



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
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MINUTES  
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION  
March 28, 2018

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA  
Dr. Morgan Grefe  
Mr. Paul Jordan, representing Ms. Janet Coit, Director, DEM  
Ms. Tanya Kelley  
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Ms. Lucie Searle  
Mr. John Smith  
Ms. Ruth Taylor, Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Warren Ducharme, representing the State Building Code Commissioner  
Dr. Tripp Evans  
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon  
Mr. Kevin Nelson, representing the Associate Director of the Division of Planning  
Mr. Jesse Saglio, President, Rhode Island Commerce Corporation  
Mr. Clark Schoettle  
Vacant

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Rosemary Carreiro, Fiscal Aide  
Ms. Joanna Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian  
Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Acting Executive Director/Deputy Director  
Ms. Joyce Gervasio, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer  
Ms. Virginia Hesse, Principal Historical Architect  
Mr. Glenn Modica, Senior Project Review Coordinator  
Ms. Katherine Pomplun, Senior Grants Coordinator  
Ms. Roberta Randall, Principal Historical Architect  
Ms. Elizabeth Warburton, Senior Architectural Historian  
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Principal Special Projects Coordinator

GUESTS

Edward Connors  
Morgan Devlin, Preserve Rhode Island

Leigh Schoberth, Preservation Society of Newport County  
Robert Valenti, DOA Division of Legal Services  
Mary Rose Watson, DOA Division of Legal Services

## II. AGENDA

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 P.M., Ms. Taylor, Chair, presiding.

### 2. Minutes of February 14, 2018

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Mr. Sanderson, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the corrected Minutes of February 14, 2018.

### 3. Acting Executive Director's Report

a) Mr. Emidy reported on the Salve Regina dormitories project that was introduced at the February meeting. The RIHPHC sent a letter to Helen Johnson, Preservation Planner for the City of Newport, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The letter stated that the cluster of ranch houses that are proposed for demolition is outside the Bellevue Avenue Historic District's period of significance and not representative of the architectural style and quality for which the listing was intended. Regarding the new buildings, the letter stated that we could not fully review them without further information, including a comparison of their proposed size to that of nearby buildings and landscaping history for the proposed parcels and more details on the proposed plantings. The letter also asked for more information on the proposed work on the William Watts Sherman House so that we can evaluate that impact. We have not received a response to the letter.

Mr. Abbott stated that the project is still in the conceptual approval state with the city. It looks like the review will continue in the coming weeks or months.

b) Mr. Emidy reported that registration for the 2018 Statewide Preservation Conference, entitled "Encuentro," is open online. Registration fees are \$30 for both Thursday and Friday, and \$50 for Saturday, or \$80 for all three days. Commissioners attend for free, but should sign up soon to ensure that they get into the tours that they prefer. Ms. Zurier stated that she emailed a registration code to the Commissioners so that they can register without a fee.

- c) Mr. Emidy reported that the report by Place Economics entitled “Historic Preservation: An Overlooked Economic Driver” had its public release on March 21 at an event at the Breakers. The report, commissioned by the Preservation Society of Newport County and Preserve Rhode Island, received funding from the RIHPHC through a Certified Local Government grant. Over 100 people attended the release event, including the Chairs of the House and Senate Finance committees, other senators and representatives, and the mayor of Newport.

Mr. Smith asked if the report is intended to be heavily used for advocacy efforts? Morgan Devlin, of Preserve Rhode Island, replied that the report is intended for active use. Copies of the report are being mailed to each of the state’s senators and representatives and it is also available online.

Dr. Grefe noted that the Rhode Island Historical Society has a lot of information about the areas that are covered in the report, however, much of that was not requested by Place Economics.

#### 4. Consideration of revised RIHPHC regulations

Mr. Emidy reported that, in 2016, the R.I. General Assembly updated the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) to require all regulatory agencies to codify and update their regulations. The new law requires all regulations to be reformatted, indexed, and published online on the Secretary of State's website. In addition, the law requires that all state agencies repeal outdated or obsolete rules and consolidate and amend regulations to improve the clarity of the requirements. Ted Sanderson and Katherine Pomplun have been working with Mary Rose Watson and Bob Valenti from the DOA Division of Legal Services to get this work done, and it’s almost there.

Mary Rose Watson explained that Rhode Island is one of three or four states that don’t have a good, standardized set of regulations for the entire state. The APA was updated to ensure consistency in existing regulations with statutes and to eliminate redundancy between regulations and statutes. The internal deadline for the work to be completed in August in order to provide sufficient time for any necessary public meetings to be held and for the regulations to be approved and posted by the deadline of December 31, 2018.

Katherine Pomplun explained that Commission action is required on three current RIHPHC regulations: “Historic Preservation Tax Credits 2013;” “Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission General Procedures;” and “Procedures for the Registration and Protection of Historic Properties.”

Ms. Pomplun explained that the regulations for the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program need to be repealed. Currently, the same regulation is on the books at both the RIHPHC and the Division of Taxation. This redundancy needs to be eliminated. The DOA has determined that full regulations for both the 2008 and 2013 iterations of the program should be

promulgated at Taxation. Thus, the existing regulation at RIHPHC must be repealed, and two “one-page” regulations will be promulgated that do not include the actual procedures for carrying out the program, but merely refer to the Division of Taxation regulations.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Ms. Kelley, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve repealing the RIHPHC regulation for the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit program and replacing it with two “one-page” regulations that reference the full regulations for the program at the Division of Taxation.

Ms. Pomplun explained that the regulations “Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission General Procedures” must be repealed. Per guidance from DOA, they only concern the internal procedures of the RIHPHC and do not affect private rights or procedures available to the public. Therefore, under the Administrative Procedures Act, the General Procedures should no longer be a rule or regulation. Ms. Pomplun noted that staff have made minor formatting changes to the General Procedures and have updated the Executive Director’s job description provided therein; this updated document will be made available to the public as a “Guidance Document” but will no longer be a regulation.

On a motion by Dr. Grefe, seconded by Ms. Taylor, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve repealing the “Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission General Procedures” regulation.

Ms. Pomplun explained that staff have worked with DOA to update the “Procedures for the Registration and Protection of Historic Properties.” No substantive changes have been made; rather, this regulation has been reformatted to match the new Rhode Island Code of Regulations template. RIHPHC must promulgate the updated regulations.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Mr. Jordan, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the reformatted “Procedures for the Registration and Protection of Historic Properties” regulation.

Two regulations remain to be reworked, “Registration and Protection of Historic Cemeteries” and “Rules and Regulations for the State Preservation Grants”. Ms. Taylor and Dr. Grefe asked if, rather than just the revised versions, red-lined copies of these could be distributed to the Commissioners prior to the meeting at which they will be voted on. Mr. Emidy replied that he will ensure that is done.

##### 5. Consideration of proposed 2018 Certified Local Government Grant awards

Katherine Pomplun explained that applications for 2018 Certified Local Government (CLG) Grants have been reviewed and scored by the RIHPHC staff based on four criteria: project priority, National Register significance, Project need, and project impact. Commissioners received a handout that listed the funding criteria proposed projects and the Based on the results of the scoring, the staff recommends funding six projects:

- \$10,000 to the Town of Cumberland for the preparation of a Town Hall Historic District National Register Nomination
- \$7,000 to the Town of South Kingstown for the preparation of an update to the existing Wakefield Historic District National Register nomination
- \$15,000 to the City of Newport for the completion of an existing conditions assessment for Newport City Hall.
- \$8,000 to the Town of North Kingstown for the purchase and installation of interpretive signs in the Lafayette Historic District.
- \$6,230 to the City of Newport for the development of an interpretive plan for Miantonomi Park and to support the purchase of two replacement bronze markers to be installed on Miantonomi Tower, which is listed in the National Register.
- \$12,500 to support planning and coordination for the annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference to be held in April 2019.

Three applications were not recommended for funding:

- \$10,000 to the Town of Bristol for a feasibility study for Longfield, a privately-owned historic house which has been for sale for an extended period.
- \$2,500 to the Town of New Shoreham for a homeowner education project.
- \$7,500 to the Town of Hopkinton to survey and prepare historical documentation of a 14-acre property owned by the Hopkinton Land Trust.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Ms. Kelley, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve funding for the six projects recommended by staff.

## 6. Announcements

Mr. Emidy announced that the next Commission meeting is scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 9:30am, however, due to the rescheduling of the March meeting, the April meeting may be cancelled if there are not significant agenda items.

## 7. Report: Executive Director Search Committee

Ms. Taylor asked for a motion to conduct the Search Committee meeting in executive session.

The motion was made by Dr. Grefe, seconded by Mr. Jordan, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

Minutes recorded by,



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