

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

**October 5, 7:30 p.m.
Delancey Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Buchholtz
David Talbot
Debby Moore
Marcia Rockwood
Steve LaRocca

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gail Pantezzi
Francis Tuoti, Chairman

ALSO PRESENT: Kathryn and Brian Bartsch
John Caralyus
Janice Will, Recording Secretary

Public Hearing: 6 Old Schoolhouse Road

Vice Chairman Bruce Buchholtz called the meeting to order and opened the public hearing to consider the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation to the Town Board that the former Purdys school at 6 Old Schoolhouse Road be designated a historic landmark. Mr. Buchholtz invited the owners, Brian and Kathryn Bartsch, to address the Commission.

Kate Bartsch stated that it is clear to see that the building was a schoolhouse, given the large spaces, high ceilings and sturdy construction. She said she experienced a brief disappointment when a UPS delivery person said her home had not been the school, but Merwin Voris assured her it had been/he went to school there.

Mrs. Bartsch explained that there are actually 2 separate tax parcels; one is owned by Mr. Bartsch's parents. The Bartsches intend to keep the 2 parcels together, but the application for historic designation is only for the lot with the former school building on it. Mrs. Bartsch said the other lot was bought and sold numerous times, but failed perc tests made it impossible to build on/there is too much water on the property.

Mr. Buchholtz said the application only includes a 20 ft. perimeter, and he thanked the Bartsches for their efforts.

Mr. Bartsch said Susie Thompson gave them a great deal of help with the application.

Mr. Buchholtz said the HPC has been working on the proposed Purdys Historic District; and after the public hearings, the HPC will be discussing the issue of what kind of

restrictions to put on buildings within the district. He asked the Bartsches what they think their neighbors will support.

Mrs. Bartsch replied that it is hard to say/it has been a heated topic of conversation. She said she and her husband have tried to encourage people to understand that one can make changes to historic properties. She stated that people are not sure what the limitations will be. She added that it will be easiest for people to accept the fewest restrictions, but she would not want to see people lose sight of why there should be a historic district. Mrs. Bartsch said having more specific information would help to promote the district, although some people will find it easier to say no than yes.

Mr. Bartsch said seeing his house designated a landmark should help to allay some of people's fears. Some fear they will lose the right to do what they want with their property, but others want to do what is right for the community. He said he hoped that designation of his house, along with the Brockmeyer house and Ms. Moore's house at 3 Spur Street, will be baby steps toward helping to get the district established.

Ms. Bartsch reiterated that she feels the biggest problem is that people don't know what exactly the district will be/require.

Mr. Buchholtz said the HPC will be mailing out a survey to Purdys residents soon, which he hopes will begin to explain things. He asked John Caralyus what his neighbors on First Street think.

Mr. Caralyus said he thinks most people feel establishment of the historic district will enhance the hamlet, adding that he has not heard a lot of objections. He said people do want to know how the old houses in Purdys will be affected.

Mr. Bartsch mentioned some residents who seem inclined to object to the historic district, but Mrs. Bartsch said some people might change their minds once they know what will be required/permitted.

David Talbot said there is always more fear about what people don't know. He asked what "circa" date is to be used for 6 Old Schoolhouse Road.

Mrs. Bartsch said she thinks it is 1896. The application was checked and the date confirmed to be 1893.

Public hearing: 520 Route 22

Mr. Buchholtz thanked John Caralyus for promoting the historic designation of the Westchester Exceptional Children's School.

Mr. Caralyus said the school was built in 1927 and is in good shape now, including new windows and a new boiler. He said a donation by Ruth Keeler enabled WECS to construct an addition to the rear that is not visible from the front of the school.

Mr. Caralyus said WECS is 41 years old this year; there are 90 students from 34 school districts, and the age range is from 5 to 21. The staff currently numbers 60 and is growing,

due to the increasing number of disabled students with one-on-one aides. Mr. Caralyus said there is an after-school program 3 days a week until 5 pm. Until recently, the school was used by Alcoholic Anonymous for evening meetings, and the school has started an agriculture program. He explained that some graduates go on to employment.

In answer to a question from Mr. Talbot, Mr. Caralyus said the student body is normally about 65% male.

Mr. Talbot also asked what constitutes the after-school program, and Mr. Caralyus replied that there is some teaching and there are some sports activities; it is mainly for students of working parents.

Mr. Buchholtz thanked WECS for turning down a proposed cell tower on the school property.

Mr. Caralyus said they didn't want it, although the school could have used the money. He explained that many teachers have been with WECS for many years, but the younger teachers only stay for a few years; when they leave, they take positions that pay much better.

Mr. Buchholtz thanked the Bartsches and Mr. Caralyus for attending the meeting. He said the HPC looks forward to presenting their plaques to them, adding that he would like to try and involve the press.

Mr. Caralyus said the WECS building is in great shape; the bricks have never been re-pointed, the ceilings are good and the inside walls are 12 inches thick. He explained that the clock on the front of the school was repaired once, but it failed, so money will need to be raised to fix it again. He stated that WECS currently has an application with the Town for construction of a greenhouse, and he told the HPC there is a spelling error on the front of the school: it reads *Purdy*, New York and not *Purdys*.

Mr. Buchholtz said Mr. Talbot will order the plaques as soon as the Town Board signs off on the historic designations.

Mr. Bartsch asked if the HPC needs help distributing the survey.

Mr. Buchholtz explained that the survey will be mailed out with a stamped envelope for its return to the HPC.

Mrs. Bartsch said she will talk to people about the historic district.

Debby Moore asked if WECS will need a Certificate of Appropriateness for the greenhouse or if the HPC can facilitate the proposed construction before the school is officially designated.

Mr. Caralyus said the greenhouse will be built on the south side of the school near the playground.

Mr. Talbot asked if it will be more than 20 ft. way from the school, and Mr. Caralyus replied that it will be.

Mr. Talbot pointed out that there is no problem then, as the designation only includes a 20 ft. perimeter around the school building.

The Bartsches and Mr. Caralyus left the meeting at this time.

To accept the applications for 6 Old Schoolhouse Road and 520 Route 22 and recommend to the Town Board that they designate the two properties as North Salem historic landmarks.

Motion by: Debby Moore

Seconded by: David Talbot

All in favor.

Mr. Talbot commented that WECS is the school's current name; historically, it was the Purdys Central High School.

Mr. Buchholtz said Mr. Caralyus wished to have it known as Westchester Exceptional Children's School but Mr. Talbot pointed out that its historical significance is as the original school/it was not WECS in the 1920's.

Ms. Moore added that it was the first centralized school district in the State.

Ms. Moore said she agreed with Mr. Talbot and suggested calling it Purdys Central High School, home of WECS.

Ms. Rockwood said that designation provides a sense of the history of the school/changes to it.

After further discussion, Mr. Talbot said he thought the motion to recommend the school to the Town Board for historic landmark designation should be tabled until all the HPC members could weigh in on what it should be known as, because it is an important decision.

Mr. Buchholtz agreed that all the HPC members should be included in the decision. He said the HPC could recommend both properties for historic designation and just withhold the naming of 520 Route 22 for the time being.

Later the same week, Mr. Buchholtz polled the HPC members by e-mail, and it was decided that WECS will be known as Purdys Central High School, Home of Westchester Exceptional Childrens' School.

Circa date for the Spur Street Cottage

Mr. Buchholtz said he received additional documents from Ms. Moore last month and looked them over with help from Susie Thompson. He commented that most are not relevant and the property changed hands many times. One item shows that Mr. Bailey died and the property went to his widow in 1899, and it describes the property including

other buildings and appurtenances transferred with it. Mr. Buchholtz said he thought the date was appropriate, and the use of "circa" covers it. He stated that if the others agree, he will change the originally-recommended date of 1902 to 1899.

Mr. LaRocca agreed that, given the information provided, 1899 is more accurate.

Ms. Moore said she wanted to apologize to the HPC and specifically to Mr. Buchholtz. She explained that she was busy with other things at the time and didn't pay enough attention or provide any help to Mr. Buchholtz while he prepared the application for historic designation of her property.

Mr. Buchholtz graciously said he understood that Ms. Moore had been very busy.

To amend the circa date for the Spur Street Cottage to 1899

Motion by: Bruce Buchholtz

Seconded by: Steve LaRocca

All in favor.

Letter and survey to Purdys residents re historic district

Mr. Buchholtz said he would like to see the letter/survey tied-in with the plaque presentation at Ms. Moore's property at 3 Spur Street, and Ms. Moore said that would be fine.

Mr. Talbot said he believes he can get the plaque in 4 weeks.

Ms. Moore suggested a Sunday afternoon at 2 pm.

Mr. Talbot asked if November 14 would be acceptable, and Ms. Moore said it would.

Looking over the survey, Ms. Moore commented that the wording of the first sentence in the third paragraph could be softened.

*Sentence to be changed to, "Currently the HPC **considers** proposed alterations ... "*

*Change to letter in paragraph 3, first sentence: "**On Sunday, November 14 at 2 pm**"*

*Change to last sentence: "... informally discuss the **concept** of the Purdys Historic District ... "*

David Talbot re HPC going forward

Mr. Talbot said he is frustrated by the back-and-forth regarding requirements for historic districts. He said it was previously agreed not to limit property-owners, he missed 2 meetings, and now inclusion of restrictions is being discussed again. Mr. Talbot asked if perhaps the HPC should structure their projects more formally. He said he was pleased that there has been a lot more action in 2010 than there was last year, but review and designations have been hit or miss.

Mr. Talbot made reference to the survey with photographs that the HPC did for the Comprehensive Plan Committee, commenting that the Commission put a lot of work into

the project and wondering what became of the map with over-lays. He said he would like the HPC to be more pro-active. He added that the work done for the CPC should be revisited so the HPC can work up a list of prospective historic designations with a time frame for review and recommendation. He noted that Mr. Buchholtz and Ms. Thompson have done a lot of research, but he thought that, as a group, the HPC could formalize how they will go forward.

Mr. Talbot said he would like to see a decision on the Purdys historic district come to fruition this year. He commented that the survey is a good idea, but people are also worried because they don't know what the HPC intends – the HPC does not yet know what they intend.

Mr. Buchholtz agreed there has been a lot of back-and-forth discussion. He said he originally drew up the draft Chapter 132 as a boilerplate that could be used for additional chapters for other historic districts. He asked Mr. LaRocca if there has ever been a systematic plan in the HPC for approaching people about historic designation.

Mr. LaRocca said it has always been voluntary, based on who has time to do things and has tended to run in cycles.

Mr. Buchholtz asked if anyone wants to be on a committee to initiate outreach to some people.

Ms. Rockwood said she thought all the HPC members should participate, and Mr. Buchholtz suggested working in their own neighborhoods.

Mr. LaRocca said they should establish targets and priorities before the outreach.

Ms. Rockwood asked if there would be different guidelines for her neighborhood than the ones for Purdys.

Mr. Talbot explained they would be looking into individual properties and not creation of new districts. He suggested they review their CPC research together and put together a priority list of people to approach. He recommended revisiting the whole process with the goal of coming up with a list of viable prospects by the end of the year, and following up on that list for the first six months of 2011. Mr. Talbot remarked that the HPC will also be approached by property-owners acting on their own, and they will continue to work on the Purdys historic district.

Ms. Moore said she is frustrated with the proposed historic district, because criteria were agreed upon, and then the issued was opened up to further discussion.

Mr. Buchholtz said Chairman Tuoti was against what he considered watered-down control of the district and wanted to stick with the existing law as it pertains to historic districts, which maintains some HPC control over what may and may not be done to properties within the district. Mr. Buchholtz added that the Chairman felt that if people do not want to go along with the existing law, there may be no Purdys historic district.

Mr. Talbot reiterated his support for the survey, but he added that he feels the historic district proposal should come to a conclusion. He pointed out that the decision to designate the district will be the Town Board's ultimately.

Mr. Buchholtz told the others that a date in January is being considered for the joint presentation with the Historical Society to be held at the library, and he said he would keep the HPC up to date.

To approve the minutes of the September 7, 2010 meeting

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

Mr. Buchholtz stated that he was sad that Chairman Tuoti was not at the meeting, because he was ill.

It was agreed to meet again on November 2, 2010.

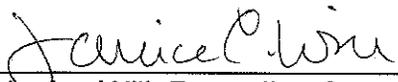
Other

Mr. Buchholtz stated that Supervisor Warren Lucas asked that the HPC look into 2 properties in Croton Falls: 5 East Cross Street and 14 Front Street (?). Mr. Buchholtz handed out photographs provided by Supervisor Lucas, saying that the owners of the 2 buildings are willing to discuss historic landmark designation. He commented that both need considerable restoration, and he said the Supervisor will look into the availability of grant money for the work.

To adjourn at approximately 8:45 pm

Motion by: Bruce Buchholtz
All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Janice Will, Recording Secretary