



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
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MINUTES
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
June 13, 2018

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA
Mr. Warren Ducharme, representing the State Building Code Commissioner
Dr. Morgan Grefe
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
Ms. Kaity Ryan
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Clark Schoettle
Ms. Lucie Searle
Mr. John Smith
Ms. Ruth Taylor, Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Tripp Evans
Mr. Paul Jordan, representing Ms. Janet Coit, Director, DEM
Ms. Tanya Kelley
Mr. Kevin Nelson, representing the Associate Director of the Division of Planning
Mr. Jesse Saglio, President, Rhode Island Commerce Corporation

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Rosemary Carreiro, Fiscal Aide
Ms. Alicia Chy, Data Control Clerk
Ms. Joanna Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian
Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Acting Executive Director/Deputy Director
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

Rachel Robinson, Providence Preservation Society

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M., Ms. Taylor, Chair, presiding.

2. Ms. Taylor recognized State Historic Preservation Officer Edward Sanderson on the occasion of his last Commission meeting as SHPO. Mr. Sanderson has resigned the position effective June 25th, ending his long career at the RIHPHC, from which he retired as Executive Director on July 31, 2017. Ms. Taylor thanked him for his leadership and Mr. Sanderson received a standing ovation from the commissioners and meeting attendees.

3. Minutes of May 9, 2018

Mr. Emidy noted one change in the recording of Section A of the Acting Executive Director's Report, to correct a typographical error.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Mr. Sanderson, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the Minutes of May 9, 2018 with the above revision.

4. Acting Executive Director's Report

- a) Mr. Emidy welcomed Kaity Ryan to the Commission. Ms. Ryan is the Deputy Chief of Staff at the Preservation Society of Newport County and lives in Smithfield. She was appointed by the Governor to fill the vacant position on the Commission. Ms. Ryan introduced herself and expressed her excitement about serving on the Commission.
- b) Mr. Emidy reported that Ms. Taylor and Dr. Morenon have been reappointed by the Governor to their positions as commissioners. Theirs were the only seats that were expiring this calendar year.
- c) Mr. Emidy reported that Alicia Chy, RIHPHC Data Control Clerk, has resigned effective June 15th. He thanked her for her time at the Commission. Mr. Emidy explained that he has decided not to start the process of filling the Data Control Clerk position until after Paul Loether has started in the Executive Director position.
- d) Mr. Emidy reported that new security cameras have been installed in the interior and on the exterior of the Old State House. Though currently operational, these are one part of a security system that is not yet completely installed. The camera feeds can be viewed from any computer in the building and are monitored by the Capital Police.

The new security system will include access alarms, motion sensors, and some window and door sensors.

- e) Mr. Emidy informed the commissioners that there is a vacancy on the State Review Board that resulted from Michael Hébert's retirement from RIDOT and subsequent relocation to Florida. The position that needs to be filled is for an archaeologist. Mr. Emidy has received a couple of suggestions and will follow up with those people. He asked that if the commissioners have any suggestions, they let him know by next Wednesday. He hopes to have candidates for a vote at the next Commission meeting. He also noted that there has been discussion at the Review Board about adding a second landscape expert. That process will be carried out separately.

5. For consideration: request to increase State Preservation Grant amount for the Foster Preservation Society's Nehemiah Angell Barn project

Ms. Pomplun explained that the Foster Preservation Society (FPS) received a 2016 State Preservation Grant of \$19,433 for the Nehemiah Angell Barn. In December, FPS hired The Preservation Cooperative to restore the barn for a total contract amount of \$27,370. Work began in the spring and is ongoing. FPS has been reimbursed for \$9,528.33 in grant expenditures to-date.

In April and May, the contractor submitted estimates for additional work to the frame and replacement in-kind of rotted posts, sills, and missing girts, for a total additional cost of \$18,184. RIHPHC staff architect Roberta Randall reviewed this request and visited the barn, and agreed that the work recommended by the contractor is necessary. FPS then submitted a request to increase their total project budget to \$44,544; this would require an additional \$10,270 in grant funds and \$5,134 in matching share from FPS.

To accommodate this request, RIHPHC can consider awarding an additional \$10,270 to FPS from unobligated State Preservation Grant Funds. FPS has affirmed that they have an additional \$5,134 in matching funds available.

On a motion by Mr. Schoettle, seconded by Dr. Greffe, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the increase to the grant award to the Foster Preservation Society for the Nehemiah Angell Barn project by \$10,270.

6. For consideration: Candidates for 2018 Rhody Awards for Historic Preservation

Mr. Emidy pointed out that the agenda erroneously says consideration of the 2019 awards, but this is for the 2018 awards.

Sarah Zurier explained that we received three nominations for the Frederick C. Williamson Professional Award, all of whom are excellent candidates and for whom the awards would be timely. The nominees are Curt Genga of Newport, Phillip Cryan Marshall, and Lucie

Searle of Providence. We received one nomination for the Antoinette F. Downing Volunteer Award, for Rob Gilpin, of Block Island. The PRI and RIHPHC staffs believe that these four would all be worthy recipients, and ask that the Commission approve these awards.

Ms. Zurier explained that, in discussions with Preserve Rhode Island (PRI), we have changed the process by which we collect information on project awards. This year, we are asking the Commission to approve a slate of project candidates that PRI and RIHPHC staff will research further, and from which we will select awardees. Typically, we have the Commission approve awards around this time of year; however, in past years we have run into some difficulty associated with already having chosen project awardees based on nominations, prior to carrying out site visits.

Ms. Zurier presented information about the following nominees for project awards: Pomham Rocks Lighthouse in East Providence, Belcourt in Newport, Almy Street (aka Meader Street) School in Providence, Atlantic-Delaine Gasworks in Providence, Nancy C. Ballou House in Providence, Case-Mead Building in Providence, Eleanor Roosevelt Hall at the University of Rhode Island in South Kingstown, and South Street Power Station in Providence. If approved, PRI and RIHPHC staff will visit each of these sites and gather further information about the properties and the projects in order to select award winners.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Mr. Ducharme, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the slate of Downing and Williamson Award winners.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Dr. Grefe, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the project candidates that Ms. Zurier presented for further consideration.

7. Announcement of 2019 Statewide Preservation Conference Date

Ms. Zurier announced that the 2019 Statewide Preservation Conference will be held on April 6th in East Providence. East Providence was in consideration for hosting the 2018 conference when the Encuentro partnership came up. The theme will be determined in the coming weeks, but the most likely candidate at this stage is historic preservation and recreation/sports.

Ms. Ryan pointed out that Senator Conley, who represents East Providence, is a supporter of preservation and a baseball fan. He's also the chair of the Senate Finance Committee.

Dr. Grefe stated that the theme of recreation will fit well with the R.I. Historical Society's plans. In 2018 their theme is 'rest and relaxation' and for 2019 it is 'sports'.

8. For consideration: State Review Board actions

Mr. Emidy explained that the State Review Board met on June 4th and saw three final nominations, all of which were approved. We will make brief presentations on these three properties and request Commission endorsement of the individual State Review Board actions.

a) Joanna Doherty presented an amendment to the existing College Hill Historic District nomination, which dates from 1976. The RIHPHC received funding from the National Park Service's Under-Represented Communities grant program to amend the National Register (NR) nomination for College Hill so that it more accurately and thoroughly reflects the contributions of people of African descent to the district's significance, by re-interpreting already recognized resources and identifying resources not yet recognized as historically significant. The RIHPHC worked with the R.I. Black Heritage Society on the project, and consultants Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson, who have done similar projects in New Bedford, were hired to prepare the NR amendment.

The scope of work included amending the description section of the nomination (Section 7) to identify and analyze properties associated with events, people, institutions or historical trends that are significant to African American heritage. These include: domestic spaces, institutions (religious, educational, and civic), and places of work. The inventory was updated to include entries for places with significant African American associations to reflect that association, including many of the oldest properties in the district.

A district-wide survey was not done for this project and inventory descriptions were not updated for all of the properties in the district. One property, the Olney Street Baptist Church, constructed in 1962-63, changed from non-contributing to contributing, but the boundary of the district was not changed.

The scope of work also included amending the *Statement of Significance* section of the nomination (Section 8). The additional information included a chronological history of African Americans on College Hill, from the 18th century to the mid-20th century, tied to place. An additional Area of Significance: Ethnic Heritage – Black, was added to the existing list.

Research for the project shows us that College Hill was the site of a notable African American settlement in the city's early history and continued to serve as a residential, religious, institutional, social, and cultural focus for people of African descent into the latter half of the 20th century. Between 1770 and 1970, the neighborhood had a proportionately greater concentration of African Americans than the city as a whole.

The team also found that the history of the district reflects national themes in African American history, including: enslavement as well as freedom through manumission and escape, the migration of African Americans from the south and of people from the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa, entrepreneurship and education in the face of limited job opportunities and employment discrimination, achievement in arts and design, the creation of community institutions, displacement due to urban renewal and gentrification, and the struggle for equal rights.

While the history of African Americans in College Hill includes stories of enslaved people, many African Americans who lived and worked in white households were not enslaved. Many blacks also lived in their own households.

Some early institutions on College Hill, though not founded by or for African Americans, have associations with the black community, including the First Baptist Meetinghouse, which had African American members as early as 1764, and the Old State House, where legislators passed the 1784 act “authorizing the manumission of negroes, mulattoes, and others, and for the gradual abolition of slavery.” African Americans in late-18th-century Providence also created institutions to serve their community. For example, the Providence Free African Union Society, a mutual aid organization, was organized in 1794, and at least five men who lived on College Hill were members, though no buildings associated with the organization are known to survive.

In the late Federal and antebellum periods, African Americans were largely excluded from factory work, despite the diversification of RI’s economy. Common forms of employment remained domestic service, barbering, teaming, shipping, and working on wharves. Workplaces associated with African Americans include the Market House, where several people of color had stalls.

The 19th century saw the emergence of three black enclaves on College Hill: along Benevolent Street; near the intersection of Meeting and Congdon Streets; and the neighborhood including parts of Meeting and Cushing Streets west of Thayer Street. Several African Americans are documented to have lived along Benevolent Street as early as 1798. African Americans remained in this area into the 1940s, though the mid-20th-century expansion of Brown University through the construction of Wriston Quadrangle in 1952 destroyed much of the neighborhood. The neighborhood west of Thayer Street remained African American in some measure into the 1940s, though the development of the Pembroke College campus caused the demolition of houses on Cushing Street beginning about 1910. None of the houses built before the Civil War in either this or the area near the Meeting/Congdon streets intersection remain.

The African American population in Providence increased significantly in the years following the Civil War, but the rate of growth slowed in the early 20th century. The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the arrival of a new immigrant group: people from the Cape Verde Islands, many of whom had West African ancestry, and College Hill continued to be a locus of settlement for Providence’s existing African American community, as well as for those newly arrived from the South or Cape Verde.

People of color coming to Providence from elsewhere, as well as native-born blacks, found limited job opportunities. As in other northern cities, they were systematically excluded from almost all factory jobs, except as janitors. Well into the 20th century, employment among African American men remained profoundly restricted to janitorial work; barbering; teaming, delivering, and later driving both for companies and residents; working as porters; working on commercial vessels; and working as stevedores and longshoremen. Many Cape Verdean men, in particular, worked on the docks; Fox Point was a locus of Cape Verdean settlement due to its proximity to the working waterfront. In 1933, Local Chapter 1329 of the International

Longshoremen's Association was founded – the first union in New England to have a predominantly Cape Verdean membership. Most black women during this period worked as dressmakers, laundresses, housekeepers, and cooks.

Twentieth-century censuses document the presence of African Americans in the homes of whites through 1940, the last census schedules that are publicly accessible. There were, of course, African Americans who worked outside the jobs to which they had historically been confined. Some African Americans on College Hill ran their own businesses that catered to the black community.

The most significant civil rights group of the period, the Providence branch of the NAACP, was organized in 1913, largely by African American migrants from the South, many of whom lived on College Hill. African Americans and Cape Verdeans also formed religious congregations and established social service and civil rights organizations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, some of which endure on College Hill.

The demographics of Providence began to change in the mid-20th century. As the city's overall population declined, its African American population increased, both in terms of absolute number and share of total population – a reversal from the previous period. African American neighborhoods on College Hill persisted, but also faced threats from institutional expansion, gentrification, urban renewal and other forces. Many Cape Verdeans left Fox Point in the 1960s, displaced by highway construction as well as rising rents and home costs. Nevertheless, many black families remained on College Hill, and the district continued to be a focus of African American life.

Mr. Smith and Ms. Taylor commented on the historic changes in ethnic and socioeconomic integration on College Hill and in Newport, reinforcing the study's findings that College Hill was historically more integrated than it is now, in both areas.

On a motion by Dr. Grefe, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Commission unanimously VOTED to endorse the State Review Board action.

b) Ms. Warburton presented information about Additional Documentation for the Georgiaville Historic District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. At the time of listing, the Smithfield Town Hall and Smithfield Fire Department Station #2 were considered non-contributing due to age. The Additional Documentation changes the status of both buildings from non-contributing to contributing.

The Smithfield Town Hall, located on the west side of Farnum Pike, was designed by Town Architect Linwood A. Gardiner and constructed with funds from the federal Public Works Administration in 1939. The two-story, east-facing municipal building consists of a central block flanked by recessed wings that are slightly shorter than the main block. The building has a brick foundation, brick walls, and an asphalt-shingled hipped roof on each of its three blocks. Features that contribute to the building's Georgian Revival character include: splayed brick

lintels, stone keystones and sills, a Palladian-style window arrangement on the north elevation, a cupola with a flared hood, and an emphasized principal entrance with a broken scroll pediment, fluted pilasters, and a transom window. The original design of the west elevation is now obscured by a c. 1998 two-story addition; the addition is not visible from the primary façade and blends harmoniously with the original design by borrowing Colonial Revival vocabulary like columns and corner pilasters. The interior features Colonial Revival details such as transom windows above primary doorways, 1930s terrazzo flooring on staircases, and original light fixtures with stylized classical details. The Tax Collector's Office, the interior space most accessed by the public, is embellished with wainscoting with dentil molding and simple, paneled pilasters. In the Town Council Chamber, a classical balustrade separates the raised stage from the audience. Set back slightly from the main road, the Town Hall is sited south of Smithfield Fire Department Station 2.

Smithfield Fire Department Station 2 is located on the west side of Farnum Pike, north of Smithfield Town Hall. Designed by Town Architect Linwood A. Gardiner, the building is a 1-story, brick building consisting of a 3-bay central block flanked by asymmetrical recessed wings. The building has a stone foundation, brick walls, and an asphalt-shingled gable roof and three arched garage bays with glazed, wood doors on the central block. A central platform centered on the station's roof - originally designed as a cupola but never executed - holds a fire siren. The building's south wing is an addition from between c. 1952-1962 and includes a fourth glazed, wood garage bay with a rectangular keystone lintel and a modern, single-leaf, glazed aluminum door with sidelights for pedestrian entry. The narrower, though taller, wing off the building's north elevation includes a modern, single-leaf, glazed aluminum door for pedestrian entry with original, glazed wood transom centered beneath an octagonal, porthole window. Original wood-sash, double-hung windows have been replaced with vinyl, though some wood-sash casement windows have been retained on the rear elevation.

The Smithfield Town Hall and Fire Department Station 2 represent Georgiaville's early 20th century municipal growth – partially funded by the national Public Works Administration – and the development of the former mill village's new identity as the municipal center of the Town of Smithfield in the first half of the 20th century. The Additional Documentation will change the status of both buildings from non-contributing to contributing.

On a motion by Ms. Ryan, seconded by Mr. Ducharme, the Commission unanimously VOTED to endorse the State Review Board action.

c) Ms. Doherty presented information about the Andrews Mill Company Plant, which is located on a 32-acre site in North Smithfield, along the Branch River. The property includes a main mill building/weave shed with attached boiler house, a freestanding machine shop/gate house, a concrete gate structure at the location of a former mill trench, a steel water tower, and a masonry pump house, all built by the Andrews Mill Company in 1918-1919. A number of non-contributing resources -- including freestanding buildings, like the ca. 1950 brick incinerator and the 1979 office building, as well as several additions to the main mill, built in the 1960s and 1970s -- were built by subsequent owners of the plant: the Uxbridge Worsted Company between

1936 and 1954, and the Tupper Corporation between 1955 and 1994.

The main mill is a south-facing, brick, one-story plus basement building with a concrete foundation. The flat-roofed southern end of the building housed the mill office, while the remainder of the building was occupied by a weave shed, and is topped by a sawtooth-monitor roof. The front elevation was altered in the mid-20th century with the application of aluminum panels, the installation of new metal window sash that partially fill the original 6-foot-by-9-foot window openings, and the replacement of the original entry door, canopy and surrounding sash. The original brick exterior wall and granite trim are intact beneath the sheathing, as are the original window openings. Side elevation windows are set in either segmental-arch or rectangular openings with quarry-faced granite sills, generally filled with paired, wood-frame sash or modern aluminum sash. Some original steel-frame windows with multi-light hoppers and concrete sills also survive. Glazing in the sawtooth monitors has been replaced with plywood, though each monitor does contain a four-light oculus in its east and west elevations. Floors are concrete and round-section wood columns support rolled-steel I-beams that form the main support for the sawtooth monitor roof. Brick, one-story additions built in the 1960s obscure much of the west elevation and all of the north elevation of the main mill. The building has been further altered with the addition of an enclosed loading dock and pre-fab cooling towers, added ca. 1970.

The one-story, brick boiler house extends off the east elevation of the main mill. It has modest corbelling and a parapet on its east elevation and a low, frame monitor on its roof. The freestanding machine shop/gate house is a single-story, clear span, brick building with a concrete foundation and a flat, concrete roof. It features a parapet and corbelling similar to that at the boiler house. Rectangular window frames are filled with metal-frame, multi-light sash.

The Andrews Mill Company Plant was built in 1918-1919 by the Andrews Mill Company of Philadelphia, established in 1902 as a subsidiary of a woolen and worsted firm based in Roubaix, France. It was built on the site of the James Pitts Flock Mill, which operated from 1870 to 1913 and was destroyed by fire in 1915. The Andrews Mill Company was attracted to the site because of its proximity to Woonsocket, which had a skilled labor force, and was further induced by a ten-year tax exemption from the town of North Smithfield. By 1920, the plant employed 200 operatives tending 168 broadlooms in the production of worsted dress goods.

In the spring of 1923 the Andrews Mill Company Plant was closed for about six weeks due to a walkout. In June of that year, the company was re-organized and opened under new ownership, maintaining employment at about 200 operatives until 1925, when the mill was shuttered. The Uxbridge Worsted Company occupied the property from 1934 to 1955, when the Tupper Corporation moved in; Tupper, which used this site as a laboratory and offices, stayed until 1994.

The Andrews Mill Company Plant is being nominated at the local level, under Criterion A in the area of industry, for its association with the French worsted industry in northern Rhode Island, and Criterion C for architecture, as an example of early-20th-century

industrial design in New England. The period of significance is 1918 to 1925, corresponding to the period of occupation by the plant's original developers, the Andrews Mill Company

Mr. Smith asked about the current use of the building. Ms. Doherty replied that it is currently vacant.

Ms. Taylor noted that, at a previous Commission meeting when a preliminary presentation was made for this property, integrity was a topic of some concern. Some of this has been resolved by further investigation about the potential for removal of the aluminum sheathing on the façade, and the presence of original materials behind it. Dr. Grefe asked if there is a binding agreement to remove the sheathing. Mr. Emidy replied that the owner, NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley, has committed to removing it, and that there is a tax credit project that will likely be contingent on its removal. Mr. Schoettle added that NeighborWorks has a history of doing good rehabilitation projects.

On a motion by Mr. Abbott, seconded by Dr. Morenon, the Commission unanimously VOTED to endorse the State Review Board action.

9. Discussion about introductions for the incoming executive director

Ms. Taylor explained that Paul Loether will begin work as the Executive Director on June 25th and he has asked if introductions can be set up for him with important people in preservation and beyond in the state. This had already been in the works, with two receptions in mind: in Providence and Newport. She is willing to host at the Colony House in Newport, but we are accepting other ideas and need a venue in the Providence area. We also need to assemble lists of invitees. She asked the commissioners to forward ideas for either to her by email.

Ms. Ryan asked if there are any issues coming in the next year or so which it would be helpful to consider when inviting people. Ms. Taylor replied that there are some issues that could potentially come up, though nothing immediate. Still, we will keep that potential in mind when inviting guests.

Ms. Searle stated that it may be better for some of Mr. Loether's introductions to be done one-on-one, particularly with important state government and political leaders.

10. Announcements

Dr. Morenon noted that the recent passing of Professor Bill Simmons is a significant loss to the archaeological community. He was a pioneer in the way that we think about the discipline of archaeology. It could be said that he was instrumental in the birth of modern archaeology in Rhode Island and the way that we work with ethnographic study.

Mr. Emidy announced that the next Commission meeting is scheduled for July 11th, 2018 at 9:30am.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:14am.

Minutes recorded by,



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