

HISTORIC PROPERTIES COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES: The Historic Properties Commission, Town of Hamden, held a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 17, 2014 at the Lock Keeper's House.

Commissioners in Attendance: Todd Levine Heidi Rubertone, Ken Minkema, Brian Murphy

Commissioners Excused: Ellen Highkin, Dan Ioime

1. Call to Order

Mr. Levine called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Roll Call -

Attendance is noted above.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Minkema made a motion to approve the minutes of June 18, 2014. Ms. Rubertone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

4. Public Hearing

There was no public hearing.

5. Public Session

There was no public Session.

6. Chairman's Report/Correspondence

7. Committee Reports

8. New Application

9. Unfinished Business

a. Memorial Town Hall – nothing to report

b. Lock 14 – Mr. Levine reported that he made no additional effort to contact Cheshire over the summer. He said he is not sure what the commission wants to do. Perhaps we can made some decisions next month when more members are present.

c. Hamden Cemeteries- Mr. Ioime was not in attendance. There was no report.

d. Ivesville Historic District – Ives House June's minutes note that the commission will take this item up again this month. Mr. Minkema reported that the Regional Water Company person said they are interested in seeing what can be done relative to stabilizing the Ives House. We have talked about getting some funds, even from the Town, which owns the building and leases the land. The Town is responsible for the upkeep of the house. He would not expect large commitments, but perhaps they will help the commission find some funds. The weather is getting in around the doors. The Ives House is the anchor to the proposed Ivesville District. Mr. Levine said fighting for the Ivesville

District did not work. A lot of the historic fabric of that district is already gone. Planning & Zoning asked us what is preservation going to do. Mr. Levine said perhaps we should look at individual buildings. Hamden is a Certified Local Government (CLG). The Town Hall is on the National Register of Historic Properties. We have enough information about the Ives House. We can ask the Legislative Council to appoint this commission as an ad hoc committee which would prepare a report and submit it. We would be going before Planning & Zoning from a different angle presenting an individual building.

Mr. Levine said being a CLG allows us to get survey money. Mr. Levine asked when was the last time Hamden had a study of historic properties. Mr. Minkema said there was one done in the 30's. Vision Appraisal went on line in the 80's. We can update the survey and make recommendations for the National Register of Local Historic Properties. These are tools that the Town should have.

Mr. Levine asked commissioners for ideas for future work of the commission. Mr. Minkema would be content to see the commission get something done for the Ives house. The Town Hall was a huge project and is just about done. He can't think of any particular sites that are in need.

Ms. Rubertone said since she joined the commission, we have been discussing Ivesville. She feels we should be focusing on individual properties. Mr. Levine said we can argue the preservation of the Ives House, which is Town owned. The key is recognizing and understanding what these designations mean. The State designation is honorific. Some municipalities have demolition delay ordinances for properties on the State and local register. The National Register is really an honorific too, and a demolition delay is the only thing that stops demolition except within the Connecticut Environmental Protection act. A policy within it says you can't demolish a National Register site without due process. He has been doing this for 15 years in Connecticut and has only seen a demolition stopped three times. The only real protection we have is easements. If someone puts an easement on a house in perpetuity, it has to be kept up forever. It might lose value. The pitch to homeowners is that they love their home and never want to see it knocked down even in perpetuity. Local Historic District is another tool we have for regulation because we have oversight.

Mr. Minkema said the only other historic structure we have is the Rectory Barn. He would like to see that fully restored. Mr. Levine said it has been moved a couple of times now and will become a museum. Ms. Rubertone said what about some of the schools, Hamden High School, Margaret L. Keefe, what's left of Newhall. Mr. Murphy said what about the Masselli Barn.

Mr. Levine said we can look now at the National Register and see if there are any properties we would like to get on the local register. We will target the Ives House, maybe the Rectory Barn and the Masselli Barn. Ms. Rubertone asked the status of the Dickerman House. Mr. Minkema said that is on the National Register and is owned by the Historic Society. There is some talk about selling the Ives House to Quinnipiac, but the annual outlay for that house isn't that much. Mr. Minkema said the Historical Society has about \$110,000 in assets. If there is a way for the Historic Properties Commission to partner with the Historic Society on projects, that might be of benefit.

Mr. Levine asked commissioners to think of other sites they may want to work on, starting with the Ives House. There was discussion on the Dickerman House, which was moved to its current site in 1967. Mr. Levine said if houses that are on the National Registry have been moved, they could be removed from the Registry if requested.

Mr. Levine said Mr. Gorman is away, but he will take a look at the regulations and get them out to the commission. It is also requested that Ms. Gempka send members of the commission a list of all the houses in Town that are on the National Register if such a list is available.

Mr. Levine will talk to Mayor Jackson and let him know that we intend to take a step back, go to a Legislative Council meeting and ask that this commission be appointed as an ad hoc committee, and do a report on the Ives House. Mr. Minkema wondered if there might be funds available to get some of the short term work done. Mr. Levine will also notify the Legislative Council hopefully get on the agenda for its November 3rd meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Minkema made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Acting Clerk