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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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STAMFORD, CT 06904-2152

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

Date: Regular meeting held: August 10, 2021
Location: Via Zoom
Present: David Woods, Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman, Rebecca Shannonhouse and
Dee Davis Oberwetter.

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. by HPAC Chair, D. Woods.

II. Approval of the Prior Meeting Minutes.

D. Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of the last HPAC meeting on April 10, 2021. B. Hersh seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

III. New Business.

A. 36 Ann Street.

Application for: Special Permit approval under Section 7.3 (Critical Reconstruction) and addition to the Cultural Resources Inventory (CRI).

Owners: Pacific House

Applicant Presentation: Rafael Pagan.

(Elena Kalman recused herself for this presentation and left the meeting.)

Mr. Pagan submitted and presented materials to HPAC. He owns both 36 Ann Street and the neighboring building at 38 Ann Street. He said the plan for 36 Ann Street would enhance the block and help provide affordable housing.

HPAC discussed specifics of the project.

Regarding the Section 7.3 Application:

B. Hersh made a motion for HPAC to approve the request for the Section 7.3 application (Critical Reconstruction) based on the following HPAC resolution. D. Davis seconded the motion, and the vote passed unanimously.

The Commission made a determination to support the project as "Critical Reconstruction" as noted under Section 7.3 with the following conditions:

1. The owner's architect will consider a change to the windows on the first floor porch area to make them full length, similar in character to the second story and historic houses.



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2. The owner's architect will consider a façade with less ornamentation. The comments from the Commission are that the Queen Ann look of the front façade is too different from the existing neighborhood.
3. The owner's architect will propose a more contextual façade design and detail for the new construction.
4. The Commission generally agrees with the massing of the building, as the higher portion is at the back of the site.
5. The Commission recognizes the Zoning Board may have other considerations to review that are beyond the scope of HPAC review, such as Section 7.3 bonuses, set-backs and parking.
6. The Commission requests the corrections noted above be resubmitted to Vineeta Mathur, Associate Planner for the City of Stamford, and then forwarded to the HPAC Board electronically. HPAC will review the corrections online.

Regarding the CRI Application:

HPAC held a duly noticed Public Hearing on ZB Application #221-23 to add 36 Ann Street to the City of Stamford Cultural Resources Inventory (CRI).

HPAC discussed the CRI application. D. Woods made a motion that the following resolution be written to support this property's inclusion in the CRI. D. Davis seconded the motion, and the vote passed unanimously.

Upon reviewing the submitted documents and consideration of testimony received during the Public Hearing, HPAC recommended approval of the application based on satisfaction of Criteria C. HPAC requests the following be submitted to the Commission for review:

1. Submittal of the full package of application materials, including a statement from a qualified historic preservation expert.
2. Other requirements of the application should be provided to the City, as noted on the application form. The requested materials are:
 - a. Site survey.
 - b. Site and building photographs, with descriptions.
 - c. National, state or local historic register documentation (may not be applicable).
 - d. Documentation supporting the architectural significance of the existing structure.
 - e. Letter from a qualified historic preservation expert for Section 7.3. applications (as noted above).
3. The Commission will accept these materials provided electronically and will process the application via email.



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- B. Riverbank Road:** Report on a historic cemetery that is currently lacking protections.
Presentation: Brian O'Neill, Stamford resident

This was presented as an informational item on the agenda. Mr. O'Neill has been involved with this project for many years. He explained the site has a rich history but has deteriorated significantly with headstones being knocked over and/or covered with dirt. It is currently for sale.

Mr. O'Neill is seeking various avenues for protection and requested the Stamford Land Use Bureau note cemeteries, such as this one, throughout the City for protection. Mr. O'Neill stated Todd Levine and Marena Wisniewski, both of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), support protection of the site. An exact location of the site was not given but was said to be in the shadow of Revolutionary Rock on Riverbank Road, roughly one mile north of the Merritt Parkway on the left-hand side of the road when traveling north. It is north of the Scarborough House and occupies part of the 536 Parcel, which is now for sale. The site has been referred to as Riverbank Cemetery in published articles.

HPAC members discussed various means of potentially protecting the site. D. Woods asked whether the current owners have an easement that has set aside the cemetery or could that be done? He also suggested a discussion with the owners occur before a cease and desist order is sought, as mentioned by Mr. O'Neill.

Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, who was in attendance at the meeting, said he had been contacted by Mr. O'Neill and wants to learn from SHPO what the City's options are.

Following the discussion by HPAC members, a motion was made by E. Kalman that HPAC write to a letter to Todd Levine of SHPO noting there is an unrecognized cemetery in Stamford and HPAC supports its recognition for landmark status and to protect the existing site. HPAC also encourages the City to do additional research on the property to find out what other options are available within the City. In addition, HPAC encourages the State and City to properly identify what has been referred to as Riverbank Cemetery. R. Shannonhouse seconded the motion, and the vote passed unanimously.

IV. Old Business.

- A. Stamford Historic Preservation Trust Fund Update.** Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, reported the paperwork for the Trust Fund has been completed and the Board of Representatives had approved the Declaration of Trust that officially set up the Trust Fund. The first meeting of the Trust Fund will be in September. Two members of HPAC (D. Woods and B. Hersh) will be members of the Trust. There is \$1,500.00 in the Trust Fund right now. Section 7.3 applications will be required to pay a fee of \$500.00, which will go into the Trust Fund. It was also noted that SHPO has reached an agreement with BLT, which allows partial demolition of the Blickensderfer Building, provided they make a \$100,000.00 donation to establish a grants program to support historic preservation in the South End.



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- B. South End Updates.** D. Woods reported he had no updates. R. Blessing noted the South End Study Group received a grant from SHPO for the South End Local District Study Group and will now need to go through the City process to accept the money. They also asked for an extension of their term.
- C. Demolition Permit Applications, as noted.** Mostly smaller residential projects or tear-downs for garages. None were presented for discussion.
- D. SHPO's Partners in Preservation Projects Grant.** R. Shannonhouse provided an update on this grant. Mary Dunne, of SHPO, said in an email to her that outreach/education efforts, such as creation of a brochure with simple explanations of incentives for historic preservation and/or a post-COVID panel discussion with developers, who have successfully used such incentives, could be eligible for this grant money. R. Shannonhouse will follow up with Mary Dunne to determine if the South End Study would need to be completed first.
- E. Long Ridge Tavern.** D. Woods provided an update on this property. The owner has sold the Long Ridge Tavern. The current owner is financing the new owners, and the new owners are not likely to make a lot of changes to it. D. Woods will try to facilitate an introduction with the new owners after the sale is complete.

V. Adjournment.

D. Woods adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Written by: Rebecca Shannonhouse, Secretary, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

DRAFT submitted: August 23, 2021.

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for September 7, 2021 via. Zoom.