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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

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

Date: Regular Meeting held: February 10, 2015
Location: Stamford Government Center
888 Washington Blvd.
Stamford CT 06901
Land Use Bureau - 7th Floor Conference Room
Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, Jill Smyth, David Woods, Barry Hersh (part-time)
Alternates: Lynn Villency Cohen and Elena Kalman

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:05 p.m.)

II. Approval of minutes

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the January meeting:
(Moved by L. Drobbin, seconded by J. Smyth, and carried unanimously.)

III. New Business

A. Yale & Towne Lock Factory, interpretive plaques

1. Ted Ferrarone, COO of Harbor Point Development presented draft text of interpretive signage that is required as a part of a Zoning Board condition for the redevelopment of Yale & Towne Lock. Ted presented an overview of the site:
 - Signs are to be installed near historic buildings.
 - BLT is proposing three (3) interpretive plaques at three buildings.
 - The three (3) buildings are: The Lofts, 711 and the former Yale & Towne Lock Administration Building, now rented by Kayak.
 - All three buildings are now completed and occupied.
 - BLT looked at other historic signs similar to those in South Norwalk.
 - BLT wants to use a combination of photos and text.
 - At the Yale & Towne building there is the lock history that has lots of graphic information.
 - Ted will get photos from the Stamford Historical Society.
 - The signs will be publicly accessible along sidewalks near circulation routes. The final locations have not yet been determined.
2. HPAC comments were as follows:
 - B. Hersh asked if they are on the side of the buildings? (Answer no)
 - The signs will be "Metal" back on "easel stands" near a sidewalk and at a height that will be able to be read by children.



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- BLT said the material for the plaques will be acrylic face with metal back.
 - HPAC members asked if the material can be cleaned and stand up to weather? (BLT to review)
3. L. Drobbin noted the following:
- BLT has made a good start but need to augment the text, once graphics are selected.
 - Need to have graphics selected first.
 - There is relevant historic information in a public document at SHPO that was prepared for the Antares Development.
 - The Plaques should give a sense of what used to be there, and what is there now
 - Suggest using photos of the inside of the buildings, as available.
 - Maybe use photos of products, as available.
 - Plaques should include a time line so readers can understand the era and sequence of development of the site.
 - Once the designers have the appropriate graphics, they can compile the text.
4. BLT would like to include brief bios of both Yale and Towne.
- Will come back with graphics and mock ups.
 - The style and format of the S. Norwalk plaques seems to be appropriate for this application. (agreed by all)
 - Mr. Ferrarone represented that the plaques could be completed in a month. (There were questions about that)
 - BLT will have a graphic designer conduct the next steps and will present a more advanced design concept at the March or April meeting.

The HPAC group generally agreed with the direction for the interpretive plaques but also agreed that the project needed to be more advanced i.e. a mock-ups with graphics prior to the subsequent review. BL&T will return to the March or April meeting bringing the design and material selection for review.

(The discussion was tabled until the design is presented at the next meeting).

B. Sterling Farms Dressing Room Addition

1. Nancy Ormsby-Flynn, from the City's engineering department, presented a two-story addition to one of the historic cow barn buildings, currently used as the Dressing Room Theater. It has a silo on the southwest corner that faces the golf course. The structure is on the entry drive road. It is a separate building from the Kweskin Theater - to the north.
- Curtain Call has an agreement with the City to operate the theaters.
 - There was a 2010 addition and renovation to the Kweskin Theater.
 - The original buildings were used as barns. In 1970, the site became a City-owned golf course
 - The building now has single men's and women's room (single stall) and they are not HC accessible.



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2. The proposal is to construct an addition on the west side, with HC toilets on the first floor, and dressing rooms, plus a rehearsal space and a work room on the second floor.
 - They intend to add a total of 2,500 sq. ft. over two stories.
 - They are not touching the silo.
 - The second floor will have a “Cathedral” ceiling under roof rafters.
 - The existing roof is in bad shape and needs to be restored with this renovation.
 - Green asphalt roof shingles are suggested since the older building had green trim. The green color is not historic.
 - The siding will be Hardie Plank, clapboard horizontal profile of 6’ or 8” – to be determined. The original is probably 4”.
 - Upper story gable ends are designed with vertical board and batten siding.
 - The city proposes to paint the window trims with dark green paint. The rakes and gable trim are proposed to be white, as there is not any real consistency with the older barns on site. The Kweskin Theater has beige trim. (questioned)
 - The original building will also be painted and will “match” the colors selected for the addition.

3. Comments were as follows:
 - The siding should be horizontal and “similar” to the clapboard siding at the gable ends of the original barn.
 - The dormers should match the original shed roof dormers on the original building, rather than the peaked gable style.
 - The dormers can also be redesigned so there is a single shed roof dormer rather than two “peaked” dormers.
 - The “exposure” scale of the Hardie Plank clapboards can be different from the original building.
 - The use of Hardie Plank clapboards is appropriate.
 - The gable ends should have clapboards that match the lower level.
 - The gambrel roof shape is appropriate for the new addition.
 - It was noted that the roof “skirt” detail (bottom of roof) that is on the historic building is not on the gambrel roof of the new addition. (HPAC noted this is appropriate)
 - All the building trim color should match the window trim color including gable trims. White would be more appropriate as it will be more compatible with the original building.
 - Green trim may be used, as long as the exact color selection is approved by the HPAC in another review.
 - The City should endeavor to have the other buildings on site appear similar with similar painting (color palate) scheme.
 - Roof shingles should be a color that recedes, such as gray or gray-green “slate look” - rather than the strong “green” color selected.
 - There may be an issue with the single stair and egress from the second floor. If a second stair needs to be added it must be presented to HPAC. (This will be reviewed by the City.)



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4. L. Drobbin noted that the Department of the Interior Standards call for additions to historic structures to be “set apart” from the original. The design team may want to think of the differences, in the design of the addition
 - D. Woods does not agree that the addition should appear different. Since barns typically had many additions over time this addition should be contextual and the new materials should match the original.
 - There will be some minor differences from the original such as with the roof line or the exposure dimension of the siding.
5. W. Haynes asked if the City applied for “Hurricane Sandy” funds for roof renovation and construction and that there are non-matching grants still available. The city should leverage money for any historic work
 - There are Sandy grants and historic restoration funds available from DECD
 - The City will consider alternatives for funding.

A resolution was made to support the design concept with the understanding that the design will be finalized and returned to the commission either in person or by electronic mail distribution. The following changes will be addressed.

1. An exterior painting option will be determined and colors will be presented to HPAC.
2. Siding will be the same clapboard on the base and on the top at the gable ends.
3. The two proposed dormers, or a single dormer, will match the original shed roof dormers;
4. The roof shingle selection and the color will be presented to HPAC for final review.
5. The City is to review stair egress and code requirements and make recommendations.

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by A. Goslin and carried unanimously)

C. Hoyt Barnum house (new item - not listed on agenda)

1. There was a brief discussion about the Hoyt Barnum House on Bedford Street adjacent to the police station. The Stamford Historical Society had a meeting Sunday to review the potential move to another location. The following was noted.
 - The building dates to 1699.
 - The City would like to move it.
 - The Historical Society owns the building.
 - It is used as a spook house by the Historical Society during Halloween.
 - The City wants to clear the site to allow for the police station construction.
 - The Mayor intends to hold a press conference on Thursday to announce the new Police station project.
2. W. Haynes said there are issues with this plan as noted here.
 - If building is moved it will be delisted from the National Register.
 - The Historical Society has indicated that they want to relocate it to their property.
 - They have a parking lot in the back and on the North side of their building.



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- In order to move it up High Ridge Road, they need to get it across parkway.
- It will need to be taken apart and put back together.
- HNPP prefers that it is placed on a downtown site, so it can stay whole.
- There may be an option to put it in Mill River Park, but the community has not been consulted.
- The community and SHPO should care about this building because It tells the “origin” story of Stamford.
- There is a request that SHPO will visit the site in the next week or two.

It is understood the Stamford Historical Society may want to attend a future HPAC meeting when it is appropriate to review the options for the house. At this time, HPAC tabled any further review until more is known, and there is a specific proposal to act upon. (The discussion was tabled until next meeting).

IV. Old Business

A. Demolition delay

1. W. Haynes reported on **650 Atlantic Street** (Blikinsdorfer factory building):
 - The transfer act requires that the previous owner is responsible for contamination clean up.
 - Pitney Bowes (PB) has filed for the demolition of “part” of the building (to be verified)
 - It is PB’s responsibility to conduct the contamination clean up.
 - The building is an L-shape and backs up to Garden St.
 - There are three buildings on the site but it appears as one. The portions to be demolished will be determined.
 - W. Haynes will be walking through the building with PB next Thursday at 10:00
 - There is a problem with ground water contamination; a pump and treat system is currently in place
 - The demolition delay will expire in April.
 - The building is owned by the “Greenwich Consortium”.
2. W. Haynes will report back to the HPAC when there is more information.
 - On going task
3. J. Smyth reported that a meeting and review of the demolition ordinance with C. Reeder, has not occurred. D. Woods and J. Smyth will try to have this meeting and review before the next meeting.
 - On going task
4. B. Hersh is in the process of evaluating the delay criteria so the HPAC can have standards for evaluating demolition requests. It was tabled until the next meeting.
 - On going task



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B. Grants update

1. J. Smyth met with Jerry Katz at the city who stated that they will proceed with an application for \$20,000 in April. Jill may request some help from the group.
 - Jill requests some direction on what neighborhoods to study.
 - The proposal will need to identify the boundaries of the study areas.
 - W. Haynes suggested the area west of Mill River Park.
 - The group may also want to identify the areas affected by recent zoning changes. (shoulder areas)
 - Another possibility is the area south of Bulls Head.
 - Another possibility is the Forest Street neighborhood.
 - It was noted that the east side is untouched and could be an historic district.
 - Jill will consider options for who will do the work of the grant, It may need to go to a consultant and low bidder to an RFP.

There was a motion to move forward with grants. J. Smyth will complete the application and request assistance as needed.

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by B. Hersh, and carried unanimously)

C. Sacred Heart property

1. D. Woods attended the walk through of the property pursuant to the city RFP for architectural firms. His firm, Culpen & Woods, has decided not to pursue the project. The City engineering bureau has also asked that a member of HPAC be on the committee to select the professional consulting firm. D. Woods has agreed to represent HPAC. The following is additional information for the project.
 - The project is broken into 4 phases.
 - a. Hazardous material abatement;
 - b. "Light" renovation to clean up existing space for K-2 classes;
 - c. Demolition and renovation/addition for K-3 and,
 - d. Renovation/addition for grades 4 & 5, including restoration of CJ Starr Barn/Carriage House.
 - Work is expected to occur over 7 years (by the RFP addendum)
 - There will be significant issues with site work for pedestrian access, auto circulation, parking, and bus circulation. All that will be determined in Phase 3.
 - L. Casolo of the city has asked that Todd Levine of SHPO, visit the site. The city has not requested the demolition of the cottages yet but may do so soon.

D. Woods will continue to work on the selection committee and will report back to HPAC at the next meeting.

(Discussion tabled until the next meeting)

D. Mill River Bridge status

1. W. Haynes reported that the firm Ryan Biggs Clark Davis has completed a report on the bridge structure and the costs of renovation. The following was noted.



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- The report suggested that restoring the trusses for structural use is feasible as an alternative to the replacement of the span proposed by the City.
- The restored trusses will need a center pier but the replacement bridge would not.
- A center pier will be located at the center of the “lenticular” steel structural span
- The additional costs, above the grant money that the City has now, will be about \$450K. The restored bridge will likely be eligible for state restoration funding up to \$200K. That is considerably less than \$1.5 million additional cost that was previously estimated.
- Lou Casolo has placed the request into the capital budget.
- HNPP has reviewed the option with the city and supports it.
- The plan is for a pedestrian bridge that will appear similar to the historic bridge
- Planning Board has reviewed the project and is supported by community groups.
- Robin Stein will present the project at the HPAC March 10 meeting, the project will be called the “Main Street Bridge over Mill River”.

(Discussion Tabled until the next meeting)

E. Cedar Heights Road Bridge Replacement Project

1. L. Drobbin reported that the CT DOT will attend the next meeting to review the status of the Cedar Heights Road Bridge Replacement Project.
 - A letter was written to SHPO for an eligibility finding.
 - Neither DOT nor SHPO have consulted with HPAC, HNP or any other local historic group in regards to the project which is an adverse effect.
 - It is understood that the City has 30% design plans at this point.
 - It is also understood that the DOT and SHPO have not followed Section 106 regulations requiring the involvement of HPAC and other local historic agencies of the design and “replacement” intent.
2. It was also noted that FHWA stated to L. Drobbin that a state wide historic bridge survey is being started but more information was not able to be publicized at this time L Drobbin will try to get an update from FHWA or DOT on the bridge survey.

(Discussion tabled until the next meeting)

Ms. L. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Drafted by: David W. Woods AIA secretary – February 11, 2015
Stamford, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 p.m. in the 7th Floor Conference Room, #7-C. The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 10, 2015.