

THE HISTORIC PROPERTIES COMMISSION

Minutes: *The Historic Properties Commission Town of Hamden held a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Parks and Recreation Dept., Hamden Government Center, 2750 Dixwell Avenue. The following issues were discussed:*

Attending: W. Doheny, A. Gorman, E. Highkin, D. Ioime, T. Levine,

Absent: D. Baker, K. Minkema

Guest: Jeff Bianco, Bianco Giolito Weson Architects, Mr. John DeRosa, Hamden Building Committee, Curt Leng, Mayor's Administrative Assistant, Town Attorney Sue Gruen

CALL TO ORDER—Chairman Levine called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Mr. Baker and Mr. Minkema not present.

Approval of Minutes of the February 17, 2010. Mr. Gorman noted that under item c signage was regarding the Lockkeeper's House and not Jeep's Brook Millsite. Ms. Highkin motioned to accept the minutes with the correction, seconded by Dr. Doheny. *The motion carried unanimously.*

PUBLIC HEARING

At 7:05 p.m. Chairman Levine opened the Public Hearing.

There was no public present to sign to speak to the issues. The clerk inquired if Mr. Levine will allow anyone who does come to address the Commission and he replied that yes, they would be welcome.

At this time Mr. Jeff Bianco addressed the Commission in response to concerns raised by Mr. Levine, the Certificate of Appropriateness and items voted at the October 2008 meeting. Mr. Bianco advised the Commission that the project is at about 20% completed. Mr. Bianco went on to address the restoration of the windows. The following is a summary prepared by Sean Donadio and sent to Chairman Levine, Mayor Jackson, Curt Leng, Leslie Creane, Robert Labulis, Justin Tebo and Sue Gruen.

1. Restoring the windows by inserting the insulating glass vs. restoring the windows by replacing with single lite glass.

As directed by the Historic Properties Commission, the contract documents included the restoration of the existing window sashes. Included in that was the repair of damaged muntins and mullions as required. The restoration of the existing sashes included the asbestos abatement of the glazing compound and lead paint found per state requirements

to allow for the restoration. The restoration of the glass included the removal of the compound and the glass during abatement.

Restoring the windows by inserting insulation glass (proposed change)-

The existing sash will have a new insulated glass panel inset into the sash. The existing historic interior muntins of the window will remain. The exterior glazing compounds will be removed and the exterior muntings trimmed to allow for the insulated glass panel which has metal divisions between the glass matching the existing interiors muntins. New wood exterior muntins will be installed on the insulated glass panel to replicate the exterior muntins and glazing compound. The new double pane w/low E glass has a value of R 2.5 with a thickness of 3/8". The insulated glass in the existing wood sash will protect the building more effectively and reduce the require maintenance. The building committee opted to proceed with the insulated glass option due to the estimated annual energy cost saving of \$1,380 per year with a payback of little over two years.

Single lite glass – The existing sash will ha e new single pane glass installed in the existing muntins. The glass has a value of R 1.

Mr. Bianco provided a sample of the existing windows (which has considerable wood damage) and one window that has already gone through the restoration process. Chairman Levine inquired how many windows have been prepared for having double pane glass applied (henceforth as routing). At this time Mr. Bianco stated that 26 windows have been routed. With regard to the windows and the considerable loss of muntins, the Commission is concerned about the amount of muntins being removed and how that impacts the integrity of the Historical state of the building. The glass panel being put in place will be tinted. Mr. Bianco recommends accepting the change as it does not significantly change the appearance, but does make a significant difference in energy cost over time. The new sash is significantly stronger and sturdier. Of course there is always cost to consider with any renovation project.

2. Repointing the entire existing building vs. spot repointing only currently damaged areas.

Repointing is when the existing joints are raked which is when the mortar is removed to a minimum depth of 1", 2 ½ times the width of the joint. New mortar is installed in the joints.

Repointing the entire existing building. – We have the opportunity to restore the entire building with the positive budding with the alternate that was a part of the bidding process. As demonstrated in the field sample of raked joints, we have an expert masonry restoration contractor to work on the existing building. It is the opinion of he architect, that due to the past maintenance of the existing building it would be wise to take the opportunity to restore the national landmark back to the condition that it should be. Repointing the entire building at one time will provide a consistent mortar color and will extend the life of the building.

Spot repointing – only damaged areas on the building would be repointed. It is estimated at 10 -15% of the building has heavily damaged joints that would require repointing at this time. Spot repointing is scheduled for all facades of the building in the drawings. The

known difficulty with spot repointing is that the mortar color will be matched to the best ability but will overtime it will fade or discolor differently than the original mortar. There is a probability that the building will have a variety of mortar colors. A variety of different mortar mixes and colors exist on the building already.

Additional concern raised by the Historic Properties Commission.

Mr. Bianco reviewed this item with the Commission. He feels the whole wall sections system should be repointed based on the varying colors of the mortar, and past maintenance on the building since the existing mortar has last this some 80 years he sees it lasting another 80 years if all completed at this time.

3. Cleaning of masonry – As specified in Maintenance of Masonry Section 040100 the cleaning of the masonry will comply with the US Department of Interior, National Park Service standards of masonry cleaning which limits water pressure for cleaning to “no higher than 300 – 400 psi.”

At 7:25 p.m. Chairman Levine closed the Public Hearing.

CHAIR REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE – Chairman Levine provided the Commission with copies of letter and emails regarding the current issues.

New Applications

An application for the Town Hall which has the following stipulations:

1. If any significant change in design and/or alterations of materials to be used or elevation changes imposed by the Hamden’s P&Z commission, the applicant must present the modifications to the Historic Properties Commission for approval within thirty days.
2. Final landscaping/streetscape design and components must be presented to the Historic Properties Commission for review and approval.
3. When a design plan for contiguous parking have been finalized, the Historic Properties Commission must be informed and allowed input.
4. Architect will produce one other option for the police entrance, using Doric columns with basic the same diameter as that of the Ionic columns at the main entrance, and the size of all other details copies from classical measurements. Particularly, the height of the Doric columns is to be not more than eight time their diameter at the base.

Chairman Levine noted that number four has already been complied with; the design passed last year.

Chairman Levine questioned the cleaning of the brick. Mr. Bianco noted that the cleaning will be as directed by the guidelines of the US Department of the Interior, and the National Park Service standards.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the mortar. Chairman Levine noted that the Commission did not have the information provided prior to this meeting. The Commission was under the impression that only about 10% needed repairs but he agreed that the life expectancy is about 80 to 100 years. He did make a site visit and feels the mortar is in good shape. He discussed this issue with other preservation experts and the mutual agreement was “don’t repoint if you don’t need to”. Chairman Levine feels spot repointing is acceptable and that in twenty years the whole building may have to be

repointed, but the Town will deal with maintenance and deterioration as needed. Mr. Bianco stated that it will definitely have to be done in twenty years and maybe before that. Mr. Gorman noted that the pervue of the Commissions is not cost or energy efficiency but it is the effort that the project follows the guidelines that were originally approved, the cost efficiency may be true in terms of the mortar situation and/or the windows but they should have been persued earlier on. "The guidelines of removing non-deteriorating mortar and sound joints then repointing the entire building to achieve a uniform appearance is not recommended", quoted from the NPS by Mr. Gorman. Mr. Gorman noted that if the whole thing was in bad shape, the Commission would acquiesce to repointed the whole building, had it been presented originally as more than 50%. If it was going to suffer and fall out shortly after the project was completed, the Commission would have certainly considered doing it, and would have gone along with that as indicated, including huge wall sections being done. Going back to this point and just saying do it and saying its just going to happen anyway, Mr. Gorman stated that the Commission understands that some day its going to happen any way, but Mr. Gorman would like to speak to the control issue now that a Town Building Committee is in place which was not in existence for eighty years and the Historic Properties Commission which was also not in place but is now. The question of sealing the building was raised and Mr. Bianco stated that it would not be sealed as the building does absorb a small amount water and needs to let that water drain off. Dr. Doheny asked how much more it's costing to do the whole building, even though Dr. Doheny stated that it isn't the Commissions prevue, he is just curious. Mr. Bianco did not have that information available. He did, however, say it was a decent amount of money in the area of \$100,000. Ms. Highkin noted that the building previously was not an Historic building and not treated as such, but that when the Commission was created they had the building put on the Historic Registry and they have a responsibility to watch the building. When repairs were made before they just did them there was no oversite of any repairs. Chairman Levine noted that this is the town's only Historic Property and as such can be argued to be the most important building to the town. Chairman Levine noted that the Commissions prevue as the Historic Properties Commission is preservation and in this case to do what they can to preserve historic material of the windows and while there are arguments for doing the Bi-glass system for energy efficiency, and while the Bi-glass may make the windows look identical to the original, they won't be (using the Bi-glass system). Looking at the guidelines of the US Department of Interior, National Park Service and the original specs, all state to repair and retain of historic windows. The balance of the windows that have not been touted in preparation for Bi-glass should be restored according to the original specs. The windows that have been routed that can be placed out of the public way should be placed in the least visible area, depending on the sizing. Chairman Levine inquired if Mr. Bianco had the schedule for the windows but he didn't and does not have a breakdown of the 26 windows. Chairman Levine would like to get that information as soon as possible. Mr. Bianco is asking the Commission to look at the impact of the long term of the windows. Mr. Gorman noted that doing this does not affect the LEED Certification. Ms. Highkin inquired about the visible difference in the glass and if they are integrated it will show, those that are Bi-glass and those that are restored. A question of the grant was raised regarding the use and does it affect the windows. Mr. Leng stated that the grant is for three specific items, restoration of the terra cotta, the replacement of the front doors and the accessibility of the elevator. Chairman Levine inquired if the match includes the windows and Mr. Leng state no. An email from Florence A. Villano reads, "with regard

to the issue of repointing the entire exterior of the Town Hall which was bid as an alternate to the project". In June of 2009 the Town, along with our architects and AP, met with Wayne Gannaway from the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism to review the entire project with him. The decision to add repointing the entire building as an alternate was raised at that time. Wayne also visited Town Hall, accompanied by Sean Donadko, Frank Fazekas and myself, to inspect the building for himself. At no time did he raise any objection to repointing the entire building. All bid documents were subsequently hand delivered to Wayne for his review prior to bidding. No objection to the alternate was raised and the project went out to bid.

The window replacement is another matter, this is a change to what was contained in the bid documents, and as the work is being done in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Restoration, CCT should have been notified and consulted on any change prior to a change order having been executed. Work on the windows has been stopped and should not resume until the method of proper restoration has been determined, which means either going back to what was originally proposed or consulting with CCT. Any changes to the scope of the project at Town Hall that are not reviewed by the **appropriate** entities endanger our funding from both CCT and the Town's Energy Block Grant. Mr. Leng noted that is what is happening at this meeting right now. Chairman Levine suggests those windows that have been routed be restored according to the Secretary of the Interior Standards as stated in the original documents. As stated above if the 26 can be placed in the rear of the building they would like that done. He would like to see consistency on the first floor. Mr. Bianco will review all this and accommodate. A double sheet of glass without a tinting would not be as noticeable. The Commission would like the windows grouped together in like and kind. Mr. Gorman motioned to approve the application for the updated Certificate of Appropriateness for Memorial Town Hall and the addition of the Police Station with the following stipulations; that the original four stipulations continue and two be added. Stipulation five to be added to the original ones, "remove by hand-raking joints and repoint mortar where there is evidence of deterioration as identified of 15 – 20%, duplicate old mortar in strength, composition, color and texture; duplicate in width and in joint profile; clean brick and masonry surfaces with gentlest method possible. Fix, repair & retain windows on first floor according to original specifications; use 26 windows on back or in non street view; use bi-glass, not tinted bi-glass; gang windows of like and kind in least obvious places; placement subject to further review by Commission subject to discussion of window placement. The motion is seconded by Dr. Doheny. ***The motion carried unanimously.*** Mr. Leng inquired about the statement by Mr. Bianco regarding the repointing. "Mr. Bianco stated that 20%+ of repointing at a minimum. If he finds a need for an increase, does he come back to the Commission? Chairman Levine said yes because it would be a change in material. It was originally 10-15 now it's up to 20%. Mr. Bianco said yes, 10-15% of repointing but now there is replacement brick as well. Mr. Gorman motioned to amend the % regarding the mortar to be replaced. The original amount of 10 to 15% mentioned in the motion above is amended to be up to 20%, seconded by Dr. Doheny. ***The motion carried unanimously.*** Mr. Leng inquired on behalf of the Town Attorney Sue Gruen if the letter that was sent out should be retracted or is the COA retracts. Chairman Levine advised Mr. Leng that they are now in compliance and a letter and notification will be sent along with a copy of the certificate.

Unfinished Business

- a. Memorial Town Hall – This item was covered extensively above.
- b. Lockkeeper’s House – Nothing new at this time.
- c. Jepp’s Brook Millsite – Mr. Gorman advised the Commission provided a sample of he sign material that would be used for the sign. The approximate cost of he sign will be \$200-400 and should last at least ten years.
- d. Ivesville District – Chairman Levine advised the Commission he is waiting to hear from the state and then gets P&Z approval all can move forward. The mailing labels have been prepared and the Commission members are going to hand deliver as many information packets as they can.
- e. Other Business – Mr. Gorman was verifying Earth Day people. Ms. Highkin, Mr. Levine, Mr. Gorman and Dr. Doheny will all be there for some period during the 10:00 – 3:00 time frame. The Certified Local Government Grant is written and Chairman Levine advised the Commission that they are on the agenda and also on the agenda for the P&Z for April 2010.

NEW BUSINESS – Nothing at this time.

Adjournment – At 8:34 p.m. Ms. Highkin motioned to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Doheny.
The motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 21st, 2010, Parks and Recreation Dept. Conference Room, Government Center 2nd floor 7:00 p.m.

Recorded by,

Catherine E. Gempka
Commission Clerk