



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
Old State House 150 Benefit Street Providence, RI 02903

Telephone 401-222-2678
TTY 401-222-3700

Fax 401-222-2968
www.preservation.ri.gov

MINUTES

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION November 12, 2008

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Robert E. Cusack
Mr. Robert Goff
Ms. Patrice O'Malley Hagan
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board
Mr. Karst Hoogeboom
Mr. Bradford Kopp
Dr. Ronald Onorato
Mr. Jared L. Rhodes, Chief of Statewide Planning representing Kevin Flynn
Mr. Frederick C. Williamson, Chairman & SHPO

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Sr. Project Review Coordinator
Ms. Mercedes Monteiro, National Register Assistant
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director
Mr. Wm. McKenzie Woodward, Principal Architectural Historian
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Sr. Special Projects Coordinator

GUESTS

Mr. Michael Hogan, House Policy Office

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Michael Sullivan, Director DEM
Mr. John Grosvenor, AIA
Mr. Saul Kaplan, Executive Director, EDC
John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner
Dr. Patrick Malone
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon\
Dr. Patricia Rubertone

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M.

2. Minutes of October 8, 2008

On a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Kopp, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the Minutes of October 8, 2008.

3. Executive Director's Report

a) Sarah Zurier reported on planning for the 2009 Statewide Historic Preservation Conference that will be held on Saturday April 25 at the University of Rhode Island campus in Kingston.

b) Mr. Sanderson reported that a number of applications have been received for the vacant position of Supervising Historic Preservation Specialist/Deputy Director and interviews are being conducted with several well-qualified applicants. Hopefully a final selection can be reported at the December Commission meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Goff, seconded by Ms. Hagen, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to go into executive session in order to discuss confidential personnel issues related to applicants for the position of Supervising Historic Preservation Specialist/Deputy Director.

c) Mr. Woodward and Ms. Zurier reported on discussions with Preserve Rhode Island to create a joint historic preservation awards program to be held annually in the Fall. This proposal would remove the RIHPHC awards from the Annual Conference in the Spring (freeing up more time for the conference program), and would join two statewide awards programs into one with greater public impact.

d) Mr. Sanderson reported that the owner of a historic house located at 20 Moore Street in Providence has asked to appeal the RIHPHC staff review of his application for the Historic Homeownership Tax Credit, and presented information and photographs about the project.

The reason for this denial is because, as stated in the application, all exterior work done on the property must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Standard 6 states that the new features shall match the old in design, texture, color and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Unpainted replacement hand-railings and steps do not match the originals.

In 2003 this owner successfully completed historic preservation work in consultation with the Providence Preservation Society Revolving Fund.

During discussion, Dr. Onorato noted that replacement of the porch steps and railings was a significant portion of the total project and that it is historically appropriate to paint porch steps and railings. A painted finish is part of the visual character of historic houses like 20 Moore Street, and a painted finish is important weather protection to the wood steps and railings. Mr. Cusack stated that projects should meet the approved Standards for Historic Preservation Projects. However, the Commissioners also noted that the Owner plans to paint the house at a later date but has not decided on the color scheme. On a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Hoogeboom, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to deny the appeal because in the Commission's opinion, leaving the steps and railing unpainted will not meet the Standards. However, the Commission recommends that the Owner apply standard primer to the steps and railings and apply the finish coat when the rest of the house is painted; applying a primer coat will satisfy the requirements of the Standards for the purpose of approving the project. If the Owner wishes to appear before the Commission to present his point-of-view, he will be welcome.

4. Loan Committee Report

Mr. Goff reported that the Loan Committee has met with representatives of Cornish Associates to review details of a proposed loan for rehabilitation of the storefront and first floor retail space at the historic Fletcher Building, 173 Weybosset Street, Providence. The Committee recommends approval of a loan in the amount of \$200,000 at 5% secured by the Borrower's personal guarantee (since the Borrower is a lessee and not the owner of the real property). The Borrower will meet the RIHPHC's standard requirements, and the owner of the real estate will be required to grant a 20-year term easement on the exterior of the historic building (the first floor interior retail space has no historic features). On a motion by Mr. Goff, seconded by Mr. Cusack, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the Loan Committee recommendation.

5. National Register of Historic Places

Final Presentation: Ocean Drive Historic District, Newport

Mr. Woodward presented information and summarized his work to revise the National Register nomination documentation. Ocean Drive Historic District was listed by the National Park Service as a National Historic Landmark in 1976. Unfortunately, only limited research and documentation was prepared by NPS. Mr. Woodward has completely resurveyed the properties included in the historic district and has added significant new research to the statement of

significance. For the purpose of revising the National Register nomination, no boundary changes are proposed, and therefore the proposed action by the Commission is to update and supplement information contained in the National Register nomination. This is not a new National Register nomination, since no boundary changes are proposed, and National Register regulatory procedures for new nominations are not required.

Spread across most of the peninsula that forms the southwest tip of Aquidneck Island, the Ocean Drive Historic District is a 1750-acre area variously occupied by approximately 360 individual residential and recreational properties. Physically unique in its natural, environmental, and developmental composition, the Ocean Drive Historic District represents one of the nation's most significant examples of a late 19th-/early 20th-century summer resort and as such achieves national significance in the areas of landscape architecture and architecture. Ocean Drive represents one of the country's first efforts to plan and develop an upper-income residential seaside summer resort: nationally important landscape architects as well as significant local gardeners have shaped both the topography and texture of the landscape; the district's overall appearance owes much to the large-scale planning that occurred during its development, and many designers and gardeners played significant roles in the planting and cultivation of individual parcels. Architecturally, the district includes many examples of high-quality domestic architecture designed by nationally important architects and constructed over a hundred-year period between the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries.

Mr. Woodward presented a large number of images of views within the historic district to document its current visual character and to present information about new construction that has occurred since 1976. Due to the siting, landscape treatment, and architectural character of recent buildings, new construction in the historic district has had relatively little impact on the historical character of Ocean Drive Historic District.

During discussion, Dr. Onorato complimented Mr. Woodward on his excellent research and presentation. Mr. Sanderson noted that the revised Ocean Drive National Register nomination represents a major research contribution to American architectural history, and Dr. Onorato (University of Rhode Island) and Dr. Keith Morgan (Boston University) both read and commented on the revised nomination. Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Hoogeboom, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the Ocean Drive Historic District National Register nomination.

6. Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Next meeting date: Wednesday December 10, 2008.

8. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

Minutes recorded by,

Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer