

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2016
Delancey Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Malone
Debby Moore
Gail Pantezzi
Steve LaRocca
Francis Tuoti, Chairman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Gracie
Marcia Rockwood

ALSO PRESENT: Susie Thompson, Town Historian
Amy Rosmarin, Mills Road Resident
Janice Will, Recording Secretary

Chairman Francis Tuoti opened the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year.

Mills Road/Highway Dept. placement of rocks at side of road

The Chairman invited Amy Rosmarin to tell the HPC about Mills Road.

Ms. Rosmarin explained that the Highway Department repaved Mills Road, resulting in its being a good bit higher than the shoulder and making it very difficult for a car to pull over. To try and even the road with the shoulder, Highway put large gray rocks alongside to fill the gap somewhat. She commented that it looks like drainage.

Gail Pantezzi commented that the rocks are much lighter in color than the road.

Ms. Rosmarin went on to say that as Mills is an historic road, she e-mailed Highway Superintendent Ward Hanaburgh about its appearance with the rocks in place, but she has not heard back from him. She stated that someone suggested that the rocks are in place for the winter so that people who slide off the road due to ice/snow won't be stuck/unable to get their cars out. Ms. Rosmarin wondered if the HPC would like to suggest something to the Highway Department.

Debby Moore thought grass would grow up between the rocks in the spring, softening their appearance somewhat.

Ms. Pantezzi said it will not grow there; fallen leaves will cover some of the rock surface but won't cover completely. She looked at similar rocks on June Road to compare, and no grass has grown between them.

Ms. Moore commented that putting in top soil and grading would have been a better solution.

Ms. Pantezzi agreed, adding that the HPC should have been consulted but safety concerns may be the reason Highway went ahead and put in the rocks.

Susie. Thompson said the road-side was very deep even before the rocks were put in, and John Malone added that if the difference in grade is more substantial now, something had to be done.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if the road couldn't have been crowned to lessen the difference in grade; someone thought that would tend to widen the road.

Ms. Thompson remarked that crowning would have been better, but the rocks are in now; the HPC should ask how it can be made to look better.

Ms. Moore was in favor of top soil and seed.

The Chairman thought it unlikely that Highway would remove all the stones to do this, which would be necessary because soil or some kind of agricultural cloth would have to be put underneath them.

Ms. Pantezzi said she thought the Historic Road law states that if safety is an issue, the HPC must allow whatever is deemed necessary to be done.

Mr. LaRocca said a dark color, finer stone on top of the existing rocks would work to keep weeds down and work for drainage, but he did not know if this would be cost-effective.

Ms. Pantezzi agreed, saying stone dust is quite dark and would be a good choice, but the Chairman thought it would impede the drainage.

Ms. Rosmarin said the stones were not put down for drainage purposes, but the Chairman thought stone dust would create a need for drainage.

Ms. Pantezzi thought having a conversation with Town Supervisor Lucas would be an opportunity to bring up other possibilities.

Mr. Malone said drainage issues would be a problem with putting on top soil (it would wash away).

Ms. Rosmarin thought a cloth product would work to prevent wash-out.

Ms. Thompson read from the Ordinance that a Certificate of Appropriateness should have been applied for, but she added that the work is done already; all the HPC can do now is ask what can be done to make the road look better.

Mr. LaRocca asked how long a stretch of road is involved.

Ms. Rosmarin replied that it is a lot/there are multiple sections of road where the stone have been put down. She asked if anyone on the HPC would speak to Superintendent Hanaburgh.

Chairman Tuoti said he will talk to the Superintendent, but he did not think anything would be done. The Chairman asked if he should try to get Mr. Hanaburgh to attend a meeting of the HPC.

Ms. Rosmarin thought there might be a plan to add something to the stones, and she suggested that the Chairman ask what kind of options there are.

Ms. Pantezzi commented that the work had been done without consulting the HPC, so it would be reasonable for the Chairman to say the HPC is looking for answers/solutions.

Chairman Tuoti will have a conversation with Highway Superintendent Hanaburgh.

Member Resumes/Certified Local Government Program

Everyone is to e-mail their resumes to the secretary who will forward them to all the HPC members to review.

Ms. Pantezzi said she will collect the resumes and forward them to the State; next there should be a letter from the Supervisor stating that in the future the Town will be looking for people qualified in terms of history, architecture, historic preservation, etc. when making appointments to the HPC. She explained that the CLGP seeks to raise the standard of the kind of work done by the HPC.

Chairman Tuoti thought Ms. Pantezzi's comments made it sound as though the current members are not qualified.

Ms. Pantezzi responded that they are all qualified in different ways.

The Chairman thought it would be better for the letter from the Supervisor to state that the Town will continue to appoint qualified people to the Commission, and everyone agreed.

Ms. Pantezzi will forward the section of the CLGP paperwork pertaining to qualifications to the rest of the HPC.

Ms. Moore said the HPC already has the qualifying criteria in the local Ordinance.

The secretary said the HPC simply needs to state to the CLGP that they are doing what is required in order to be accepted for inclusion in the Program.

Cat Ridge Cemetery Fund-Raising

Ms. Thompson stated that the Historical Society has agreed to take over fund-raising, and \$4,000 has been donated already. She explained that she, Debby Moore and Peter Bliss will work out how funds will be used.

Ms. Thompson said Stephen Tilly submitted a detailed report of what will need to be done to repair/restore the vault at the cemetery, so now she can get bids from masons to do the work/she has called a few who were recommended. She went on to say that approximately \$8,000 will be needed for the work on the rest of the cemetery, and restoration of the vault will cost about \$10,000.

Ms. Moore said a cocktail party will be held at the White Elephant on March 4, and the proceeds will go toward restoration work in the cemetery.

Ms. Thompson commented that funds received so far have been due only to mention in the Historical Society bulletin; nothing else has been done, although she plans to contact the Lions Club.

Ms. Moore said Cynthia Curtis has been very helpful in including something about the cemetery in any Historical Society flyers distributed. She noted that the Historical Society is a 501C-3, so any donations made are tax-deductible.

Ms. Pantezzi said she was aware of the importance of using the right kind of mortar for repair jobs like the vault, so it was good to read in the Tilly report that samples from the vault were to be analyzed to help get the right mortar.

Ms. Thompson said Steve Tilly sent mortar samples to Jablonski Building Conservation for analysis, and they are a very well-respected firm.

Ms. Thompson remarked that if they could have known the weather would stay mild for so long, more clean-up work could have been done in Cat Ridge Cemetery.

Chairman Tuoti asked if the Highway Department has been helpful.

Ms. Thompson said the Superintendent sent 2 people to help and they were very good. She added that Highway just can't do all that is needed.

Ms. Pantezzi said the Superintendent's assistant, Gail Soto, attended the class given by Beyond the Gravestone. Ms. Pantezzi also saw something on-line by the Chicora Foundation that provided the same information as BTG regarding cemetery-stone repairs. She said Chicora had a specialist who wrote a series of articles explaining what should and should not be done re cemetery restoration.

Ms. Thompson said she had been looking at the other cemeteries in Town; a lot of cleaning up is needed, but there are fewer broken stones.

Historic District Laws

Ms. Moore said she thought the HPC should look at the historic district laws of other towns to see how they are dealt with. She explained that while the majority of residents of the Purdys hamlet support establishment of an historic district, there were a few who did not because they feared restrictions. Ms. Moore came across information about the Starr Ridge Historic District in Southeast, and it was established just to draw attention to the historic aspect of the area/has no restrictions at all.

Ms. Pantezzi recalled Eleanor Fitchen (a founder of the Southeast Landmark Preservation Society) as the driving force behind the Starr Ridge designation, which came at a time when a developer wanted to construct a multiplex cinema at the bottom of Starr Ridge Road. Ms. Fitchen hoped historic designation would help prevent such a development. She came to a meeting of the North Salem HPC to tell about it, and that was when the

HPC began to work on a historic road law for North Salem. Ms. Pantezzi said the Southeast designation initially made Starr Ridge a scenic road with no restrictions, but she didn't know it had been further designated an historic district, albeit still without restrictions.

Ms. Thompson commented that the designation calls attention to the area.

Chairman Tuoti suggested taking time to read the paperwork provided by Ms. Moore and discussing it at the February meeting.

Ms. Moore agreed, adding that she would like to have a similar designation for Purdys.

Ms. Thompson said the issue would be how to do that, given the Town's existing Historic District law.

Ms. Moore wondered if it could be called something other than an historic district to circumvent the restrictions.

Ms. Pantezzi said it will be helpful to look at what other towns do.

It was noted that Historic Districts were added to the Town's Historic Landmarks law in 2000.

Ms. Rosmarin said vacant land at the bottom of Starr Ridge Road in Southeast has been cleared of brush and is for sale. She imagines it will have offices built on it (property is zoned for certain commercial-type uses).

Mr. Malone suggested that given how close the land is to the highway, that would probably be the most appropriate use of the property.

The Chairman asked Ms. Moore what she would like to do.

Ms. Moore said she would like to find a way to recognize the historical significance of hamlets without putting limitations on property-owners within them.

Chairman Tuoti asked if calling it something other than an historic district would require a change to the law.

Ms. Pantezzi said they could create/add a definition for historic significance or meritorious history, etc.

Other: Delancey Hall Side Door

Ms. Thompson noted that she sent the HPC a memo in December about the problem with both the door and the siding, adding that the same architect who examined the Cat Ridge Cemetery vault looked at the Delancey Hall siding problem and Steve LaRocca looked into the door problem in the past. She explained that the building is not straight, and the doorsill is rotting. She said Supervisor Lucas wants to put up a portico like one that was there in the past (but not originally), but the architect recommended a sort of hood over the

door. Ms. Thompson thought this was a better solution and cheaper/less obtrusive than a portico.

Ms. Pantezzi said the source of the water getting in should be determined first.

Mr. LaRocca said he thinks it has been determined that the problem is the slope of the siding; if it is not leaking up above, it is probably not a roof leak. The little prow over the door is not flashed into the siding; this could be solved.

Ms. Pantezzi said there is also a problem with moss accumulating on the slanted part of the wood shingled roof on Delancey Hall (topmost part has already been replaced with metal roofing).

Ms. Thompson said the HPC first needs to address the door; no C of A application was submitted, but they can make a recommendation. She wondered what the work would cost, and Mr. LaRocca thought it would probably be about \$5,000.

Ms. Moore thought a small covered entry like that over the front door of Delancey Hall as depicted on the Town stationery was a good choice, as it is less obtrusive than a full portico but more significant than the hoods.

Mr. LaRocca agreed that the scale was appropriate/it doesn't stick out too far, but he would prefer a hood.

Ms. Pantezzi thought that would be the least obtrusive option, and it might work, and Ms. Thompson added that it would probably be much cheaper than the portico.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested the sill be constructed of a composite product called Boral that is very durable.

Ms. Thompson said the HPC only needs to address the appearance of the building, responding to Supervisor Lucas's request for a recommendation. She added that he likes the porch alternative. Ms. Thompson thought a memo should be sent to the Town Board spelling out the HPC's preference.

Ms. Pantezzi asked if everyone agreed that a hood over the door would be best.

Mr. LaRocca said that if it is deep enough and properly-flashed, a hood would work.

Ms. Pantezzi thought they could say they were leaning toward a hood-like protrusion but would like to see some examples and point out that it will be less obtrusive and less expensive.

Mr. LaRocca said a hood could be designed to pick up the detailing of the back porch.

To inform the Town Board that the HPC would prefer an historic-looking hood over the side door of Delancey Hall rather than a shed-roofed porch and that, given the prominence of the side façade, a hood would be less intrusive and also less expensive:

Motion by: Gail Pantezzi
Seconded by: John Malone
All in favor.

Ms. Pantezzi said the Cable Barn has water problems also, and Joe Constantino suggested using Boral. Ms. Pantezzi said the board on the right corner of the building is separating and the door is hinged there.

Ms. Thompson asked if the work has been approved.

Ms. Pantezzi replied that she thought Mr. Constantino was asked to do the work a while ago, but he was too busy then; he realized in November that he had time to look into it.

The Chairman asked if the HPC needed to do anything, and Ms. Pantezzi said that if Boral is used, the HPC should be consulted.

Chairman Tuoti asked if a C of A would be required.

Ms. Pantezzi said it would not be needed for repairs or maintenance, but a change of appearance or materials would call for one.

Ms. Thompson said she will send an e-mail to the Supervisor (cc'ing the Town Board) about the HPC's recommendation for the Delancey Hall side door.

It was agreed that Ms. Thompson should also point out that any change in appearance or materials would call for a C of A.

To approve the minutes of the October 6, 2015 meeting:

Motion by: Debby Moore
Seconded by: John Malone
All in favor.

It was agreed to meet again on February 2, 2016.

To adjourn at approximately 6:25 pm:

Motion by: Debby Moore

Respectfully submitted,


Janice Will, Recording Secretary