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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: September 3, 2019

Location: Stamford Government Center
6th Floor Safety Training Room
888 Washington Blvd.
Stamford, CT 06901

Present: Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order 7:10 p.m.

A motion was made to assign Rebecca Shannonhouse to be a voting member for this meeting. Anne Goslin (Vice-Chair) will chair the current meeting.

(The motion was moved by D. Woods and seconded by B Hersh, and carried unanimously.)

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2019 meeting. There were no changes to the minutes noted.

(The motion was moved by D. Woods and seconded by B. Hersh and carried unanimously)

III. New Business

A. Preservation Trust Fund Ordinance.

Applicant: City of Stamford

Participants: Anne Goslin

1. A. Goslin introduced this draft ordinance that creates a Historic Preservation Trust Fund. Ralph Blessing drafted it and suggested HPAC sponsor it so that it can go to the Board of Representatives for the next level of review.
2. R. Shannonhouse asked what the history is? Anne said there has been talk about the creation of a fund for property owners to assist with renovations. She thinks some of the funds may come from Section 7.3 applications. She noted there may be some City funds. The City reviews approximately five Section 7.3 applications per year.



CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

Page 2

3. Rebecca noted there has been some concern in the past that developers will be paying more for the improvements through building permit fees or other filing fees. She also noted it might be good if there is some administrative support for staff that can back HPAC. Maybe the fund can also support inventories.
4. Barry thinks the intent is somewhat broader. The draft contains language regarding funding administrative staff for HPAC. Rebecca said this may supersede the “tax benefit” or “tax deferral” program that HPAC has discussed before. The group is waiting on Harry Day to determine if a law exists for tax deferrals. Anne will contact SHPO to inquire about possible laws that can be used. The phase-in period for a property owner’s tax deferral can be 5 or 10 years. Barry asked if the trust fund and tax deferral programs should be developed simultaneously. David agreed but also thought the funds should be separate and therefore, the programs should be separate. Both of the programs can be very useful. Rebecca said she will reach out to the Representative from the Hubbard Heights District to see what the interest is in this program.
5. Barry asked about the Trustees. David said that currently HPAC has a Vice Chair but does not have a Chair person. There should be a note in the ordinance that other persons may be assigned when the Chair position is not filled.
6. Anne noted in the Purpose Section, a property should be eligible by HPAC designation “and/or” the City’s cultural resource inventory. Judy Norinsky of HNP noted that under Section 29-7, Item C, a historic district should be eligible and may need to be defined in Section 29-2. Anne said she will ask Ralph Blessing for a clarification. Anne also asked Judy to provide, in writing, (email OK) any notes she may have on the proposed ordinance.
7. Rebecca wondered how this might work for a property that applies for a tax credit. David said it can be worked out by the trustees as written in the ordinance.
8. All were generally in favor. Rebecca also asked if private donations may be accepted under this program. It is not clear if this program will generate more funds for a property owner than a tax incentive program or if a property owner can use both programs. That will be determined as it proceeds.

There was a general discussion of the next steps as follows:

- Judy will put other comments in writing.
- Anne will send the ordinance to SHPO to see if there are review comments.
- The Commission will get comments and questions to Ralph.
- Can a person be eligible for tax credit or a tax deferral and also use this program?
- Barry asked if the Law Department has looked at this.
- Rebecca will review this with Hubbard Heights District Representative.

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



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 3

B. Changes to Section 7.3 of the Zoning Code.

Applicant: City of Stamford

A. Goslin noted the City asked for comments on the Section 7.3 Ordinance re-writes. This has been in the works since the improvements to the Zoning Code were discussed last spring.

There was some discussion about the “Historic Overlay District” as it is proposed in Section 7.3. There was some confusion about that designation and the impacts on those districts or upon other “districts” in the City that currently exist. David said he believes that Ralph is identifying a new “overlay” designation that can be used in the future to help define a historic district. These overlay districts may also help with tax incentives or the Preservation Trust Fund that was discussed earlier. The overlay districts are usually a mapped “overlay” to other districts or zone designations. Rebecca asked how those are determined. David said they are usually mapped by staff and approved by the Zoning Board. Rebecca also asked who can propose those. David and Barry both said that zoning changes or map changes can be requested by anyone and staff. They still must be approved by the Zoning Board. She said she is OK with the designation but has these general questions for Ralph.

All generally agreed with the Section 7.3 changes as these were mostly discussed last Spring. Rebecca asked to get further definition of how Historic Preservation Overlay District works. Rebecca asked if the rules will be too stringent for an “overlay district.”

Anne said she will follow up with the City on a few items as noted.

- Easement question.
- Send the proposed Section 7.3 to SHPO.
- Question about overlay district and what the implications are for it.
- Judy Norinsky will submit some notes in writing.

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

IV. Old Business

A. Cultural Resources Inventory

Participants: Judy Norinsky, HNP

J. Norinsky met with Mary Dunn at SHPO regarding grant money expenditures. Historic Resource Inventories are an option.

It was generally agreed that HPAC would like to work with HNP and the City to develop the cultural resources inventory. Judy and Anne, and possibly Elena, will meet with Ralph in a couple of weeks.

Anne suggested that the inventory start by asking SHPO to determine eligibility for the buildings noted as significant, and not already registered, by architectural historians in the East Side, Cove, and Glenbrook inventories.

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



**CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Page 4

V. Adjournment

A. Goslin adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m. (There was no further discussion.)

Drafted by David W. Woods AIA, Secretary,
September 12, 2019 (Historic Preservation Advisory Commission on going)

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 p.m. in the 6th Floor Safety Training Room. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2019.