

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

**November 9, 2010
Delancey Hall**

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

ALSO PRESENT: **Janice Will, Recording Secretary**

Spur Street Cottage Plaque Presentation

Chairman Francis Tuoti opened the meeting and asked how many people have responded that they will attend the event.

The secretary said she saved 5 e-mails; after some discussion, it seemed there were about 20 people expected at the presentation.

David Talbot unwrapped the plaque and showed it to the other HPC members. Everyone agreed that the plaque looked nice.

Debby Moore said the house at 3 Spur Street is in contract, and the buyers love the house. She said she will have wine and cheese at the reception following the plaque presentation.

The Chairman said he will say a few words at the presentation, and he asked if he should bring up the proposed Purdys historic district.

Ms. Moore suggested the Chairman see if people have any questions about the district. She added that the presentation should be made indoors, as it will be cold on Sunday.

Ms. Pantezzi said the Chairman should bring up the district, and she asked that there be extra, blank surveys for people at the reception. She also asked if the Press has been invited to the presentation.

Mr. Buchholtz said Liz Ganga of the Journal News will write something up, but she probably won't be coming to the presentation. He added that Ms. Ganga has already photographed the Mahoney House, the Spur Street Cottage and WECS.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested the HPC provide a photo of Ms. Moore receiving the plaque.

Mr. Buchholtz said he believes the article will be in the paper that Sunday, November 14.

Plaques for Purdy Homestead Stone Chamber, Purdys Schoolhouse and the Central High School

It was agreed that the Schoolhouse plaque date should be circa 1893.

The Chairman asked what will be put on the plaque for the stone chamber, and Susie Thompson replied that the property-owner, Tim Purdy, wants "Purdy Homestead Stone Chamber".

Bruce Buchholtz added that Mr. Purdy has also asked that the plaque be small and inconspicuous so it will not attract unwanted attention.

Ms. Thompson stated that Mr. Purdy would like to have the plaque epoxy'd onto one of the chamber stones. She went on to say that someone recommended setting a large stone into the ground near the chamber and affixing the plaque to that. She said Mr. Purdy was agreeable to either of the 2 options, but he does not want the plaque on a post. Ms. Thompson remarked that if a stone similar to those of the chamber could be located, it could be moved to the landmark site to be used.

Ms. Moore asked why not just affix the plaque on the stone of the chamber itself.

Ms. Thompson stated that she thought it better not to do anything to the chamber.

Gail Pantezzi suggested putting the plaque on a tree near the chamber, commenting that a suitable stone would be very heavy.

Ms. Thompson explained that Mr. Purdy does not want the plaque on the tree. She added that a stone could be set into the ground so it appears permanent.

The Chairman asked if other Town historic landmarks have plaques that are not right on them.

Ms. Pantezzi mentioned the Balanced Rock (plaque mounted on a post) the Keeler Lane Bridge (plaque on guardrail) and others.

To order a plaque for the stone chamber according to Tim Purdy's request re size and wording

Motion by: David Talbot

Ms. Pantezzi asked why it will be called the Purdy Homestead Stone Chamber, commenting that she believes it pre-dates the farm and is not otherwise connected to the farm.

Ms. Thompson pointed out that the HPC had already designated it the Purdy Homestead Stone Chamber.

Ms. Rockwood said it is good to give the chamber a locator.

Ms. Pantezzi agreed that it could not be changed now, but she suggested that perhaps future stone chambers to be designated historic landmarks should be numbered.

Ms. Thompson said it is sensible to call this one the Purdy Homestead Stone Chamber as it is on that property and needs to be associated with something.

***Seconded by: Steve LaRocca
All in favor.***

Mr. Talbot said he will order the plaque half-size. He asked if he should request mounting holes for bolts or screws.

Ms. Moore said that was a good idea, and Mr. LaRocca added that bolts and epoxy could be used to secure the plaque to a stone.

Regarding the plaque for the high school, Chairman Tuoti said the Town Board has asked for a larger plaque with more information on it.

Mr. Buchholtz added that Town Board members said they want tax-payers to see something significant and understand why the school has been designated a landmark.

Ms. Pantezzi remarked that it is significant because it was the site of the first centralized school district in the State.

Ms. Thompson pointed out that written right across the school are the words, "Town of North Salem Central High School, Purdy, New York". She suggested that be put on the plaque.

Mr. Buchholtz said it has always been known as Purdys Central High School.

Ms. Pantezzi asked why Westchester Exceptional Children's School is to be mentioned on the plaque, and Mr. Buchholtz said it will please the people at WECS.

Dating was discussed, and Mr. Buchholtz suggested using 1927 as that is the date on the cornerstone.

Ms. Pantezzi asked when the district was formed.

Mr. Buchholtz responded that it was in 1926. He added that the school opened in fall of 1928 with a first graduating class in 1929.

There was general agreement to use 1927 to match the date of the cornerstone.

Mr. Buchholtz said the Town Board wants the start-date for WECS included on the plaque also.

The Members discussed the dates of the establishment of the central school district, construction of/enrollment at the school, transfer to WECS, etc. The secretary will check the WECS date.

Mr. Buchholtz said the HPC should work something up to show the Town Board before ordering the plaque.

Chairman Tuoti agreed, adding that they should provide the Town Board with the plaque dimensions and the cost also.

Mr. Talbot said he will look into it. He added that they need to determine where and how to mount the large plaque.

Mr. Buchholtz commented that there are 3 large plaques inside the school, but this one should go on the exterior of the building.

Ms. Moore suggested it be mounted to either side of the school entrance.

Mr. LaRocca said the architects, Knappe and Morris, should be included on the plaque.

Mr. Talbot read the following to be used for text on the plaque:

Town of North Salem Central High School
First Centralized School District in New York State, 1927
Home of Westchester Exceptional Children's School Since 1982
Architects: Knappe and Morris

Chairman Tuoti asked if he will have a proof to look over at the December meeting, and Mr. Talbot said he will.

Mr. Buchholtz reiterated that the designation/plaque are important to the Town Board, and the Chairman asked if anything else should be put on the plaque.

Mr. Talbot suggested they wait and see how it looks with what they have so far.

Ms. Pantezzi said it seems likely that the plaque will be expensive.

Based on the cost of approximately \$200 for a "regular" plaque, it was estimated that the one for the high school would run about \$400.

Mr. Buchholtz said he was told by the Town Board not to worry about the cost.

Mr. Talbot said the proof should be forwarded to the Town Board after the HPC looks at it at their December meeting.

Chairman Tuoti said the size and cost of the plaque should be provided to the Town Board also, and Mr. Talbot said he will get those figures.

Purdys Historic District Survey

The Chairman commented that not many surveys have been returned so far. He stated that the HPC should at least wait until the return deadline of November 19, and then he and Mr. Buchholtz can summarize the results. He commented that perhaps the HPC could talk to respondents who seem adamantly against the district.

Ms. Pantezzi wondered if it would be worthwhile to call or send postcards to those who don't return the survey.

Mr. Talbot said they should at least wait until after the November 19 deadline passes to see how many surveys are returned before contacting people.

2011 Budget

The secretary said the HPC budget-line includes \$1000 in the proposed 2011 Town budget. It was agreed to leave it at that.

Other Potential Landmarks: 14 Front Street and 5 East Cross Street, Croton Falls

Ms. Thompson stated that the B. Hawley-Smith house at 5 East Cross Street is a stunning example of Second Empire architecture, and she has some information on it.

Chairman Tuoti wondered if the house would have to be brought up to building code standards if the HPC designated it a landmark, but Ms. Thompson said they could designate it as is.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if the owners of the property are interested in historic designation, and Mr. Buchholtz said he had gotten the impression from Supervisor Warren Lucas that they are.

The Chairman said he will speak to Supervisor Lucas about both properties, and he asked if everyone was interested in both buildings.

Mr. Talbot commented that 14 Front Street already appears to have been altered, perhaps well beyond what it looked like originally.

Ms. Thompson said she has old photos of Croton Falls, and she will look for some of 14 Front Street. She also said she will talk to Kathy Magnuson, the Deputy Tax Receiver, who lives in one of the apartments. Ms. Thompson stated that she will e-mail the HPC her notes on the B. Hawley Smith house.

Ms. Thompson said she would like to see the Bloomer farmhouse on Bloomer Road designated an historic landmark. Noting that the farmhouse is on property owned by one of the Peach Lake Co-ops, she added that it would be nice to have a landmark in that section of Town.

Debby Moore passed around some photos she recently took of properties she found interesting.

Chairman Tuoti asked if Ms. Moore's interest is in the Weisblatt house or their barn (369 Mills Road), and she responded that she is interested in both.

The Chairman said Mrs. Weisblatt recently joined the Historical Society, and he asked if anyone would like to work with the Weisblatts on the barn.

Mr. Talbot stated that at the October HPC meeting he brought up the subject of the historical survey they conducted for the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and he said he thought they should get back to that.

Ms. Thompson said she has the photos and the list of properties,

Mr. Talbot said he would like to see the information reviewed as a group and a list of potential landmarks worked up.

Ms. Thompson stated that although she has moved the HPC files into a cabinet in Cynthia Curtis's office, she has the photos taken as part of the CPC survey in her office.

To review the survey done for the CPC and make a list of potential landmarks.

Motion by: David Talbot

Seconded by: Bruce Buchholtz

All in favor.

Ms. Rockwood asked if she should speak to the owners of the former schoolhouse near her home, or if the others think it has been altered too much.

Ms. Pantezzi said she feels it is still noteworthy.

Ms. Thompson stated that Jim Lundy has written a bulletin for the North Salem Historical Society on the history of local schools, and she suggested it would be helpful for the HPC to look at that (available on-line through the Historical Society) first.

The Chairman said perhaps they could identify on the plaque the part of the house that was the school. He asked if Ms. Rockwood will speak to the owners, and she said she will.

Ms. Thompson remarked that the school was called Salem Center School.

Ms. Rockwood said she agreed that she should research the school before approaching the property-owners.

Joint Presentation with Historical Society

Mr. Buchholtz mentioned that in September the HPC discussed a joint presentation with the Historical Society to be given at the library.

Ms. Moore said Cynthia Curtis suggested a mini-bus tour of local landmarks to end at John Michael's (restaurant at the Purdy Homestead).

Chairman Tuoti described a group of MG-owners he escorted around Town last year, showing them historic houses, the Balanced Rock and some stone chambers. He said the group really enjoyed the tour, so he thought Ms. Curtis's suggestion was a good one.

Ms. Moore said the Historical Society could do the tour in May, and she asked if they should have a bus tour or send people out on their own with a map. As a fund-raiser, they could have a speaker on the bus and charge for the tour and refreshments at John Michael's.

Ms. Rockwood thought it was a good idea, but Ms. Thompson said the HPC cannot conduct fund-raisers/they could only do it for the Historical Society.

Ms. Pantezzi said holding a presentation at a land-marked house would be interesting and attract a lot of people.

Mr. Buchholtz said Tim Purdy is agreeable to using the Purdy Homestead, and he added that numerous people have said they would be willing to talk about their historic landmark homes.

Ms. Pantezzi said she thought giving a talk in someone's home would draw more people than the restaurant.

Ms. Thompson stated that part of the point should be to let people know what the HPC does and what a landmark means. She noted that only exteriors are designated, and she thought people could become confused about that. She said she thought a tour ending at the Homestead was a good idea.

Chairman Tuoti said they need to choose a date or at least a month, and then they can get a group together to work on the details with the Historical Society.

Ms. Pantezzi asked the Chairman if he could get owners of antique cars to come also.

Ms. Moore stated that the Historical Society has just set their calendar of events for 2011, and they are trying to get antique cars or carriages for their strawberry festival in late June/early July. She added that May would be a good time for the joint event. She suggested that people could park at the ball field across the street from John Michael's,

and the bus tour would depart from there; when the tour ends, people could either head over to the restaurant or go home.

Mr. Buchholtz said he was not enthusiastic about the bus aspect of the tour.

Ms. Thompson said the good thing about using a bus would be having someone on the bus to talk about the landmarks.

The Chairman asked the HPC to simply agree to the month of May for the time being; then they can get a specific date from the Historical Society.

It was agreed to aim for the third or fourth Sunday in May, and Mr. Buchholtz said he would speak to John Michael.

The Chairman agreed to speak to Roland Baroni (Town attorney) about the HPC assisting the Historical Society in a fund-raiser.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if the Chairman was sure that the HPC may not conduct fund-raisers, adding that she thought they should certainly be able to assist another non-profit in the raising of funds. She said she thought the HPC should be permitted to raise funds for their own group too, for education/public awareness.

Ms. Thompson said the Chairman could find that out also, so he should be specific about what the HCP wants to do.

Chairman Tuoti said he does not want to see the HPC get into the business of fund-raising, except as a means of supporting other groups. He said he does not think it would be appropriate for a Town commission, and he commented that there is a lot of fund-raising going on.

Ms. Pantezzi said they just need to know if they can participate in a fund-raiser for the Historical Society.

Mr. Buchholtz agreed, saying he would like to see the HPC have lead billing for the tour with the Historical Society.

Past occasions when the HPC has worked with other groups (Historical Society, Library) were mentioned.

Ms. Pantezzi said she felt the landmark tour would be different from hosting a table at the Library fair, adding that the event will be publicized and she too would like to see the HPC get lead or joint billing for the event. Ms. Pantezzi expressed her enthusiasm for the joint endeavor, saying the HPC would never be able to do something on this scale because they are too small a group.

Chairman Tuoti said he would call Mr. Baroni, but Ms. Thompson said he should wait until he knows exactly what the event will entail.

Mr. Talbot disagreed, saying they only need to know if they may participate in a fund-raiser for the Historical Society.

Repair Work at Delancey Hall

Ms. Thompson stated that thanks to Mr. LaRocca were in order, and she explained that there was a leak in a door of Delancey Hall that the Supervisor was concerned about. Mr. LaRocca looked at the problem and quickly provided repair options. The door is being fixed now, and its appearance won't be changed at all/no approval from the HPC will be needed.

Mills Road

Ms. Thompson said she had heard from Amy Rosmarin (Town Board member) recently about interest in seeing Mills Road designated an historic road, and she asked if the HPC would be interested. Ms. Rosmarin said a new resident, Ginny Gerard, is interested in helping with the project if it goes forward and also in assisting the HPC in any way she can although there is currently no seat available on the HPC.

Everyone said they would be interested, although it would take a lot of work.

The group discussed a past attempt to get Mills Road designated in order to try and prevent a proposed realignment of Titicus River Road when the traffic light at Routes 116 and 22 was installed, the fear being that it would create heavier use of Mills Road to access 684 and the train station. At the time, Ms. Moore called Ms. Rosmarin about seeking historic designation of Mills Road in the hope that it would serve to prevent some of the increased traffic. Ms. Rosmarin set about the task and produced many signatures; Mills Road was not historically designated, but neither was Titicus River Road realigned.

Chairman Tuoti asked for a motion.

To try and designate Mills Road an historic road

Motion by: Debby Moore

Mr. Buchholtz noted that a similar motion was passed a while back, so he hopes this time they will succeed.

The members began discussing other potential historic roads in Town.

Mr. Talbot said it would be better to work comprehensively and formulate a plan starting in January as discussed earlier.

Ms. Pantezzi was in favor of letting the 2 women start working on Mills Road if they are anxious to do so.

Mr. Buchholtz reiterated that they already have an approved motion regarding Mills Road, so they could do that.

To approve the minutes of the October 5, 2010 meeting

Motion by: David Talbot

Seconded by: Bruce Buchholtz

All in favor.

It was agreed to meet again on Tuesday, December 7, 2010.

Chairman Tuoti adjourned the meeting at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Will, Recording Secretary