

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

June 7, 2011
Delancey Hall

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Francis Tuoti, Chairman

ALSO PRESENT: Susie Thompson, Town Historian
Janice Will, Recording Secretary

Vice Chairman Bruce Buchholtz called the meeting to order at 7:35pm, explaining that Chairman Francis Tuoti was out of town.

Public Hearing: Application for historic landmark designation of stone chamber at 955 Peach Lake Road, property of Kay Spear

Mr. Buchholtz opened the public hearing. He said he invited Ms. Spear to attend the meeting, but it appeared that she was not coming. As the application was discussed at the May meeting, Mr. Buchholtz stated that the only remaining issue is the perimeter to be included in the designation. He explained that he amended the blue form to include Steve LaRocca's notes about this. Mr. Buchholtz said the attached photo clearly reflects the demarcation between the garage and the stone chamber and possible pitfalls if the 2 were to be separated, and he asked Mr. LaRocca to elaborate on what he observed at the site.

Mr. LaRocca said 3 borders are clear: the garage on the south side; the road on the west side; and the fence to the east. He added that there are 2 options on the north side: the perimeter could go to the adjoining cemetery; or just to the outside of the stone chamber.

David Talbot asked who owns the cemetery, and Susie Thompson said the Town is responsible for it.

Mr. Talbot asked if the cemetery is of historical significance, and Debby Moore and Susie Thompson replied that it is.

Mr. Talbot asked if the HPC shouldn't pursue designation of the cemetery, but Mr. LaRocca commented that cemeteries are not generally considered to be endangered.

Ms. Thompson said she would like the chamber's perimeter to go right to the property line at the cemetery, noting that a new owner could change the property entrance or even subdivide it.

Ms. Pantezzi asked what Ms. Spear thought about it, and Ms. Thompson answered that she didn't know.

Mr. Talbot was in favor of taking the perimeter right to the property line at the cemetery, but Mr. LaRocca preferred to take the least restrictive area (perhaps 15 ft. out from the chamber) while requiring approval for any activity in the vicinity of the stone chamber that could affect it; i.e. excavation, rock and tree removal.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if the existing fence is made of wood, and Mr. LaRocca responded that it is, adding that it could be changed in the future.

Marcia Rockwood asked if the chamber is near the sewer work being done, and Debby Moore said it is right across the street.

Mr. Buchholtz stated that Ms. Thompson is pursuing a State archeological designation for the stone chamber as well.

Ms. Thompson said that is not going very well. She said she sent in the paperwork for the Purdys chamber, and the reply was that the Homestead is already on the national register, so it was not necessary. When she explained that she was not so concerned about the Homestead, but the stone chamber is very near the road, she was told they could not do anything. Ms. Thompson said she does not think the Homestead's placement on the register includes the entire property. She told the representative in Albany that she will be sending information about a stone chamber about to be designated and was told to wait until the designation is complete and send that to him as a cover letter. Ms. Thompson said it will be recorded somewhere, but she doesn't know what will happen otherwise.

Mr. Buchholtz asked where the HPC should set the north perimeter for the stone chamber.

Ms. Pantezzi said they need to know what the property-owner wants.

Mr. Buchholtz explained that he did not have her phone number will him, but he would go and see Ms. Spear the next day to see what she thinks.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested designating the chamber subject to the owner's approval.

Mr. LaRocca suggested that a line 20 ft. from the north side of the chamber will be enough. He commented that it is better not to hinder the property-owner, and appearance is not an issue/only damage is.

Mr. Buchholtz closed the public hearing.

To accept the application for the stone chamber at 955 Peach Lake Road and recommend to the Town Board that they designate it as a North Salem historic landmark, pending the property-owner's approval of the proposed protective perimeter.

Motion by: Steve LaRocca

Seconded by: Debby Moore

All in favor

Mr. Buchholtz thanked Mr. LaRocca for his efforts and Ms. Thompson for all her work on the application.

Ms. Thompson said she will re-type the Inventory form, adding the point that the side of the chamber appears to have been raised to meet the garage.

Ms. Rockwood asked what the house at 955 Peach Lake Road is like.

Mr. Buchholtz said there is no house, but there is a beautiful barn. He added that the owner said it was built around 1933, but Mr. LaRocca said he thought it was built in the mid- to late-40's.

Ms. Pantezzi expressed interest in the barn, but Mr. Buchholtz told her Mr. LaRocca feels it is not very unusual/may not have much historical value.

Ms. Pantezzi said the HPC should look at barns in general, and Mr. LaRocca said he will research the Spear barn.

St. James Church

Mr. Buchholtz stated that Ms. Pantezzi and Mr. LaRocca met with the Vestry at St. James Church to discuss its historic designation.

Ms. Pantezzi said she would like to see the minutes of the Vestry meeting and suggested they be sent a follow-up memo.

Mr. Buchholtz said Tim Purdy spoke to the Vestry members personally and told them how accommodating he found the HPC to be when he wanted to make modifications to his historic house. Mr. Buchholtz added that perhaps Mr. Purdy would follow up with the church members.

Ms. Pantezzi commented that they had a lot of questions at the meeting, e.g. possible future changes and construction of handicapped ramps. Ms. Pantezzi told the Vestry the HPC would help them with those kinds of things.

Ms. Thompson stated that when she was speaking to the State about another issue, she told them about St. James Church. She was advised that it merits national registration.

Reconsidering his earlier statement, Mr. Buchholtz said that as Tim Purdy is not a member of the HPC, he should not be asked to follow up with the Vestry. He asked who would write them a letter. When no one was forthcoming, he said perhaps he and Ms. Rockwood could work on something.

Ms. Rockwood agreed to try and help.

Mr. Buchholtz asked Ms. Rockwood to jot down some ideas that they can share via e-mail, and he will find out when the Vestry meets again.

Mr. LaRocca offered to contribute notes also.

Placement of Mike Bonelli drawings in Junior High School

Mr. Buchholtz said Ms. Pantezzi gave him receipts for sales of the historic landmark booklet, and he spoke to Supervisor Warren Lucas. The Supervisor was excited by the notion of getting the drawings out in public, and he liked the idea of displaying them in the school. Mr. Buchholtz went on to say that Supervisor Lucas shared the HPC's concerns about care of the drawings, and said the drawings should all be labeled, "Property of Town of North Salem, on Loan". The Supervisor suggested moving the drawings during the summer, perhaps to be displayed at the library or the Hammond Museum. Mr. Buchholtz stated that anyone wishing to view the drawings while they are in the school need only show a drivers license to visit the school, and the drawings will be seen by 600 children a day. He said he thought they would learn about the Town's history from the drawings, and the school's Art Department will label each one.

Ms. Pantezzi showed the HPC the special hardware for securely mounting framed pictures on the wall and demonstrated how the parts are attached to the frame and anchors put in the wall.

Ms. Moore asked if this method is acceptable to the school.

Ms. Pantezzi said she needs to show the hardware to the principal. She admitted that taking the pictures down even once a year will not be easy, but she added that only the screw and anchor will be left in the wall. She said she thinks the pictures for the school's annual art show can easily be taped up as none will be framed.

Mr. Buchholtz stated that the school will also insure the drawings at their expense.

Ms. Pantezzi said it is still important to make sure the pictures cannot easily be removed from the wall.

Mr. LaRocca asked Ms. Pantezzi how she thought the drawings should be hung, and she replied that she thought 2 rows would be a good way to display them.

Mr. LaRocca said he asked because there might be a way to hang the school's pictures over/on top of the framed drawings, eliminating the need to take them down.

Mr. Buchholtz commented that there is room enough on the wall in the school to hang another 20 drawings.

Ms. Pantezzi said she will speak to George Bovino.

Mr. Buchholtz said there is no natural light in the corridor, but the estimate to mat and frame the drawings includes UV protective glass.

Mr. LaRocca said the small, detailed drawings should be hung at eye level, but they will surely get bumped into.

Ms. Pantezzi stated that the anchors she proposes to use will allow no movement, adding that she used some to hang pictures at home and is pleased with the way they work.

Mr. Buchholtz said the Supervisor proposes that the HPC get 2 firm estimates for matting/framing. He also said he told the Supervisor that the cost will be about \$2500, and Supervisor Lucas said he will submit it for payment.

Ms. Thompson said she found it completely unreasonable for the Town to fund this project, given the current constraints on Town employees not to cause or require any additional expenditures.

Ms. Pantezzi said the anchoring hardware is \$4 per set, and she suggested that if the school wants to make a donation, they could pay for that. She noted that the HPC has given the Town approximately \$500 from sales of the booklets.

Mr. Buchholtz commented that that would keep the Town's expense to \$200, and he added that he thinks displaying the drawings is the right thing for the Town to do.

Mr. Talbot agreed that they should accept the donation offered by the school.

Mr. Buchholtz said the donation amount is \$300.

Ms. Moore said she would like to look into finding a way to avoid taking the drawings down if there is another way to display the students' artwork for the school show.

Mr. Buchholtz reiterated that Supervisor Lucas wants to be sure the school is aware that the drawings are on loan/belong to the Town, and he may wish to display them somewhere else 5 years down the road.

Mr. Talbot asked when the drawings will be put up if the framing is approved.

Mr. Buchholtz answered that Mr. Bovino said he would like to put them up in September when school opens. Mr. Buchholtz suggested inviting parents and the media to see them.

Ms. Pantezzi said they should invite the owners of the historic properties, and she thanked Mr. Buchholtz for taking the lead in getting the drawings displayed.

Purdys Schoolhouse plaque presentation, June 4

Mr. Buchholtz stated that turnout was light, but the presentation was nice. Chairman Francis Tuoti said a few words, and the Bartsches were delighted to receive their plaque.

Ms. Moore said she thought there had been at least 25 people present.

Ms. Pantezzi commented that a neighbor took some pictures, and she wondered if the HPC could get copies to put on the Town website.

Ms. Moore said Helen Powers' husband took photos.

Mr. Talbot said he has photos of 3 Spur Street.

Ms. Pantezzi asked for an update on the Central High School plaque.

Mr. Buchholtz said the plaque has been ordered but has not been delivered yet.

Some members commented that there are owners of historic landmarks in Town who have never put their plaques up.

Mr. Talbot asked if plaque presentations could be scheduled a little farther in advance in the future, and Mr. Buchholtz replied that they should be.

Bloomer Road Farmhouse

Ms. Thompson stated that the owners are interested in historic designation and have promised to call her. She said she will pursue the matter further.

Potential Purdys Historic District

Ms. Pantezzi asked what the HPC is doing about this. She thought it was decided that they cannot create the historic district as they thought they could because it is already defined in the existing law.

Mr. Buchholtz said he is working on a draft for the Town Board's consideration, but he does not know how it will stand up judicially. He stated that his first attempt was drawn from the Bedford code which has survived several challenges. He said he also needs to consult with Cynthia Curtis to pare down the actual map based on data from the survey. The proposed district will be tighter/smaller than originally envisioned. He said it will essentially consist of the hamlet and a few areas beyond, probably not going as far as the area opposite WECS or Friends of Karen, as there is no interest there.

Ms. Moore said that would only eliminate a few houses.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if she was correct in saying that Mr. Buchholtz is working on a draft to change the existing law/definition of an historic district.

Mr. Buchholtz said the draft relates to Purdys only. If other historic districts are proposed in the future, they will be separate issues. He explained that it was learned from the survey that people were mainly agreeable to preservation of the street-facing façade of their houses. He said paring the designated area down to a walking district makes sense.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if what Mr. Buchholtz is working on is a modification of the existing Chapter 131 and not a new Chapter 132, and Mr. Buchholtz said that was correct.

Mr. Talbot asked if such a proposed change will require Town Board approval.

Mr. Buchholtz replied that it will. He stated that because he is working from scratch, the draft modification is taking a long time.

Ms. Rockwood asked what happens when a house in an historic district is sold, and Ms. Moore answered that it remains in the district.

Mr. Talbot asked if the HPC will get to review the map again once Mr. Buchholtz has revised the proposed district.

Mr. Buchholtz said that of course they will review it.

To skip the scheduled July meeting and meet next on August 2

Motion by: Debby Moore

Seconded by: David Talbot

All in favor.

Ms. Pantezzi will be away in August, but she will phone in a report of her meeting with George Bovino before then.

Mileage Markers

Mr. Talbot asked if mileage markers are on private property or State land. He explained that there is one near his property, where there is a certain amount of land between the road and his stone fence. He said he maintains this land, but he thinks it is actually State property, and there is a similar situation near the Rattner property.

Ms. Pantezzi said the Highway Department would be the best source of information.

Ms. Thompson said the mileage marker on Dingle Ridge Road is almost certainly on Town property.

Mr. Talbot said he brought it up because he thinks the HPC needs to know whose property the markers are on/who owns them before they look into designating them, but he does not know how to go about finding out.

Ms. Thompson said she will find out, and she added that she thinks there are only 3.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested asking the NYS Department of Parks and Recreation for suggestions on how to go about this. She also reiterated that the Highway Department has a lot of information.

Mr. LaRocca asked if the Historical Society has written any articles about the mileage markers in the past, and Ms. Moore said there are some.

Ms. Thompson said they are mentioned in several publications.

Mr. Talbot asked if the HPC could get copies for their files, and Ms. Thompson said she will get the copies.

To approve the minutes of the May 3, 2011 meeting.

Motion by: Gail Pantezzi
Seconded by: Steve LaRocca

Other

Ms. Thompson said she has been unable to find any evidence to support the 1726 date given for the Mills House. She said she would like to look at the house with Mr. LaRocca to try and see architectural/construction indications of its age.

Ms. Rockwood stated that a consultant who looked at her house said it was a cousin of the Mills house due to the pitch of the roof and other physical similarities.

Ms. Thompson said the deeds for the Mills House stop with Mills; he didn't buy it from anyone. She added that he wouldn't have inherited it from anyone, because he was originally from Dutchess County. She stated that there has to have been some evidence because the designation gives the 1726 date, but she has been unable to find anything.

Ms. Moore said Robert Treadway would be a good source of information because of the research he did on the Smiths (original owners of Ms. Rockwood's property).

Ms. Pantezzi said she recently spoke to Caroline Weisblatt (new owner of the former Marceca property at 369 Mills Road) about the barns there. Ms. Weisblatt said people doing other work on her house expressed doubt about saving the barns. Ms. Pantezzi cautioned her not to take one person's word about it. She said it would be nice for someone who knows Ms. Weisblatt to encourage her to invite some people from the HPC to take a look at the barns.

Debby Moore said she will talk to Ms. Weisblatt.

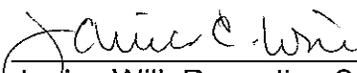
Vote on the motion to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2011 meeting.

All in favor

To adjourn the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Motion by: Debby Moore

Respectfully submitted,



Janice Will, Recording Secretary