



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
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MINUTES
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
February 8, 2017

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA
Mr. Mohamad Farzan, AIA
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board
Mr. Karst Hoogeboom, Chairman
Ms. Lisa Lawless representing Janet Coit, Director DEM
Dr. Patrick Malone
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
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. Virginia Hesse, Principal Architect
Ms. Michaela Jergensen, Senior Reviewer RIDOT Projects
Mr. Glenn Modica, Senior Project Review Coordinator
Ms. Katherine Pomplun, Senior Grants Coordinator
Ms. Roberta Randall, Principal Architect
Ms. Elizabeth Warburton, Senior Architectural Historian
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Principal Special Projects Coordinator

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Al Cocce, AIA, representing John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner
Mr. Darin Early, COO, Commerce RI
Mr. Kevin Nelson, representing the Associate Director of the Division of Planning
Ms. Ruth Taylor
Vacant

GUESTS

Edward Connors, NR Consultant (American Supply Company NR)
Mr. Thom Deller (American Supply Company NR)
Ms. Kaity Ryan, Preservation Society of Newport County
Marena Wisniewski, PPS

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M., Mr. Hoozeboom, Chairman, presiding.

2. Minutes of December 14, 2016

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

VOTED to approve the Minutes of December 14, 2016.

3. Executive Director's Report

- a) A ceremony to announce the 2016 State Preservation Grants was held on January 19 in the Ballroom at Linden Place.
- b) RIHPHC, the RI Historical Society, and the RI Black Heritage Society have been awarded a federal grant to document the history of the 20th-century Civil Rights Movement in Rhode Island.
- c) Transfer of management and operation of Eisenhower House from RIHPHC to the RI Department of Environmental Management is proceeding.
- d) The Governor's recommended State Budget for FY 2018 funds the RIHPHC request.
- e) RIHPHC has sent a letter dated February 7, 2017 to the Federal Railroad Administration expressing serious concerns regarding an Environmental Impact Statement for the Northeast (Rail) Corridor; copies were distributed to Commissioners.
- f) In accordance with a State government reform of agency regulations, RIHPHC will need to repeal the regulation for the Historic Homeownership Tax Credit since that tax credit was repealed by the General Assembly several years ago. RIHPHC will review all of our regulations over the next six months and draft revisions as appropriate. On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to repeal the Historic Homeownership Tax Credit regulation.

4. Approval of 2017 Certified Local Government Grants

Ms. Pomplun presented information about CLG grant applications and staff funding recommendations.

Applications for 2017 CLG funding have been reviewed and scored by RIHPHC staff on four criteria:

1. **Project priority:** Local preservation plan implementation is the top CLG funding priority, followed by survey and registration activities, protection of threatened resources, and public education activities.
2. **National Register significance:** Projects involving properties which are eligible or recommended for listing on the National Register receive priority, and rare, unique, or key landmarks merit special consideration.
3. **Project need:** Projects addressing historical resources with special needs and projects which further local planning efforts are preferred.
4. **Project impact:** Projects with broader or statewide impact rank higher than those with local impact, as do those which can lead to a larger or multi-phase project.

Based on the results of this scoring, staff recommended funding the following 6 proposed projects for a total of \$57,900.

| Applicant/CLG | Project Title | Grant Request | Recommended Award | Proposed Project |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------|-------------------|--|
| Newport/PSNC | Historic Preservation: An Overlooked Economic Driver | \$15,000 | \$13,600 | Grant will support a statewide study to analyze, report, and disseminate the economic impacts of historic preservation in Rhode Island. |
| PRI/Annual Conference | Annual Conference | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | Planning and coordination for the annual conference, to be held in April, 2018. |
| Cumberland | Ashton Village Historic District Standards | \$8,000 | \$8,000 | Town of Cumberland will hire a consultant to develop design guidelines for Ashton Village. |
| Providence | Knight Memorial Library Architectural Assessment | \$12,000 | \$12,000 | Providence Community Libraries will hire an architect to complete an architectural assessment of the library that will identify work required and establish priorities for addressing the most critical needs. |
| North Kingstown | Wickford Design Guidelines | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | Town of North Kingstown will hire a consultant to complete design guidelines for Wickford's commercial corridor. |
| North Kingstown/Cocumscussoc Assoc. | Smith's Castle Trail System Brochure and Signage | \$4,300 | \$4,300 | Grant will support the design, construction, and installation of outdoor educational signage and a brochure to enable self-guided tours of trail system. |
| | | | \$57,900.00 | |

Following discussion, on a motion by Mr. Schoettle, seconded by Mr. Roos, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the 2017 CLG grants.

5. Loan Approval

Ms. Pomplun presented information about two applications for RIHPHC preservation loans.

RIHPHC received two applications for loan funding in January, 2017:

| Property | Address | Use | Applicant(s) | Total Project Cost | Loan Request |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|--------------|
| Hoxie House | 26 Carolina Main Street, Richmond | Private home | Kathleen Hawes and Michael Frappier (Homeowners) | \$12,000 | \$12,000 |
| Irons and Russell Building | 95 Chestnut Street, Providence | Mixed Use (will be 57 apartments and ground floor commercial space) | Brian Poitras (Waldorf Capital Management) | \$16m+ | \$200,000 |

Staff have reviewed these applications for significance of property, need for project work, impact of project, and fiscal considerations of project and borrower. RIHPHC has approximately \$240,000 available in the Revolving Loan Fund to make new loans.

Hoxie House, c. 1780, is a contributing structure within the Carolina Village Historic District. The nomination suggests that Hoxie House is likely the oldest dwelling in the village. The homeowners/applicants intend to hire a contractor to fix damaged/rotted sills and make repairs to the existing framing system to correct a bowing wall. The building is not open to the public, but is highly visible.

The applicants originally applied for loan funding in summer 2016. RIHPHC staff reviewed the application and visited the property, and concluded at the time that the work was necessary and appropriate. Staff also felt that the applicants' budget for the project was higher than necessary, and recommended that the applicants obtain additional estimates from preservation contractors in order to determine a more accurate budget. The applicants followed this advice and submitted a revised application in January, for a lower total project cost.

The total loan request is \$12,000. This amount is based on a reputable preservation contractor's quote to remove and replace 26 ft. of sill and to cut and install splines to straighten the side of the building. Applicants are requesting a five-year term at 5% interest (floor rate of program) to be re-paid in 20 quarterly payments of \$681. The applicants have submitted sufficient documentation that their income will support these quarterly payments and total liens (including the proposed loan) will not exceed 75% of the after-rehab value of the property.

The Irons and Russell Building, c. 1903, is a contributing structure within the

Providence Jewelry Manufacturing Historic District. It is a current federal and state tax credit project, being monitored by RIHPHC staff architect Virginia Hesse. It is a large rehabilitation project (\$13.8 million) and is over 90% complete, but the applicants require additional bridge financing. It is a highly visible building and some areas (i.e. ground floor commercial space) will be accessible to the public.

This is an atypical loan request in that the funding would not be tied to a specific work item; rather the request is for bridge financing only. The total loan request is \$200,000 (RIHPHC loan maximum). Applicants are requesting a two-year term at 5% interest (floor rate of program) to be re-paid in 8 quarterly payments of \$26,427, and have submitted evidence of anticipated leasing income that indicates income will support proposed quarterly payments. To secure the loan, RIHPHC would have to accept a subordinate mortgage on the property (although applicants have also suggested a willingness to discuss personal guarantees). Total liens (including the proposed loan) would exceed 75% of the after-rehab value of the property. A loan of \$200,000 plus the proposed loan of \$12,000 would deplete the RIHPHC Loan Fund available balance to \$38,000.

Following discussion, on a motion by Mr. Schoettle, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve a loan for the Hoxie House project in the amount of \$12,000.

On a motion by Mr. Farzan, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission

VOTED to not approve a loan for the Irons & Russell Building project due to concern that the loan is essentially financing a completed development, the loan cannot be adequately secured by a mortgage given the existing debt, the loan would significantly deplete the available Loan Fund balance, and lending to a project that RIHPHC is already reviewing for tax credits could create the perception of a conflict of interest because not approving the tax credits would jeopardize repayment of the loan. Mr. Schoettle recused himself because the Providence Revolving Fund is participating in this project.

6. Approval of additional funding for the State Preservation Grant awarded to Smithfield Town Hall. The Commission originally awarded a matching grant of \$18,755 for a project to restore historic windows. Working with RIHPHC staff, the Town of Smithfield put the project out for bid, and when the low bid exceeded the budget the Town re-bid the project. The lowest bid is still above the amount originally estimated, and RIHPHC recommended an increase of \$13,195 to the grant. Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Farzan, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to increase the amount of the SPG grant to the Town of Smithfield from \$18,755 to \$31,950.

7. National Register of Historic Places

Final Approval: American Supply Company, 1420 Broad Street, Central Falls

Mr. Emidy presented information about the property.

The American Supply Company Building was constructed in 1875 on the south bank of the Blackstone River in the village of Valley Falls, within the City of Central Falls, Rhode Island. The 2½-story building is rectangular in plan, with a heavy timber wood frame and an end-gable, trapdoor monitor roof. It has been altered over the 140+ years of its existence, as additions have come and gone, and its original exterior materials are hidden behind vinyl siding; however, it retains original materials behind the vinyl, and its original form is largely intact. The interior retains its original materials and plan, with exposed timber framing, wood floors, and sided-over original sash, among other features.

The American Supply Company Building is significant under National Register Criterion A on the local level as an example of factories and supply houses erected in the 19th century to provide auxiliary services to the expanding textile economy. In 1870, Myron Fish and a partner named Grey established a business under the name Myron Fish and Company, leasing space within the Valley Falls Company plant, a large cotton mill on the east side of Broad Street, to manufacture loom reeds, heddles and harness – devices attached mechanically to looms. In 1875, the thriving company erected its own building across the street and began the independent manufacture of these loom components. Within a few years, the company began the manufacture of leather machinery belting and, over time, provided a wide range of textile supplies. The corporate name American Supply Company is the result of a merger of three related companies in 1883.

During discussion, Dr. Malone said he was glad to see recognition for the importance of manufacturing equipment and components for the Rhode Island textile industry in the 19th century. Obviously Rhode Island mills' production was dependent on a good supply of machines and looms and machinery components as were made at the American Supply Company. He also noted that the nomination document should be corrected to state that the Valley Falls Bridge is faced with stone but is not a structural stone-arch bridge. On a motion by Dr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Farzan, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the nomination.

Preliminary Consideration: 4089 Main Road, Tiverton

Ms. Doherty presented information about the property. The house at 4089 Main Road is a fine example of a transitional Federal/Greek Revival-style dwelling, likely built in the mid-1820s. It includes a 2½-story, 3-bay-wide, front gable main block and a full-height, 2-bay-wide rear kitchen ell that appears to be original. A 2-story flat-roof block, which houses the rear stairs, may be a later alteration but probably dates to the 19th century. The building is sheathed in wood

clapboards, has paneled corner pilasters and gable-end cornice returns. The main entry is slightly recessed and includes sidelights, a transom window, paneled pilasters and a plain but prominent entablature. Window openings are filled with 6-over-6, wood sash. The interior exhibits a side-hall, “staggered parlor” plan, which survives largely intact. Plaster walls and ceilings are found throughout the house, along with original doors and hardware, wood flooring, and molded wood trim. The main stair features a delicate balustrade and carvings on the stair stringer that are Federal in style. Several of the six fireplaces have Greek Revival-style surrounds. The Rumford fireplace in the parlor has a Classical Revival-style surround that may date to the 1920s or 1930s. The house sits on former farmland that was associated with the Cory family; further research is needed to determine for whom the existing house was built. The property was subdivided in the 1970s, at which point a barn and family cemetery were separated from the house. The current lot includes the house and a two-car garage, built in the 1920s and expanded in the 1940s. Handsome stone walls mark the perimeter of the property. The house is highly intact and, though separated from most of its original acreage, retains a strong sense of its historic setting. It would likely be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C for architecture.

During discussion, Dr. Onorato and Mr. Hoogeboom both noted that the house exhibits elements of architectural style beyond what is typical of a farmhouse. Dr. Morenon noted that given the age of trees on the property it is possible that the site is relatively undisturbed and may contain archeological deposits related to the history of the property. Mr. Abbott inquired about a historic barn located on adjacent property? Mr. Sanderson replied that information about the barn could be included in the final nomination, but since there is a separate owner, the barn could not be added to the National Register without the owner’s consent. On a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Roos, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for the nomination.

Preliminary Consideration: St. Joseph’s Hospital, 21 Peace Street, Providence

Mr. Emidy presented information about the property. Occupying much of a city block in a densely settled, commercial and residential neighborhood of South Providence, St. Joseph’s Hospital is a complex of attached buildings exhibiting five distinct phases of development: ca. 1897, ca. 1918, 1929, 1954 and 1964-6.

Within a few years of the establishment of Rhode Island Hospital in 1868, the Diocese of Providence (established 1872) addressed a massive increase in the city’s population and a critical need for hospital services with the purchase of the former Broad Street mansion of industrialist Cyrus Harris and refitted it for use as a hospital. Oversubscribed from the beginning, the first building was augmented in 1892 by a brick, 4½-story hospital designed by William Walker and Son. Around 1897, a chapel was constructed to the rear of the Walker building; the Chapel remains as the earliest building on the site. In 1929 the Diocese commissioned architect Ambrose J. Murphy to design a six-story brick wing attached to the 1892 building. The 1892 hospital was demolished in the early 1960s to make way for a substantial enlargement occupying the east end of the hospital property and designed in a distinctly modern style by Kiff, Colean, Voss and Souder of New York.

St Joseph's was an independent diocesan hospital until 1970, when it was merged with Our Lady of Fatima Hospital in North Providence. The hospital has been closed for several years, though sections of it are still in use as an urgent care center and for other outpatient procedures.

Mr. Schoettle recused himself from considering this property because the owner has asked the Providence Revolving Fund to assist the historic rehabilitation project.

There was extended discussion about the property. Commissioners expressed considerable interest in the question of whether the hospital might meet National Register eligibility criterion "A" as significant in the history of the development of Providence. However, Commissioners felt further research was needed on a number of issues, including the history of the development of Providence hospitals (and particularly the relationship of St. Joseph's with the nearby Rhode Island Hospital); the significance of St. Joseph's as a Roman Catholic hospital established early in the history of the Providence diocese; the medical history of St. Joseph's; and the relationship between St. Joseph's and the development of the Elmwood neighborhood.

Commissioners also expressed considerable interest in the architecture of the 1964 portion of the hospital as possibly a significant example of mid-twentieth-century architecture. The Commissioners noted that the earliest portions of the hospital have been replaced by later construction. The 1929 building exhibits physical integrity but seems to lack individual architectural significance. Commissioners asked for further research about the 1964-1966 development, its relation to the design of other buildings of the period (particularly to hospital design), the importance of its architects, and further information about whether architecturally significant interior spaces exist?

On a motion by Mr. Roos, seconded by Mr. Abbott, the Commission

VOTED that St. Joseph's Hospital is potentially eligible for the National Register but further research is needed is needed to document its historical and architectural significance and consideration of the property's National Register eligibility was continued until additional information becomes available.

8. Other Business: There was no other business.

9. Next regular meeting date: Wednesday March 8, 2017 at 9:30 AM.

10. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Minutes recorded by,



Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer