



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

## RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION July 8, 2009

### I. MEMBERS PRESENT

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

### STAFF PRESENT

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

### GUESTS

Ms. Adriana Thomas, House Policy Office  
Ms. Susanna Prull, Preserve RI  
Ms. Katherine Cavanaugh, National Register Consultant

### MEMBERS ABSENT

John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner  
Dr. Patricia Rubertone  
Mr. J. Michael Saul, Interim Executive Director, EDC  
Dr. Michael Sullivan, Director DEM

## II. AGENDA

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 A.M.

### 2. Minutes of May 13, 2009

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

VOTED to approve the Minutes of May 13, 2009.

### 3. Executive Director's Report

a) The enacted State Budget provides basic level funding for RIHPHC programs. Ordinary expenses have been reduced, and unpaid "Shut Down Days" may be ordered by the Governor. For the Federal FY 2010 Budget, The President and the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees have recommended modest budget increases for the Historic Preservation Fund.

b) Dr. Robinson reported that the National Park Service has announced the award of \$37,320 from the American Battlefield Protection Program to RIHPHC for a research and planning study of the Nipsachuck battlefields in the towns of North Smithfield and Smithfield. This project is an important initiative in the understanding and preservation of Rhode Island's 17<sup>th</sup> century past.

The Nipsachuck territory, centered on Nipsachuck Hill and Swamp in North Smithfield and Smithfield, RI, was the location of two important battles in King Philip's War (1675-1676). The first battle occurred shortly after the beginning of the war, as colonial and Mohegan Indian forces pursued and fought the Wampanoag leader Philip and the Pocasset Tribe's Saunk Squaw (Woman Chief) Weetamoo and their soldiers at Nipsachuck. Contemporary critics and historians condemned the militia for not defeating Philip and ending the war there; instead, Captain Henschman, perhaps uncertain of battle tactics in the densely-vegetated swampland, let the tribal defensive units of Philip and Weetamoo escape after inflicting some casualties, and the war continued for another year. The second battle occurred just days before the war ended. By this time, colonial officers had adapted their battle tactics to swamp warfare as Connecticut and Mohegan Indian soldiers attacked, killed or took prisoner a large group of Narragansett, led by the elderly Saunk Squaw Quiapin, who had encamped at the base of a hill at the edge of Nipsachuck Swamp. This battle, according to several modern historians of the war, all but ended Narragansett resistance.

Although the precise locations of the battles are unknown, eye-witness accounts and official colonial records indicate that both took place at Nipsachuck. Narragansett Indian Tribal oral history recounts that Nipsachuck was a regional place of significant ceremony. During times of great crisis, Nipsachuck's traditional spiritual usage would have been heightened. This factor

may have created a predictable place for colonial military interception.

While the historical significance of these battles is established, there is much that remains to be learned about the battlefields. Through this study, RIHPHC, in a research partnership with the Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office, will assemble a fuller history of the events and correlate the documentary accounts of the battles with the physical features of the landscape. The project researchers will examine documentary records and archaeological collections, collect Tribal and Yankee oral histories and use military terrain analysis to identify likely places where the two battles took place. A research design will be developed to confirm the battle site locations and to establish their boundaries with future testing, and RIHPHC will contact landowners to secure permission to conduct future archaeological testing.

The historical setting at Nipsachuck has been little altered over the past three hundred years. The new information obtained through this research project will be shared with landowners, local officials and the interested public in order to engage them in a joint effort to recognize and protect this remarkable historic place.

c) Dr. Robinson reported that the Salt Ponds archaeological site was partially bulldozed on June 26, 2009. RIHPHC was successful in alerting State authorities and having the activity shut down. During an inspection on June 29, extensive surface disturbance was evident, but impacts to buried archaeological features was less than initially expected. Mr. Sanderson is working with attorney Michael Rubin in the Office of the Attorney General and with Grover Fugate, Executive Director, RI Coastal Resources Management Council to protect the site.

d) Mercedes Monteiro reported on the very successful annual Cape Verdean Independence Day Celebration held at India Point Park, Providence on Sunday, July 5.

#### 4. National Register of Historic Places

##### Final Approval

##### Anthony Mill Village, Coventry

Dr. Greenwood presented information about the property. Anthony Mill Village encompasses 250 historic buildings, including the colonial Nathanael Greene Homestead, early mill ruins from 1806 and 1810, an 1874 mill designed by architects Stone & Carpenter, a 1910 weave mill designed by Frank Sheldon, workers housing from 1806 and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, a mill superintendent's residence, early 19<sup>th</sup>-century village dwellings, churches, stores, and a library, and a water-power system. The nomination was based on a National Register Determination of Eligibility commissioned by the RI Department of Transportation.

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

VOTED to approve the nomination.

Stonybrook Estate Historic District, Middletown

Dr. Greenwood presented information about the property, the Edward C. Knight, Jr. estate, created in 1928. The main house was designed by architect Horace Trumbauer, a prominent Philadelphia-based architect with numerous Newport mansions to his credit. In addition to the main house on a waterfront lot, the Knight estate extended across Indian Avenue, with formal gardens and outbuildings in the same style as Stonybrook.

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

VOTED to approve the nomination.

5. Loan Committee Report

Mr. Sanderson reported that in 1988, RIHPHC made a loan of \$500,000 to the Providence Revolving Fund (formerly Providence Preservation Society Revolving Fund) with the intention that PRF would make "secondary" loans to individual borrowers to finance historic rehabilitation projects, primarily historic houses. In 2005, the loan was increased to \$750,000. Since PRF already was making loans from its own capital and PRF had administrative capacity to make additional loans, RIHPHC's loan had the effect of increasing PRF's loan capital and ability to increase the number of loan projects. Most PRF loans have been less than \$50,000.

This loan is secured by PRF capital funds. PRF holds individual mortgages for each project. RIHPHC staff monitors PRF use of our loan funds, but PRF services the loans relieving RIHPHC of substantial workload. The rate of interest to RIHPHC is 3%. PRF loans are generally in the 6% range, and the 3% spread funds PRF administrative costs. When PRF holds RIHPHC funds as capital on deposit in an interest-bearing account, PRF's return has been in the 3% to 5% range.

PRF currently earns less than 3% for funds held on deposit, and therefore PRF has negative cash flow on RIHPHC funds they hold. PRF requests a modification to their loan agreement to provide that when deposited funds earn less than 3%, RIHPHC will accept that lesser rate of interest as payment. Funds that PRF provides as "secondary loans" for historic preservation projects will continue to carry 3% interest payable to RIHPHC.

During discussion, Mr. Grosvenor noted that PRF projects have extended RIHPHC loan assistance to many historic buildings and significantly assisted revitalization of Providence's Elmwood Historic District and Broadway-Armory Historic District. Mr. Kopp suggested that PRF executive director Clark Schoettle be invited to the next Commission meeting to report on the current status of PRF programs and finances.

On a motion by Mr. Grosvenor, seconded by Mr. Goff, the Commission

VOTED to approve the modification in PRF loan terms to provide that when deposited funds earn less than 3%, RIHPHC will accept that lesser rate of interest as payment. Funds that PRF provides as "secondary loans" for historic preservation projects will continue to carry 3% interest payable to RIHPHC.

6. Other Business  
There was no other business.
7. Next meeting date: Wednesday September 9, 2009.
8. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

Minutes recorded by,

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