



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
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MINUTES

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
March 18, 2009

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Robert Goff
Mr. John Grosvenor, AIA
Ms. Patrice O'Malley Hagan
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board
Mr. Karst Hooeboom
Mr. Bradford Kopp
Dr. Patrick Malone
Dr. Ronald Onorato
Mr. Frederick C. Williamson, Chairman & SHPO

STAFF PRESENT

Dr. Richard Greenwood, Deputy Director
Ms. Mercedes Monteiro, National Register Assistant
Mr. Wm. McKenzie Woodward, Principal Architectural Historian
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director

GUESTS

Ms. Adriana Thomas, House Policy Office
Ms. Valerie Talmage, Preserve Rhode Island
Mr. S. Paul Ryan, ESQ., 670 Willett Ave, East Providence 02915 (Indian Ave)
Lawrence & Kim Ingeneri, 62 Pond Rd, Wellesley, MA 02482 (Indian Ave)
David Andreozzi, AIA, 232D Waseca Ave, Barrington, RI (Indian Ave)
Meg Steiner, 17 Bridal Path, Weston, MA (Indian Avenue)
Dawn Lockwood & Faith Underwood, Roaring Brook Watershed Asso (Hopkins

Hollow)

Ms. Jenny Fields, PAL, consultant to Roaring Brook Watershed Asso (Hopkins Hollow)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Robert E. Cusack
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
Mr. Jared L. Rhodes, Chief of Statewide Planning representing Kevin Flynn
Dr. Patricia Rubertone
Mr. J. Michael Saul, Interim Executive Director, EDC
Dr. Michael Sullivan, Director DEM
John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 A.M.

2. Minutes of February 11, 2009

On a motion by Mr. Kopp, seconded by Mr. Hoozeboom, the Commission unanimously VOTED to approve the Minutes of February 11, 2009.

3. Executive Director's Report

a) The Commission welcomed Adriana Thomas to the meeting. Ms. Thomas will be attending RIHPHC meetings as an observer for the House Policy Office.

b) The FY 2009 Federal Historic Preservation Fund provides a \$3.1 million increase for State Historic Preservation Offices, \$20 million for Save America's Treasures restoration grants, and zero funding for Preserve America education grants.

c) Mr. Sanderson was in Washington, DC for the annual meeting of State Historic Preservation Officers and met with legislative staff from RI's Congressional delegation to discuss appropriations for Federal FY 2010 and pending federal legislation that affects historic preservation.

d) The first of three "Preservation Is Local" public meetings was held at Slater Mill, Pawtucket on March 16; the meeting was well attended and productive. The second "Preservation Is Local" public meeting will be held at Burnside Memorial, Bristol on March 26.

e) Dr. Onorato reported on his work as a member of the Newport Historic District Ordinance Review Task Force appointed by the City Council. Initiated at a time of local controversy regarding historic district zoning, the Task Force conducted fact-finding workshops to air and discuss perceived issues. The Task Force has proposed a series of recommendations for amendments to the Newport ordinance and Historic District Commission procedures to make the process more efficient and user-friendly while maintaining protection for historic properties. The controversy has been significantly reduced, and a large number of advocates for historic preservation have voiced support for the Task Force and the proposed ordinance amendments. An ongoing concern is the current vacancy in the City historic preservation planner position.

4. National Register of Historic Places

Final Approval

Indian Avenue Historic District, Middletown

Mr. Hoogeboom, Chair of the RIHPHC National Register Review Board welcomed visitors to the meeting, and he noted that letters of support and letters of objection had been received regarding the Indian Avenue Historic District National Register nomination. He noted that the National Register nomination process is set forth in federal regulations, and the RI Review Board's consideration of the nomination would be carried out in accordance with the federal process. RIHPHC staff had sent notice to all property-owners of record, and a fact sheet that explained the National Register program and the rights of property-owners was included with the notice. Notice had also been sent to public officials. The nomination form has been posted on the RIHPHC website. Mr. Hoogeboom stated that RIHPHC staff would present information about the Indian Avenue Historic District. Following the presentation, Commissioners could ask questions and have discussion. Before considering final action on the nomination, Ms. Talmage of Preserve Rhode Island would be recognized to report on PRI's role in bringing the nomination to RIHPHC, and any supporters or opponents of the nomination would be given an opportunity to briefly share their views.

Mr. Ryan identified himself as an attorney representing property-owners Lawrence & Kim Ingeneri, and he asked to be permitted to present evidence that property-owners object to the nomination. Mr. Hoogeboom stated that he would recognize Mr. Ryan at the appropriate time, and he asked Mr. Sanderson to explain provisions of the federal National Register nomination regulations that address objections by property-owners. Mr. Sanderson explained that under the federal regulations of the National Register, a proposed historic district will not be listed on the National Register if a majority of owners object, and it appears that a majority of owners in the proposed Indian Avenue Historic District have filed written and notarized objections. However, under federal regulations, the Review Board and the National Park Service still have a responsibility to determine whether in their judgment the proposed Indian Avenue district meets the criteria for National Register eligibility. It is important for state and federal planning purposes to record the opinion of the Review Board and the NPS. Mr. Hoogeboom asked RIHPHC to proceed with their presentation.

Dr. Greenwood and Mr. Woodward presented information about the nomination. The RIHPHC report on the Architectural & Historical Resources of Middletown (1979) identified Indian Avenue as a potential historic district. Recently, the statewide nonprofit preservation organization Preserve Rhode Island worked with a group of neighboring property owners to propose the Indian Avenue Historic District nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. RIHPHC professional staff assisted in preparation of the final nomination document.

In the middle decades of the 19th century, as Newport acquired national renown as a summer resort, vacationers from the nearby city began to explore Middletown's adjacent countryside, drawn by the scenic attractions of a bucolic landscape of isolated farmsteads surrounded by

fields, pastureland and coastal marshes, punctuated by dramatic ridges like nearby Hanging Rock and bordered by an alternately rocky and sandy coastline.

Two products of the 19th-century phase of development were Boothden, completed in 1883, and the Berkeley Memorial Chapel, now St. Columba's Chapel, in 1884. Boothden, designed by the nationally prominent architect, Calvert Vaux, for the country's most noted actor Edwin Booth, achieved a level of social and architectural distinction comparable to that of the cottages of Newport. The nearby chapel was designed by Wilson Eyre, a young architect in the process of establishing his national reputation.

The three-and-a-half-mile distance to Newport proved to be too great a distance to travel for most prospective buyers, and development languished until the advent of the automobile. In the first three decades of the 20th century, new summer estates filled in many of the spaces between the earlier ones on the southern half of Indian Avenue. An important product of this period of growth was the Edward C. Knight Jr. estate, Stonybrook (1927-1928), designed by Horace Trumbauer, another prominent architect with numerous Newport mansions to his credit. In addition to the main house on the waterfront lot just north of Boothden, the Knight estate extended across Indian Avenue and north of the chapel with formal gardens and outbuildings in the same style as Stonybrook. With its grounds enveloping Indian Avenue and its Gothic style complementing the picturesque rural character set by Boothden and St. Columba's, Stonybrook was a significant addition to the district.

During the late 20th Century, Indian Avenue was a desirable location for the construction of new houses, and some open land has been converted to house lots. The Boothden and Stonybrook estates have been subdivided into multiple lots in separate ownership. Historic outbuildings, such as the Stonybrook gatehouse and garage are now individual homes, and several new houses have been built on the land of the former estates.

During the presentation, attention was focused on Boothden, whose owners object to National Register listing. Dr. Greenwood and Mr. Woodward showed recent and historic images of the house, and noted that the house has been expanded over time. An early 2 ½ story addition was made to the northwest corner of the house near the entrance. An original open veranda on the eastern side of the house facing the water was enclosed and extended. There was also a single-story addition on the south that connected the main house to a free-standing outbuilding. Original open porches on the eastern side of the house facing the water were enlarged and enclosed. These changes altered the original interior spaces, and fireplace mantels and woodwork on the first floor appear to date to the early 20th-century. On the second story, the floor plan and woodwork appear to be original. A historic photograph shows the house clad in unpainted wood shingles, while today the house is painted white.

Following the presentation, Ms. Talmage was recognized to speak on behalf of Preserve Rhode Island. She explained that in 2006, neighboring property owners contacted Preserve Rhode and expressed their wish to preserve the historic character of their neighborhood. This group included the 2006 owners of Boothden, who subsequently sold the property to the present owners. Believing that listing on the National Register of Historic Places would recognize the

cultural value of Indian Avenue, PRI and the owners developed a draft nomination, which was subsequently modified based on discussion with RIHPHC staff.

Attorney Paul Ryan was recognized. Mr. Ryan represents the current owners of Boothden, Kim and Lawrence Ingeneri. Mr. Ryan stated his belief that regulations should require that a majority of owners be in favor of a National Register nomination in order for it to be listed, and he submitted a written argument. He stated that the Ingeneris are not opposed to historic preservation in general. He stated that it was significant that the owners of both Boothden and the Chapel oppose the nomination. Mr. Ryan introduced architect David Andreozzi who has evaluated the Boothden structure. Mr. Andreozzi stated that additions have expanded the original building by fifty percent; shingle-clad columns were removed when the eastern porches were enlarged, some original windows have been replaced; the original structural system seems undersized today; and some of the original interior features such as mantels have been replaced. In conclusion, Mr. Andreozzi stated that "the spirit of the original building" is gone today. Mr. Lawrence Ingeneri stated his belief that Calvert Vaux never completed a fully designed landscape for Boothden because he died soon after the house was completed in 1883. [*Calvert Vaux died in 1895.*] Mr. Ingeneri also stated his belief that during the 1940s the landscape was not maintained. Ms. Meg Steiner, owner of 393 Indian Avenue (non contributing) stated she personally does not see a relationship among the several buildings to create a sense of a "whole piece" in the proposed historic district.

During discussion by Commissioners, Mr. Grosvenor said he believes that Boothden remains a historic building in spite of the alterations that have been made. In his opinion, the original "kernel" of Calvert Vaux's building remains, and some of the early alterations represent the evolution of the building over time and have a degree of significance in their own right. Dr. Malone agreed that Boothden remains significant and that quite a bit of historic fabric survives. Dr. Onorato expressed concern about the losses to Calvert Vaux's original design. He also noted that the number of new buildings constructed on former Boothden and Stoneybrook estate lands reduced the historical integrity of the district. Dr. Onorato stated that the Chapel and Stoneybrook appeared to be individually eligible for National Register listing. Mr. Hoogeboom expressed concern about the loss of architectural details at Boothden, and the overall loss of character as an example of Shingle Style architecture.

Mr. Hoogeboom called on Mr. Sanderson to explain the issues on which the Review Board needed to vote. Mr. Sanderson noted there are eight owners of record in the area of the nominated district. Written and notarized letters of objection have been received from the following owners:

Indian Avenue Historic District Owners List

INGENERI LAWRENCE M & KIM M

OBJECT

- 62 Pond Road, Wellesley, MA 02842 357 INDIAN AVE
MIDDLETOWN, RI 02842

RIHPHC MINUTES

6

March 18, 2009

HOUSTON PAUL C & MARY D HOUSTON

OBJECT

361 INDIAN AVE
MIDDLETOWN, RI 02842

HENDERSON LESLIE M 377 Indian Avenue

OBJECT

13608 LUTTON WAY
TAMPA, FL 33624

STEINER, DONALD 393 Indian Avenue

OBJECT

17 BRIDAL PATH
WESTON, MA

ST COLUMBAS THE BERKELEY MEMORIAL CHAP

OBJECT

55 VAUCLUSE AVE [Meg Little, Sr. Warden & Rev. Epperson]
MIDDLETOWN, RI 02842

Emails expressing support for the nomination were received from the following owners:

VETER ET NOVA TRUST 501 Indian Avenue

APPROVE

C/O MARY TEIXEIRA [Sandra & Grenville V. Craig]
PO BOX 656
NEWPORT, RI 02840

JBO-JDO ENTERPRISE LP 502, 515 Indian Avenue

APPROVE

720 North Post Oak, Suite 265 [Jane Dale Owen & Jane Blaffer Owen]
HOUSTON, TX 77019

DHIONIS GEORGE C & PENELOPE P 75 Vaucluse Avenue

APPROVE

150 SCHOOL STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02172

Under the federal regulations of the National Register, a proposed historic district will not be listed on the National Register if a majority of owners object, and it appears that a majority of owners in the proposed Indian Avenue Historic District have filed written and notarized objections. However, it is important for state and federal planning purposes to record the opinion of the Review Board and the National Park Service whether in their judgment the

proposed Indian Avenue district meets the criteria for National Register eligibility.

On a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Kopp, the Review Board unanimously VOTED to record its finding of fact that five property owners of record presented written and notarized objections to the nomination, and there are a total of eight property-owners.

Based on all the information contained in the nomination and information presented during the meeting, on a motion by Dr. Malone, seconded by Ms. Hagen, the Review Board VOTED to approve the nomination of Indian Avenue Historic District as meeting National Register eligibility criteria.

Review Board Members voting in favor of the motion were: Dr. Malone, Ms. Hagen, Mr. Hebert, Mr. Kopp, Mr. Grosvenor.

Review Board Members voting against the motion were: Mr. Hoogeboom, Dr. Onorato, Mr. Goff.

Not voting was: Mr. Williamson.

Manville Company Workers Housing Historic District, Lincoln

Dr. Greenwood explained that following Review Board approval of the Manville Workers Housing Historic District at the September 10, 2008 meeting, the nomination was transmitted to the National Park Service in Washington, DC. During NPS review, it was noted that the nomination included two discontinuous sections (narrowly separated), and the NPS reviewer suggested that the Review Board consider revising the nomination to include several excluded buildings. The original nomination was focused on 49 units of factory housing built by the Manville Company over a 70-year period from ca. 1820 to ca. 1890. As revised, the nomination adds the company-built church (1830s), company-built community center and post office, a school built on company-donated land, and a small park and Veterans Memorial donated by the company. With the addition of these properties, a single continuous boundary encloses the entire historic district.

Following discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Goff, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the revised Manville Workers Housing Historic District.

Preliminary Review: Hopkins Hollow Historic District, Coventry

Dr. Greenwood presented information about Hopkins Hollow Historic District, an agricultural area settled in the 18th century. The Arnold Farm (1838 et. seq.) and the American Cranberry Company, founded in 1854 were major landowners. The historic resources in the

proposed historic district include 3 farms, 7 houses, a variety of outbuildings, 1 church, 8 cemeteries, a cranberry bog, 5 dams, 1 sawmill and gristmill, and 1 forge.

During discussion, Commissioners expressed interest in documenting and preserving this rural place. On a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Kopp, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for the nomination.

Preliminary Review: Warren Artillery Company Armory Hall, 11 Jefferson Street,
Warren

Dr. Greenwood reported that Warren Artillery Company Armory Hall is included in the Warren Waterfront Historic District that is already listed on the National Register. However, the Warren Armory Association seeks to have the building listed individually on the National Register as part of a campaign to raise awareness of the building's importance and to raise funds for its preservation. Built in 1842-1843, the Armory is associated with the Dorr Rebellion. Additions in 1864 and the 1890s have expanded its footprint, but its historical character remains evident. During discussion, several Commissioners expressed support for individual listing at the local or possibly state level of significance. On a motion by Ms. Hagen, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for the nomination.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

6. Next meeting date: Wednesday March 18, 2009.

7. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Minutes recorded by,

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