gets together in person at a public meeting.

(The item was **Tabled** without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

**IV. Old Business**

**A. Historic Resources Inventory**

Presented: Anne Goslin introduced the agenda item. She noted that she completed a draft of the Cultural Resources Inventory Protocol and sent it to Elena and Ralph. He noted it is a good first draft and will circle back.

1. Ralph said the Intern will be starting in June and may be able to take on some of these tasks of the inventory. They still have the changes to Section 7.3 for review and approval. There is time to put the process of the Cultural Inventory in motion after Section 7.3 is passed. They also continue to review the Preservation Trust Fund proposal. He believes there will not be any decisions on the Zoning changes until the City is back to normal after the quarantine.
2. There was some discussion about how a nomination of the building will take place. It was noted a nomination to the Inventory must be made or approved by the property owner. Anne noted that state, national register properties and those on the 1966-67 Inventory will be automatically added to the Inventory. Additions should be suggested by HPAC members.
3. Rebecca raised the prospect of a tax incentive program for historic properties, noting a proposal to the City that stalled a few months back. Ralph added the City may not want to support a program that costs money, but they may be able to do research to show there is no net revenue loss with such a program. Ralph again noted the Intern will start in June and can work on updating the database of properties with a Cultural Resources inventory. This person may also be able to do some of the fiscal research to determine if a tax program is viable.

All generally agreed the Commission needs to review the current City map and the existing historic resources list. All agreed this needs to be updated as soon as possible to make sure it is accurate.

(The item was **Tabled** without further decision. Review of status will be on going)



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**B. Communications**

Item 1: Anne Goslin noted the owners of the Duncan Phyfe House in the South End are working with Renee on a Section 7.3 proposal. It is expected to come before HPAC. She will try to find out what stage they are in currently.

Item 2: Anne asked if a demolition application notice was received for 340 Washington Blvd. She heard, not seen, about one earlier in the day. David said he had not seen it. He will try to do some research. Anne will check with Judy Norinsky of HNP.

David asked if this is the white house next to 1350 Washington Blvd. Anne said no. It was also noted HPAC had passed on a demolition application for that house.

(The item was **Tabled** without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

**V. Adjournment**

A. Goslin adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m. (There was no further discussion)

Drafted by: David W. Woods AIA, Secretary  
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission  
April 27, 2020

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 5, 2020**. Depending on the state of events related to the situation with COVID-19, this meeting will either be held in the 6th Floor Safety Training Room, Government Center Building, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT if the Government Center reopens or via the Internet and/or Conference call should this facility remain closed to the public.