



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
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MINUTES
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
September 13, 2017

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA
Dr. Tripp Evans
Dr. Morgan Grefe
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board
Ms. Tanya Kelley
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, State Historic Preservation Officer
Ms. Lucie Searle
Ms. Ruth Taylor

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Joanna Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian
Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Deputy Director
Ms. Virginia Hesse, Principal Historical Architect
Dr. Timothy Ives, Principal Archaeologist
Ms. Michaela Jergensen, Senior Reviewer RIDOT Projects
Mr. Glenn Modica, Senior Project Review Coordinator
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Principal Special Projects Coordinator
Ms. Elizabeth Warburton, Senior Architectural Historian

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Al Cocce, AIA, representing John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner
Mr. Darin Early, COO, Commerce RI
Mr. John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner
Mr. Kevin Nelson, representing the Associate Director of the Division of Planning
Ms. Lisa Primiano representing Janet Coit, Director DEM
Mr. Clark Schoettle
Mr. John Smith
Vacant

GUESTS

Mr. Edward Connors
Mayor Charles A. Lombardi, Town of North Providence
Ms. Gretchen Pineo, PAL
Ms. Shanna Vecchio-Schubert, Senate Fiscal Analyst
Mr. David Westcott, Town Planner, Town of North Providence

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:38 A.M., Ms. Taylor, Chairwoman, presiding.

2. Minutes of July 12, 2017 and August 9, 2017

On a motion by Dr. Morenon, seconded by Mr. Abbott, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the Minutes of July 12, 2017 and August 9, 2017.

3. Acting Executive Director's Report

- a) Mr. Sanderson and RIHPHC staff Joyce Gervasio and Elizabeth Warburton visited four sites of completed State Preservation Grants on August 2, 2017 with our House and Senate Fiscal Analysts and our State Budget Analyst. Mr. Emidy explained that this annual event serves to reinforce the positive outcomes of our SPG program. The group visited sites in Bristol, Newport, and Westerly.
- b) The Providence Preservation Society and Preserve Rhode Island organized a tax credit advocacy meeting with Senator Jack Reed and Representative David Cicilline. The meeting was held on August 28, 2017 at the former Mechanical Fabric property in Providence, which has been converted into residential space with a kitchen incubator and pop-up restaurant space. The RIHPHC was represented by Mr. Sanderson and Mr. Emidy, and Commissioner Lucie Searle was in attendance to represent AS220. Other attendees included Barnaby Evans, the Providence City Councilor who represents the Cromwell Street area, and the project developer. After touring the project, Senator Reed and Representative Cicilline expressed their support for the program.
- c) Representatives of the National Park Service who oversaw the Hurricane Sandy Grants came to Rhode Island August 28th and 29th to visit sites of projects that were funded through their program. RIHPHC staff architects Virginia Hesse and Roberta Randall, and archaeologist Timothy Ives led the tours, which included sites in Narragansett, Newport, and Westerly.
- d) The 40th annual Rhode Island Heritage Festival was held on the front lawn of the State House on Saturday, September 9, 2017. Fourteen heritage groups had tents with information about their culture, some including food and games for children. Seventeen groups sent performers including singers, dancers, and musicians. RIHPHC Heritage Aide Mercedes Monteiro was the primary organizer of the event, which, by all accounts, was a success.

- e) The RIHPHC received notice early in September that the Preservation Society of Newport County is considering a change to the landscape plan that the Commission previously approved. The change involves replacing some trees between the driveway and the new Welcome Center. Joanna Doherty and commissioners Taylor and Kelley will visit the site on September 14th to speak to the PSNC project team and view the location of the proposed changes. A presentation will be made to the Commission at the October 11 meeting, after which the Commission will be asked to vote on whether or not to approve the alterations.
- f) The RIHPHC has hired Alicia Chy to fill the part-time position left vacant when Estelle Toracinta retired at the end of January, 2016. Ms. Chy holds a degree in Computer Information Systems from Rhode Island College. We have altered the job title and description that Ms. Toracinta worked under to be a Data Control Clerk. As such Ms. Chy will have some administrative responsibilities, particularly assisting the Project Review coordinator and RIDOT Project Review coordinator, but will also be responsible for our new GIS system, once we receive the deliverables from the two active projects. Ms. Chy's first day of work will be September 18th.
- g) The two GIS projects are moving along. Tim Ives reports on the archaeology project with URI that all of our archaeology site forms have been scanned, along with some of our mapping. The estimated completion date for the project remains summer 2018. Also, Dr. Ives reports that the URI project staff have begun to look for additional funding to continue the project after the Hurricane Sandy funds are expended. These new funds will provide a budget for continued maintenance on the system.

The above-ground GIS project is also moving along. Mr. Emidy reported that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers GIS expert with whom he is working has been combining multiple data sets into one set of points and polygons that correspond to our historic properties database. Mr. Emidy is conducting quality control checks on the points provided by the USACE. He pointed out that properties with an address range have proven particularly tricky for the assignment of points. The due date for our work on the points is December 1. After our check of the data, the USACE will combine it with R.I. Emergency Management Agency data to produce hazard maps with historical properties on them. The expected end date for the project is December 31, 2017.

Regarding the above-ground GIS system, Ms. Taylor noted that starting from scratch with latitude and longitude would be the easiest way to carry out a project like this, however, since our information was not collected with latitude and longitude, she can understand that this would be a difficult starting point.

4. Report: Applications for State Preservation Grants Program & Review Schedule

Ms. Zurier reported that 27 applications for State Preservation grants were received by the end of August deadline, and distributed a list of these. She has been working on the applications to organize them and obtain any information that may have been omitted, and they are almost ready for the review panel. Over \$3million was requested through the 27 applications, and we have a

little over \$2million to grant. Two properties for which applications were submitted are not currently listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, as required: the Forman Center at Rhode Island College, and the East Smithfield Community Center. The staff will collect more information on each property in the coming weeks.

5. Approval of 2018 Certified Local Government Grant Criteria

Mr. Emidy explained that the agenda for the meeting lists this as approval of the 2017 program criteria, however, that is an error and this approval is for the 2018 program. Every year, the Commission is required to approve criteria for our Certified Local Government (CLG) Grants. Mr. Emidy handed out copies of the Criteria that were used for the 2017 grants. He explained the types of properties that were eligible, the funding priorities, and the project selection criteria that were used in the 2017 criteria, and recommended that the Commission adopt the 2017 criteria for the 2018 program.

Mr. Abbott asked if there is a way to use the CLG grants as an incentive to get more of the state's municipalities to become CLGs. Mr. Sanderson responded that the grants are one incentive, however, the community also needs to have an Historic District Commission and meet other obligations to qualify as a CLG. He added that GIS may also be a tool where, in one instance, we would explain to a community that we want to establish a GIS program for historic properties in a community and the community could use CLG grants to do so.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Dr. Evans, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to adopt the proposed 2018 Certified Local Government Grant Criteria.

6. Report: Executive Director Search Committee

Copies of the minutes of the Executive Director Search Committee's August 29, 2017 meeting were distributed. Ms. Taylor reported that the Committee is working with the state's Department of Human Resources and Department of Administration to facilitate the hiring process. The process is a somewhat custom one, as the Commission's role is somewhat uncommon in state government. The upcoming tasks are getting permission to hire for the position and work with Human Resources to complete the job description. Ms. Taylor stated that the Committee plans to post the open position for eight weeks and hopes to conduct interviews before the end of 2017.

Ms. Searle asked whether the Commission is responsible for publicizing the opening, as through the National Trust for Historic Preservation, or whether Human Resources and DOA will do so. Ms. Taylor replied that Human Resources and DOA will do as much as possible, but that the Committee and Commissioners should also spread the word.

Dr. Morenon asked whether the interviews would be conducted electronically or in-person. Ms. Taylor replied that the Committee and the other state offices can pre-screen electronically

according to the Commission's criteria.

7. Approval: State Review Board Appointments

Mr. Emidy explained that, at Ms. Taylor's request, the staff looked into the formation of an independent State Review Board for National Register of Historic Places actions. The staff found that, according to federal and state regulations, a State Review Board (SRB) must have at least five members, including a historian, an historical and a prehistoric archaeologist, a historical architect, and an architectural historian, and that a person may fill more than one of these roles. The Commission staff prepared a list of potential SRB members based on these criteria and presented it to Ms. Taylor for her review. Ms. Taylor replied that the staff should contact the people on the list to inquire if they are interested in serving on the SRB. Mr. Emidy contacted ten potential members, all of whom expressed their interest in serving.

Mr. Emidy distributed a list of the ten prospective members:

- Patrick Malone and Edward Sanderson, historians
- Pierre Morenon and Michael Hébert, archaeologists
- Michael Abbott and Martha Werenfels, historical architects
- Marissa Brown, Tripp Evans, and Ronald Onorato, architectural historians
- Tanya Kelley, landscape historian.

Ms. Taylor stated that we need more landscape historians and landscape architects to be involved in historic preservation and encouraged the Commissioners to inform the Commission of any whom we could make connections with.

Ms. Taylor explained that the establishment of the SRB is not proposed as a way to exclude the Commission from the National Register process. The SRB will make determinations, which will be reported to the Commission, and the Commission will vote to endorse the SRB recommendations or send them back to the SRB for further review.

Dr. Morenon stated that it will be important for the Commission to remain informed of National Register actions. Ms. Taylor responded that there will be abbreviated presentations to the Commission of each of the properties that the SRB reviews prior to the Commission vote.

On a motion by Ms. Searle, seconded by Dr. Greffe, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to establish a State Review Board independent of the Commission.

On a motion by Ms. Searle, seconded by Ms. Kelley, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to appoint the ten persons listed above to positions on the State Review Board.

8. National Register of Historic Places

Final Review: Otis Angell Gristmill, One governor Notte Park Way, North Providence

Elizabeth Warburton presented information about the property. The Town of North Providence received a State Preservation Grant in 2015 for rehabilitation work at the building that will remove some inappropriate alterations. At the time, the building was not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, however, part of the grant agreement was that the building would have to be listed. The Commission reviewed the property at its September 2015 meeting and granted preliminary approval under National Register Criterion A at the local level with a Period of Significance of 1855 to 1872.

The Otis Angell Gristmill is a 1-1/2 story building with uncoursed fieldstone walls with rough-cut granite quoins. It is topped with an asphalt-shingle, front-gable roof with wood cornice returns. The building faces northeast, with a small millpond immediately to its northwest and the Wenscott Reservoir further upstream on the West River. The principal entrance is centered on the building's northeast-facing façade and recessed within a shallow, elliptical-arched opening with original brick trim and quoins. Overall, fenestration is arranged symmetrically, with some window openings infilled with fieldstone that matches the walls. A second area of fieldstone infill, on the southern end of the southwest wall, most likely indicates the original location of the tailrace.

The interior of the Otis Angell Gristmill/James Hilton Bleachery features largely open floor plans on the first and second stories, with some subdivision of bathrooms and closets along outer walls. A mid-twentieth century fire resulted in many interior finishes being replaced at that time. The second story is accessed via a set of stairs in the eastern corner of the building. Ceiling framing is made up of exposed heavy timber rafters connected by collar ties. Metal tie rods extending from this heavy framing support the second floor joists to provide an uninterrupted space on the first floor.

The Otis Angell Gristmill/James Hilton Bleachery is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Industry. Otis N. Angell, a farmer and water wheel manufacturer, constructed the building as a gristmill c. 1855. Angell was known for his invention of a double-bucket turbine known as the "Rhode Island Water Wheel," or the "Angell Water Wheel." As noted in a period review of his patented invention, Angell refined his design during the twelve years during which he lived and worked on this property. In 1866, Angell sold his North Providence property to Connecticut textile manufacturer Thomas Pray. Pray immediately leased the property to James Hilton, an English immigrant who had settled in Cranston by 1860. Hilton converted the gristmill to a textile waste bleachery. When Otis N. Angell published a descriptive circular advertising his new water wheel design, Hilton's review – identifying the source of power at the bleachery as a 23" Angell Water Wheel – was published as a testimonial. Hilton concluded his five-year lease term in 1872, and the property returned to members of the Pray family. Pray's son-in-law Henry Randall Hill, a prominent member of the North Providence community and a farmer, took over the property at the conclusion of Hilton's lease. The property remained in the Hill family until the 1920s and became a social hall for the local Geneva Sportsmen's Club in

1936. The Town of North Providence acquired the property from the Club in 2012, and it is currently used as a municipal social hall and the centerpiece of Governor Notte Park. The building is a rare surviving example of a small-scale, independently operated, rural industrial enterprise that contributes to Rhode Island's significant textile manufacturing and processing heritage.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Ms. Kelley, the Commission unanimously

VOTED final approval for the nomination.

Final Review: Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District, Pawtucket

Mr. Emidy presented information about the proposed district. The City of Pawtucket received a Certified Local Government grant from the RIHPHC in 2015 to write a nomination for the complex of industrial buildings. Edward Connors was hired by the city to prepare the nomination. At the Commission's February 2016 meeting, a preliminary presentation was made and the Commission voted to grant preliminary approval for the nomination.

The Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District comprises a dense collection of contributing brick, industrial buildings of from one to six stories and other structures that occupy a large city block approximately .5 miles west of downtown Pawtucket. The roughly 8-acre complex was built out by E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company and its successor, Jenckes Spinning Company, between 1883 and 1919. Extant Jenckes buildings date from 1887 to 1919, and include the Main Mill (1887), Dye House (1891, 1905), Carding and Spinning Building (1903), Turbine/Engine Room (1887), three Weave Sheds (1909, 1915, 1915), the Tamarack Mill (1916-17), and Tamarack Waste and Store House (1916). Although Building No. 7 (1882) was not built by the Jenckes interests, it is included because it was acquired by the company in 1920, abuts this plant, and is architecturally compatible with the Jenckes-built resources. A brick smokestack associated with the 1917 Second Boiler House and Engine Room (Building 6) is a contributing structure. Roughly 1,000' of granite paver road on Conant Street in front of Buildings 4B, 5, 5A and 5B is inventoried as a contributing structure. Roughly 1,000' of granite paver road on Conant Street adjacent to the complex is inventoried as a contributing structure.

The Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District is significant under Criterion A on the local level for its association with Pawtucket's role in American textile industrialization in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Edwin Jenckes purchased manufacturing and sales rights to the "Hicks Standard Patent U.S. Ring Traveler" in 1883 and relocated in the same year to the site that is the subject of this nomination. There, Jenckes expanded the sales of mill supplies and ventured into cotton spinning. On that basis, Jenckes incorporated as the Jenckes Spinning Company in 1903, massively expanded the spinning of cotton yarn, and began large-scale weaving. Shortly after Jenckes' death in 1910, the successor leadership of his company initiated a new venture, the manufacture of "tire fabric," a coarse, strong cotton duck material that was embedded in liquid rubber before vulcanization. In the decade from 1910 to 1920, Jenckes would become a leading global supplier of cotton yarn and tire fabric and the largest employer in Pawtucket. The Jenckes Spinning Company and its successor, the Manville-Jenckes Corporation, occupied and developed

this site until production ceased in 1933

The complement of buildings of the Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District are also significant under Criterion C as a fine example of the evolution of the architecture of large-scale cotton spinning and weaving in the period from 1882 to 1919.

On a motion by Dr. Grefe, seconded by Mr. Abbott, the Commission unanimously

VOTED final approval for the nomination.

Final Review: Central Falls Mill Historic District Boundary Increase, Central Falls

Mr. Emidy presented information about the proposed increase to the existing Central Falls Mill Historic District boundaries. The City of Central Falls hired the PAL to prepare a nomination to include additional properties in the district so that buildings would be eligible for historic preservation tax credits. At the Commission's October 2016 meeting, a preliminary presentation was made and the Commission voted to grant preliminary approval for the nomination.

The Central Falls Mill Historic District (District) was originally listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 6, 1979, and contained six contributing buildings and one contributing structure on approximately 4.5 acres in Central Falls. The purpose of this boundary increase is to extend the boundary of the District to encompass previously excluded industrial mill buildings south and west of the original District boundary to better represent the continuum of manufacturing operations along the Blackstone River in Central Falls. The boundary increase extends west and north to Charles Street and south to Clay Street and encompasses nine additional buildings, all of which are contributing resources.

The industrial character of the architecture in the original 1978 District continues in this boundary increase. The buildings added to the District with this boundary increase are similar in function and architecture to the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century industrial buildings previously included. The boundary increase area encompasses 10.32 acres and includes: the Standard Seamless Wire Company Factory and United Wire and Supply Company Factory at 381 Roosevelt Avenue; Central Falls Power Company Building at 396 Roosevelt Avenue; Seth Wilkinson Machine Wipers Factory at 403 Roosevelt Avenue; Pennsylvania Textile Company Silk Mill and Lyon Silk Works at 404 Roosevelt Avenue; Leader Weaving Company Weave Shed and Office at 413 Roosevelt Avenue; Union Block at 548 Roosevelt Avenue; and General Fabrics Corporation Silk Mill at 558 Roosevelt Avenue.

The buildings within the Central Falls Mill Historic District Boundary Increase possess integrity of design, workmanship, location, association, feeling, setting, and materials. The buildings within the original Central Falls Mill Historic District consist of large, brick mill buildings along the east side of Roosevelt Avenue. The nine buildings within the boundary increase area demonstrate the expansion of the industrial area of Central Falls as the manufacturing base shifted from predominantly cotton- and wool-based industries to silk and wire and the building types that housed those industries shifted from predominantly brick to wood frame and concrete.

The district as a whole also demonstrates the shift from predominantly hydropowered manufacturing to electrical and steampowered production. The buildings in the increase areas retain their historic massing and siting, and none have been moved from their original location. Additionally, no new buildings have been constructed within the boundary increase areas; little loss of building stock has yielded a generally cohesive grouping of industrial buildings that retain their original relationships. At least four of the buildings have had interior alterations as a result of changing uses (e.g., from manufacturing to self-storage units and condominium residences) and shifts in industrial uses from textile to jewelry manufacturing and other light industries. Exterior alterations generally consist of the application of vinyl siding on wood-frame buildings; the exteriors of the brick buildings are largely unchanged. The streetscape along Roosevelt Avenue still appears to be industrial in nature, despite the changing uses of many of the buildings within the original Central Falls Mill Historic District and the boundary extension areas.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Dr. Morenon, the Commission unanimously

VOTED final approval for the nomination.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Next regular meeting date: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 at 9:30 AM.

10. Adjourn: On a motion by Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Abbott, the Commission voted to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:17 AM.

Minutes recorded by,



Jeffrey D. Emidy
Acting Executive Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer