



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

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION February 9, 2011

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Robert E. Cusack
Mr. Robert Goff
Ms. Patrice O'Malley Hagan
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board
Mr. Karst Hoogeboom, Chairman
Dr. Patrick Malone
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
Dr. Ronald Onorato
Mr. Jared L. Rhodes, Chief of Statewide Planning representing Kevin Flynn, Asso. Dir
Dr. Patricia Rubertone
Edward F. Sanderson, SHPO

STAFF PRESENT

Dr. Richard Greenwood, Deputy Director
Ms. Mercedes Monteiro, National Register Assistant

GUESTS

Mr. Raymond Choiniere, House Policy Office

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. John Grosvenor, AIA
John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner
Mr. Keith Stokes, Executive Director, EDC
Ms. Janet Quoit, Director DEM
1 Vacant

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was convened at 9:30 A.M. Mr. Hoogeboom, Chairman.

2. Minutes of November 10, 2010

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

VOTED to approve the Minutes of November 10, 2010.

3. Executive Director's Report

a) Mr. Sanderson reported that Governor Chafee has reappointed him to serve as State Historic Preservation Officer. Mr. Sanderson has appointed Dr. Greenwood to serve as Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. Mr. Sanderson has requested the Governor to reappoint Commissioners whose terms ended in 2010; Commissioners serve until replaced.

b) Mr. Sanderson distributed copies of Governor Chafee's Executive Order 11-01 "Ethics and Integrity in Government."

c) Mr. Sanderson distributed copies of a summary of RIHPHC accomplishments in 2010.

d) Mr. Sanderson reported on RIHPHC staff review of a project in North Kingstown to move "Beechwood" house off town land to a new site on Cold Spring Lane. The new site will require removal of an 18th-century house that was once part of the Updike Family farm holdings. Beechwood is a late 19th-century house that possesses local historical interest but is not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places due to alterations. It is unfortunate that local interest in preserving Beechwood will likely result in destruction of the colonial farmhouse on Cold Spring Lane. RIHPHC was not involved in the local decision to move Beechwood; however, the project has been determined to require a permit from the RI Coastal Resources Management Council, triggering RIHPHC review. Dr. Greenwood has led a team of student interns to document and record information about the Cold Spring Lane house and is seeking interest in moving the house to a new location.

e) Mr. Sanderson reported that RIHPHC staff have contacted Reverend Gunn at Christ Church in the Lonsdale Historic District of Lincoln regarding preserve of the historic church building. The congregation is considering consolidation of the parish with a Cumberland parish and was reported to be considering demolition of the church building.

4. 2011 Certified Local Government Grants

Dr. Greenwood presented information about the 2011 Certified Local Governments grant applications and RIHPHC staff review of applications. Following Dr. Greenwood's presentation and Commissioner discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Ms. Hagen, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the 2011 Certified Local Governments grants as follows:

- * The Town of North Smithfield will receive \$10,000 to complete a GIS mapping study of known sites associated with the European settlement of Providence County during the first century of colonization ca. 1636-1730, using site information compiled from RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission files. The resulting maps and database will aid in the identification and protection of sensitive locations and contribute to a better understanding of the spread and growth of early English settlement.
- * The City of Cranston will receive an award of \$9,000 to produce a National Register nomination for the Abby Thornton Estate Historic District, a 90-house plat on Shaw and Marion Avenues that exemplifies the growth of in Edgewood as one of the earliest commuter suburbs in metropolitan Providence.
- * The Town of New Shoreham will receive \$8,000 to produce the National Register documentation for a New Shoreham context for single-family houses. The development of this island-wide historic context will simplify the nomination of individual houses to the National Register of Historic Places.
- * The Town of North Kingstown is awarded \$5,085 to sponsor a statewide training session for Historic District Commissioners who were not able to attend previous sessions developed by Grow Smart Rhode Island. The training session covers the legal and procedural underpinnings for Historic District Commissions and best practices for conducting Commission business.
- * The City of Providence will receive an award of \$10,000 for Providence Revolving Fund to manage development of architectural and engineering plans and specifications to complete emergency repairs to the roof and tower of the George W. Prentice/Tirocchi House at 514 Broadway in the Broadway-Armory District. This work will provide critical aid in stabilizing this Victorian landmark which has just been acquired by Community Works Rhode Island after decades of neglect.
- * The Commission has reserved \$10,000 to fund the 2012 Rhode Island Statewide Historic Preservation Conference. A location for the annual conference and workshops will be announced later this year. The 2011 Conference will be held on Saturday April 30 on Block Island.

5. National Register of Historic Places

Final; Approval: Spencer-Shippee-Lillibridge House "Crossways Farm"
12 Middle Road, East Greenwich

Dr. Greenwood presented information about the property. The Spencer-Shippee-Lillibridge House is a large, two-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed, timber-framed house, five bays wide and three bays deep with a large central brick chimney. It is vernacular Georgian in design with some modifications; its date of construction has been traditionally given as 1772, but some architectural characteristics appear earlier and may suggest a mid-eighteenth century origin. It is commonly known as "Crossways Farm" because of its location at the "crossways" of two important early roads - Middle Road, leading from the East Greenwich waterfront to the town's western farmlands, and Cedar Avenue, leading from Division Road approximately south and east to the Post Road. The house is sited prominently on a slight rise.

The Spencer-Shippee-Lillibridge House is an important example of the Georgian style as interpreted by rural builders in Rhode Island in the decades before the American Revolution. The house displays a measure of architectural pretention for its rural setting, but without the sophistication of the stylish merchant mansions of Newport merchants that epitomized the style in Rhode Island. The large proportions of the house, the wide entry hall, and the large windows openings with heavily molded caps and sills, together with the house's prominent siting on high ground overlooking a crossroads, give the house an imposing presence. On the interior, the front tier of rooms features the cased framing members, moderately heavy cornice moldings, paneled chimney breasts and bolection firebox molding of the period. The front stair is nicely finished with turned balusters and an open string, in the three-run configuration that was largely abandoned in finer Newport houses by the 1770s.

For approximately 200 years, the house served as the primary residence for a sizeable and prosperous farm and it retains the character and immediate setting of its agricultural past. The house occupies a piece of high ground at what was the northern apex of historic farm; the tilled fields and pastures were on the lower ground to the south. Unlike the house's facade, which gives little indication of the working landscape that was to the south, the rear features a two-story ell built to accommodate the farm's hired hands and a yard bounded by agricultural outbuildings and bisected by the former farm lane. The three-bay wagon shed and moderately sized horse barn from the second half of the nineteenth century, and the cobble-stone walled milk house and frame pump house from the first half of the twentieth century continue to provide strong reminders of the property's rural character in an otherwise suburbanized landscape.

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

VOTED to approve the nomination.

6. Other business

There was no other business.

7. Next meeting date: Wednesday December 8, 2010.

8. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

Minutes recorded by,

Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director