



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
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MINUTES  
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
December 14, 2016

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA  
Mr. Al Cocce, AIA, representing John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner  
Mr. Mohamad Farzan, AIA  
Mr. Karst Hoogeboom, Chairman  
Dr. Patrick Malone  
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon  
Mr. Kevin Nelson, representing the Associate Director of the Division of Planning  
Dr. Ronald Onorato  
Mr. Pieter N. Roos  
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Clark Schoettle

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Joanna Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian  
Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Deputy Director  
Ms. Michaela Jergensen, Senior Reviewer RIDOT Projects  
Ms. Katherine Pomplun, Senior Grants Coordinator  
Mr. Glenn Modica, Senior Project Review Coordinator  
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Principal Special Projects Coordinator  
Ms. Elizabeth Warburton, Senior Architectural Historian

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Darin Early, COO, Commerce RI  
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board  
Ms. Lisa Lawless representing Janet Coit, Director DEM  
Ms. Ruth Taylor  
Vacant

GUESTS

## II. AGENDA

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 A.M., Chairman Hoogeboom presiding.

### 2. Minutes of November 9, 2016

On a motion by Mr. Farzan, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission unanimously November 9, 2016.

### 3. Executive Director's Report

- a) Mr. Sanderson reported on staff review of designs for the Providence Public Library.
- b) Mr. Sanderson distributed a 2017 annual meeting schedule. The January 11, 2017 meeting will be cancelled.
- c) Mr. Emidy reported on Geographic Information System development by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and R.I. Emergency Management Agency for historic properties. The ACOE GIS work will be in addition to GIS development at the University of Rhode Island as reported at the November 9 meeting.

### 4. State Preservation Grants

Sarah Zurier presented information about the process to review and evaluate the 2016 State Preservation Grants. Ms. Zurier and Katherine Pomplun organized and managed the SPG program.

The State Preservation Grants (SPG) program is now in its seventh granting year. The program was created by the R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) as a result of a successful bond issue in 2002, extended with a second bond issue in 2004, and reauthorized by the passage of the Creative and Cultural Economy Bonds in 2014. The three bond issues have provided a total of \$11 million for the RIHPHC to distribute through a competitive grant program. Regulations for the program were adopted in 2003, revised in 2005, and revised again in 2015. The Creative and Cultural Economy Bonds also fund capital construction work at 9 major arts institutions and will fund nearly \$8 million in competitive State Cultural Facilities Grants (SCFG)—a program for arts organizations modeled after the State Preservation Grants. RISCA's SCFG decisions were finalized on Monday 12/12/2016. We had one applicant in common this year. Also, one of our past grantees applied for a SCFG, and one of our current applicants recently completed a SCFG project.

State Preservation Grants support capital preservation work at museums, cultural art centers, and public historic sites located in historic buildings. Between 2003 and 2007, RIHPHC

received applications for 208 projects; 96 sites in 29 cities and towns received State Preservation Grants. The \$7.6 million invested between 2003 and 2015 has leveraged about \$85 million in total project spending.

In 2016, RIHPHC held four information sessions to promote the program—in Wickford (at the annual statewide historic preservation conference), and in Providence, Newport, and Coventry. We received 27 applications for sites in 16 cities and towns. Four of these applications were ineligible for evaluation—due to incomplete SPG projects or failure to provide a complete grant application. Requests for assistance with capital preservation projects totaled \$2.1 million. Of these requests, five were for Small Projects that cost \$45,000 or less, and 18 were for Large Projects that cost as much as \$2.9 million. Small projects are given easier matching requirements—a ratio of two parts grant to one part match, plus the opportunity to use approved materials and/or labor as match. Large projects must raise a cash match of 1:1.

Once applications were checked for completeness, RIHPHC staff and SPG Review Panel members received at least 12 applications each to review and score. Conflicts-of-interest were noted, and Review Panelists did not evaluate or comment on those applications.

Scoring measured 1) the property's architectural and historical significance; 2) the building's physical need for the project; and 3) the impact the project would have on the organization's public programs and services. Additional points were awarded to projects that were specifically included in community comprehensive plans or part of local arts or historic district zones.

Staff members met to consolidate individual scores to reflect staff consensus. Ted represented the staff in Review Panel deliberations. The SPG Review Panel—appointed by the Commission—met for the first time on October 19, and Ron Onorato was elected Chairman. The Review Panel agreed on a consensus score for each application and asked staff to collect additional information about specific projects.

Over the next month, additional information was shared with staff and Review Panel members. One applicant (Fort Adams Trust) withdrew its application due to a change in their schedule. Staff members ranked the applications by region and by Small and Large Projects. Staff met to consolidate individual ranks to reflect staff consensus and provide ranks for Ted to use in SPG Review Panel deliberations. SPG Review Panel members also completed ranks for the applications. Ranking projects by region ensures that the slate of applications represents various parts of the state.

Members of the SPG Review Panel met on December 2 to discuss the ranked applications and finalize a recommended slate of projects for the Commission. One property recommended for SPG funding is not listed on the National Register. The Commission gave the First Universalist Church—home of the American-French Genealogical Society/Veterans' Memorial Museum—preliminary approval for the National Register on 9/14/2016. AFGS will work with RIHPHC to prepare a nomination.

The Review Panel's recommendations include three Small Project Grants and twelve Large Project Grants for a total of \$1,281,012. Of the 15 proposed recipients, seven applied for the first time in 2016, and eight had received a grant before. Twelve cities and towns in seven regions are represented by the funding slate.

The recommendations of the SPG Review Panel were presented for consideration and approval by the Commission.

During discussion, Commissioner5 Abbott stated that he is involved with the Providence Performing Arts Center project, and he recused himself from discussion or voting on that project. On a motion by Mr. Farzan, seconded by Mr. Roos, the Commission

VOTED to approve the following SPG projects with the understanding that the recommended funding amounts represent general allocations based on the applications at hand, and the Commissioners' vote to approve these grants also authorizes RIHPHC staff to work with grantees to adjust scopes-of-work and final budgets. RIHPHC staff will work with applicants whose projects were not awarded funding to determine if a revised application might be submitted in 2017.

**APPROVED 2016 STATE PRESERVATION GRANTS**

Site	Region	Town	\$ Request	\$ Recommend	\$ Total proj.
Kendall Dean School (new Town Hall)	Blackstone	North Smithfield	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$2,965,690
Pawtucket Public Library	Blackstone	Pawtucket	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$385,000
Am-French Gen. Soc./Vets' Museum	Blackstone	Woonsocket	\$111,403	\$111,403	\$222,806
Crescent Park Loeff Carousel	East Bay	East Providence	\$75,152	\$69,652	\$150,304
Coggeshall Farmhouse	East Bay	Bristol	\$29,452	\$29,452	\$96,695
Linden Place	East Bay	Bristol	\$58,616	\$58,616	\$203,659
Fort Adams Visitors Ctr	Newport	Newport	\$120,000	\$109,091	\$218,182
Nehemiah Angell Barn	North/West	Foster	\$29,700	\$19,433	\$29,150
Betsey Williams Cottage	Providence	Providence	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,025
PPAC	Providence	Providence	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$565,904
Beavertail Light	South County	Jamestown	\$46,475	\$46,475	\$92,950
Wilcox Park Bandstand	South County	Westerly	\$17,036	\$15,488	\$23,232
Read Schoolhouse	West Bay	Coventry	\$26,404	\$26,404	\$39,606
E Greenwich Town Hall	West Bay	East Greenwich	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$446,765
Varnum Armory	West Bay	East Greenwich	\$43,450	\$43,450	\$86,900
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>\$1,307,688</b>	<b>\$1,279,464</b>	<b>\$5,826,868</b>

	\$ Recommend	# Awards	%
<b>SMALL</b>	\$71,344	3	5%
<b>LARGE</b>	\$1,208,120	12	95%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>\$1,279,464</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>BLACKSTONE VALLEY</b>	\$411,403	3	32.2%
<b>EAST BAY</b>	\$157,720	3	12.3%
<b>NEWPORT</b>	\$109,091	1	8.5%
<b>NORTH/WEST</b>	\$19,433	1	1.5%
<b>PROVIDENCE</b>	\$300,000	2	23.5%
<b>SOUTH COUNTY</b>	\$61,963	2	4.8%
<b>WEST BAY</b>	\$219,854	3	17.2%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>\$1,279,464</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**The following applications were awarded funding:****BLACKSTONE VALLEY**

1. **Kendall Dean School** in North Smithfield was built in ca. 1936 under the WPA to designs by Woonsocket architect Walter Fontaine. The Town recently voted to centralize town offices under one roof, in the school building where they already were holding public meetings. A grant of \$150,000 towards a \$2,965,690 project will support masonry repointing, repairing/painting exterior trim and ornament, repairing wood windows and installing interior storms, repairing interior finishes, and floor refinishing.
2. Pawtucket's former post office was built in 1896-97 to designs by William Martin Aiken and James Knox Taylor. The Beaux-Arts building has a south entrance tower with a distinctive round cupola and copper dome. The old post office now serves as part of **Pawtucket Public Library**, which serves 250,000 people each year. A grant of \$150,000 towards a \$385,000 project will restore/repair 3 elliptical windows and 12 cupola windows and sills, improve the gutter/drainage system, provide architectural services, and complete spot masonry repointing.
3. The former First Universalist Church in Woonsocket was built in 1924 to a Gothic Revival design by architect Gorham Henshaw and expanded in 1957. The building is now headquarters of the **American-French Genealogical Society/Veterans' Memorial Museum**. The AFGS holds one of the largest collections of French Canadian genealogical and historical collections in North America and supports research and public programs, while the Veterans' Memorial Museum exhibits military collections and hosts public events. A grant of \$111,403 will support a \$222,806 project for architectural services and construction of a new entrance and elevator on the back of the building.

**EAST BAY**

1. **Crescent Park Loeff Carousal** is a National Historic Landmark masterpiece of wood sculpture built in 1895 for Crescent Park in East Providence. Its "hippodrome" building topped with an onion dome was also designed by Loeff. A grant of \$69,652 will go towards a \$150,304 project to repair/replace deteriorated wood elements of the hippodrome building, install a new flashing/gutter system to prevent weather infiltration, and prep/prime/paint, as well as to stabilize decking on the carousel turntable.
2. **Coggeshall Farm's Farmhouse** was constructed ca. 1760 and expanded ca. 1790. A "living museum," Coggeshall Farm Museum attracts 11,000 people a year to learn about life on a small tenant farm in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. A grant of \$29,452 will enable the museum to hire a preservation architect to carry out a needs assessment, to design, and to oversee a project (also grant-funded) that includes structural repairs and installation of a new cedar shingle roof. The total value of the entire large project—which includes additional activities outside of the grant project scope—is \$96,695.

3. **Linden Place** was built in 1810 to designs by Russell Warren for James DeWolf of Bristol. Today, the house serves multiple roles as a historic house museum, a wedding venue, and a community meeting space. The museum interprets the history of the slave trade, economic history of the new nation, society, industry, and design. A grant of \$58,616 will go towards restoring 54 wood sash windows, following up on a project that restored the leaded glass fanlights. The total value of this project is \$203,659.

## NEWPORT

1. A 1878-79 warehouse building houses the **Fort Adams Visitors Center**, operated by RI-DEM. It contains exhibits, ticket booth, gift shop, and restrooms, and is the starting point for tours of the Fort. A grant of \$109,091 will support a \$218,182 project that includes replacing/repointing/sealing brick (which is dissolving due to the seaside location); spot replacement of slate roof shingles; replacing/repairing wood windows; and replacing/repairing door hardware.

## NORTH/WEST

1. The **Nehemiah Angell Barn** was built in Foster Center around 1790. It is an English-style barn, and its timber framing and original animal stalls remain intact. A grant of \$19,433 will enable Foster Preservation Society to carry out \$29,150 of repairs to prepare the building for exhibits and tours. Project activities include regrading, replacing sills, repairing broken girts, jacking up the building, and installing studs and bracing as required.

## PROVIDENCE

1. Built in 1773, **Betsey Williams Cottage** was part of the 100-acre farm willed by Betsey Williams to the City of Providence in 1871 as the core of Roger Williams Park. The gambrel-roofed, center-chimney farmhouse is largely intact—with its five-room plan, wide-plank floors, and original mantels. \$150,000 will support a \$300,025 project that will enable the Providence Parks Department to open the building as a historic house museum. Project activities include brick repointing; window repairs; sill repairs; exterior trim repairs; roof flashing and fascia boards; flooring repairs/replacement; plaster repairs and paint; HVAC; lighting and fire safety upgrades; and regrading and paving a path to provide ADA-access to the back ell while keeping the floor plan of the main block intact.
2. **Providence Performing Arts Center** is individually listed on the National Register. Designed by nationally recognized movie palace architects Rapp and Rapp in 1928. A grant of \$150,000 will support a \$556,904 project to restore the terra cotta façade. The project includes architects' fees, cleaning the façade, making new molds and casting replacements for failing terra cotta elements, installation, and repointing.

## SOUTH COUNTY

1. **Beavertail Light Station** is a Rhode Island icon, the site of America's 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest lighthouse (1749). The site encompasses the granite Light Tower (1856), and four brick and stucco buildings erected between 1856 and 1939 and interpreted by the all-volunteer

Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association. A grant of \$46,475 will support a \$92,950 project to remove and replace the parge coating, repair rotted wood soffits and casings, seal porous stone window sills, and repair storm windows on the four brick buildings, as well as to repair the tower catwalk.

2. Wilcox Park in downtown Westerly was designed in 1898 by landscape architect Warren Manning. **The Wilcox Park bandstand** was erected in 1902 for the Westerly Band's public concerts. Park concerts continue today, and the bandstand is a hub for public events including poetry readings, Memorial Day ceremonies, rock concerts, pet-judging contests, and children's storytimes. A grant of \$15,488 will support a \$23,232 project to replace the wood shingle roof, column bases, fascia, and crown molding; repair concrete floor; and repaint wood trim.

### **WEST BAY**

1. **Read Schoolhouse** in Coventry is individually listed on the National Register. It is a wood-frame, one-room schoolhouse built by local farmers in 1831. A grant of \$26,404 will support a \$39,606 project to repair windows, repair or replace front doors and frames; clean and repair siding and trim; scrape, prep, and paint.
2. Built in 1804, **East Greenwich's Town Hall** is one of the original State Houses of Rhode Island, individually listed on the National Register. Built in 1804 by Oliver Wickes, it is an important example of civic architecture in the Federal period. It served as the Kent County Courthouse until the early 1990s, when it was converted to a town hall. The Town of East Greenwich will receive \$150,000 for a \$446,765 project to replace the slate roof and repair/replace damaged wood trim as necessary.
3. **Varnum Memorial Armory in East Greenwich** was built in 1913-14 as a home for the Varnum Continentals, a unit of the state militia. This Gothic Revival-style brick building contains a drill hall, meeting spaces, and museum spaces for the unit's outstanding collection of military artifacts. A grant of \$43,450 towards an \$86,900 project will restore the original 77 exterior windows (cleaning, sanding, caulking, priming, and painting) and pay for staging the building to carry out the work.

### **The following applications were not recommended for funding:**

1. **St. Mary's Church** proposed a project to rebuild a non-historic feature.
2. **Block Island Historical Society** presented a disorganized application (that included work that would not meet preservation guidelines. RIHPHC has had mixed experiences with the applicant's performance on a past State Preservation Grant (easement violation, slow completion).
3. **Hale House's** current management arrangement between the South Kingstown Land Trust, Preserve Rhode Island, and Matunuck Preservation Society appears to be provisional, and the application does not describe strong public programming/impact.

4. **Bristol Naval Armory**'s application did not demonstrate a coherent program for public use and programming of the building, and the other Bristol applications were stronger.
  5. **Edward King House** proposed a project that was not historically sensitive (replacing all of the historic windows), and the applicant expressed a lack of interest in considering another approach to the project (for instance, window repair).
  6. **Paine House Museum** proposed an under-defined project that consists largely of work to non-historic features.
  7. **National Museum of American Illustration** did not demonstrate community engagement or impact, and there were concerns about visitor experience at the site.
  8. **Fort Adams Trust** withdrew its application due to scheduling concerns.
5. Other Business: There was no other business.
6. Next regular meeting date: Wednesday December 14, 2016 at 9:30 AM.
7. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Minutes recorded by,



Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director  
State Historic Preservation Officer