

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**September 7, 2010, 7:30 p.m.  
Delancey Hall**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bruce Buchholtz  
David Talbot  
Gail Pantezzi  
Steve LaRocca  
Francis Tuoti, Chairman

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Debby Moore  
Marcia Rockwood

**ALSO PRESENT:** Thomas L. Purdy, III  
Susie Thompson, Town Historian  
Janice Will, Recording Secretary

Public Hearing/Recommendation of historic landmark designation for stone chamber at 100 Titicus Road

Chairman Francis Tuoti called the meeting to order and opened the public hearing to consider the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation to the Town Board that the stone chamber at 100 Titicus Road be designated a historic landmark. The Chairman invited Mr. Purdy to address the Commission.

Mr. Purdy said he had nothing to add to the application, but he thought Susie Thompson did a fantastic job on the paperwork and research. He said he was excited to have the chamber designated.

Chairman Tuoti asked if Mr. Purdy played in the chamber when he was a child.

Mr. Purdy answered that he did not. He added that it was never used in his time, but he thought it had been used for milk wagon storage in the old days.

Susie Thompson asked where the official plaque should be placed, commenting that the HPC would not put it in the stone.

The Chairman said they could put it on a post, and Mr. Purdy said he could supply a locust post.

Ms. Thompson said it wouldn't be appropriate to put the plaque on the building that the chamber is part of, because it isn't a designated landmark. She suggested that once the chamber is officially designated, it might be cleaned out so people may enter it.

Mr. Purdy said that would be fine as it isn't used for anything now.

Chairman Tuoti noted that at the last meeting, the HPC agreed to ask Ms. Thompson to remove a reference to Celts from the application, which she did.

The public hearing was closed, and the Chairman asked if anyone had anything more to say about the stone chamber. He called for a vote to refer the recommendation to the Town Board.

To recommend to the Town Board that they designate the stone chamber at 100 Titicus Road as a North Salem historic landmark,

**Motion by: David Talbot**  
**Seconded by: Bruce Buchholtz**  
**All in favor.**

Mr. Talbot asked if the Commission's recommendation would be considered at the next Town Board meeting, and the secretary said she thought it would be.

Ms. Thompson mentioned that she will be visiting 2 more stone chambers she has never seen before; one is on Old Post Road, and the other is on the Saks property on Titicus Road. She commented that she now knows of 20 such chambers in Town.

Chairman Tuoti thanked Ms. Thompson. He stated that the Commission will schedule a presentation of the plaque to Mr. Purdy.

Status-Plaque for Spur Street Cottage

Regarding the property-owner's (Debby Moore) opinion that the correct date for the cottage is 1898, Chairman Tuoti stated that the date on the application that was approved is 1903.

Mr. Buchholtz (who conducted research and completed the application for landmark status) said he certainly could have missed something.

Ms. Thompson commented that the HPC had heard nothing further from Debby Moore.

David Talbot, who is responsible for ordering the plaque, said he would like to be sure all the members are in agreement, including Ms. Moore.

Gail Pantezzi said if additional information comes to light in the future, the date for the cottage may be changed. She suggested informing Ms. Moore that the HPC intends to stick with 1903 for now, unless new/contradictory information is provided.

Purdys Survey and Cover Letter Review

Mr. Buchholtz said the letter is similar to the one sent out at the time of the presentation of the Brockmeyer plaque.

The Chairman asked the secretary to be sure to change the cottage date on the list of historic Purdys landmarks that is in the cover letter.

It was noted that the cover letter for the Purdys Survey also needs insertion of the date of the plaque presentation for the Spur Street Cottage, and the mailing of the letter/survey should be timed accordingly.

Chairman Tuoti wondered if the stone chamber will be designated by the Town Board in time to add it to the cover letter.

Ms. Pantezzi asked the secretary to inform the HPC when the Town Board has designated the chamber.

Mr. Talbot said it will take 4 to 6 weeks to get the plaque.

Regarding item #2 in the survey, Ms. Pantezzi (absent from August 3 meeting) said window replacement is not a minor alteration and should be removed.

Mr. Talbot said he had missed the last 2 meetings, but he thought the HPC had decided against controlling/regulating properties in the proposed historic district. He commented that now it seems that all properties in the district will be regulated the same way that individual historic landmarks are.

Ms. Pantezzi commented that she thought someone was going to speak to the Town Attorney.

Mr. Buchholtz said he has spoken to some Purdys residents, and they are glad to go along with the district/seem to accept the notion of some restrictions on their property. He said the idea may not be as widely opposed as it once seemed to be.

The Chairman said that people who do object may be non-participating households.

Mr. Talbot pointed out that that would break up the district. He also said that if anyone who really objects speaks to someone on the Town Board, the HPC will have a problem on its hands.

Steve LaRocca suggested waiting until the Commission sees what the survey results are.

Chairman Tuoti stated that it was decided at the August meeting to stick with the existing law as is. He said that if residents don't want the district, there won't be one.

Ms. Pantezzi reiterated that she had been of the impression that the Town Attorney would be approached about the issue.

Ms. Thompson agreed that the Commission should wait and see the survey results before deciding.

The Chairman said that the previously-discussed notion of imposing no restrictions would result in there being no control at all over properties in the district.

Ms. Pantezzi said she thought the HPC had decided to go with no restrictions and call it something other than an historic district.

Chairman Tuoti asked with they need to speak to the attorney, and Ms. Thompson said the idea had been to see how the current landmark/district law would apply to Purdys.

Ms. Pantezzi stated that keeping the law as is would be fine.

The Chairman pointed out that the HPC may make designations without a popular vote, but Ms. Pantezzi said she agreed with Mr. Talbot about dissenters going to the Town Board.

The Chairman said the HPC will have no control if there are only guidelines, but Mr. Talbot countered that people will opt out if there are regulations.

Ms. Pantezzi described a scenario wherein a landmark-owner does something to their property without approval of the HPC. She said it would become a very public issue if the Town Board tried to force the landmark-owner to undo the alteration. Ms. Pantezzi went on to say that if it became a case of a vocal property-owner versus the Town, they could lose the law. She commented that the law is only good if people cooperate with it.

Mr. Talbot said he would like to see the addition of an item inquiring if the respondent would be interested in participating in an historic district if it involved non-enforceable guidelines but no regulations.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested that a new item #1 should ask if the respondent would be willing to participate in an historic district managed under the existing historic landmark/districts law which requires that any exterior changes have HPC approval (Certificate of Appropriateness), and refer the respondent to the Town website to see the actual law.

Ms. Pantezzi said she does not think including the respondent's name should be optional.

Chairman Tuoti asked if the HPC should show the survey to Supervisor Lucas before mailing it out, but no one else thought that would be necessary.

Mr. Talbot remarked that the HPC will learn something from the survey responses.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested that the third paragraph of the text preceding the survey should mention that the HPC has helped landmark-owners make the changes they desire, so people will understand that the HPC does not prevent alterations to landmarked properties.

Recapping what needs to be done, Mr. Talbot said once he has received the plaque for the Spur Street Cottage, the HPC can set a date for the presentation. The date is to be inserted into the cover letter of the survey, and then the mailing may be completed. He suggested including a deadline for return of the survey.

Applications for historic landmark designation of Westchester Exceptional Children's School Building and 6 Old Schoolhouse Road

Mr. Buchholtz said the only things missing from the WECS application are deeds. He stated that he also had a complete application for 6 Old Schoolhouse Road, the old 2-room schoolhouse in Purdys owned by Brian and Kathryn Bartsch.

Mr. Talbot asked to have scanned copies of these applications e-mailed to him.

Ms. Thompson stated that there is conclusive evidence that the schoolhouse was moved when Purdys was relocated for the reservoir.

Mr. Buchholtz said the WECS building is considered to be neo-classical in architectural style.

Mr. LaRocca commented that the building is not worthy of historic designation for its architecture, but rather because it was the site of the first centralized school district in New York State.

Ms. Pantezzi pointed out that the Commission could vote that the applications are complete and set a public hearing date for both if they agree that the WECS deeds are not necessary.

Ms. Thompson said she will look into getting the deeds, but she did not think they were a vital part of the application.

To accept the WECS and 6 Old Schoolhouse Road applications and set a public hearing date for both, to be held on October 5, 2010

**Motion by: Bruce Buchholtz**

**Seconded by: Gail Pantezzi**

**All in favor.**

Mr. Buchholtz said he was given a set of the school's original blue prints for the Town to keep.

Vote Chairperson/Vice Chairperson

Ms. Pantezzi said she thought the HPC did this earlier in the year, so it was agreed to vote in January for 2011.

Other

Ms. Thompson suggested trying to designate the Bloomer farmhouse an historic landmark, adding that there are no landmarks on that side of Town. She said the farmhouse is very old, and Supervisor Lucas would probably help the HPC.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if the house isn't part of the co-op golf course property; Ms. Thompson said she thinks it is but shouldn't be a problem.

The HPC discussed different types of old stone walls around Town. It was noted that sometimes they are taken apart and the stones re-used and also that many new walls are built with mortar.

Chairman Tuoti said that when he attended a meeting of the Scarsdale HPC, he met someone from the Greenburgh HPC who knew a lot about stone walls. The Chairman commented that the walls around the reservoir are in need of repair/re-building, but they are owned by the DEP/the Town may not do anything.

Ms. Pantezzi thought it would be worthwhile to try and educate people about the history of old walls and appreciation and preservation of them.

Ms. Thompson said Robert Thorson (author of books on old stone walls) might be willing to speak to the HPC.

The Commission discussed holding a joint meeting with the Improvement Society and the Historical Society at which Mr. Thorson might give a talk about stone walls.

Mr. Buchholtz said Cynthia Curtis also suggested the Historical Society do a joint presentation about North Salem landmarks with the HPC at the Library, and the Commission agreed that it would be a good idea.

Mr. Buchholtz mentioned that Debby Moore had agreed to discuss her designated properties at the library presentation.

Ms. Pantezzi commented that, historically, stones from old walls have always been re-used; beautiful churches and cathedrals have been constructed from them.

To approve the minutes of the August 3, 2010 meeting

**Motion by: Bruce Buchholtz**

**Seconded by: Steve LaRocca**

**All in favor.**

Chairman Tuoti asked the secretary to see if she has a telephone number for the Scarsdale HPC.

To adjourn at approximately 8:55 p.m.

**Motion by: Gail Pantezzi**

**Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Janice Will, Recording Secretary