

**MINUTES OF THE 10/26/2004 WVHDC REGULAR MEETING, AS
APPROVED ON 11/16/04**

Warren Voluntary Historic District Committee

Tuesday, October 26, 2004

I. Meeting Second Floor Conference Room Warren Town Hall

**II. Present Eileen Collins (EC), John DaSilva (JD), Patricia Read (PR),
Ed Theberge (ET), John Treat (JT), William Hanley (WH), Building
Official**

III. Absent Richard Valente (RV)

IV. Next Meeting: Regular December 14, 2004

V. Meeting called to order at 7:20 p.m. (ET)

**Note: In matters regarding 64 Church Street or 66 Church Street (Old
Warren Marina), members EC and PR are recused from discussion
and voting because they are abutters, but remain present. For all
other matters, members EC and PR participate fully. Upon advice of
former Town Solicitor A. DeSisto, person least compromised may
vote in situation where lack of quorum would otherwise postpone an
issue.**

OLD BUSINESS

A. Minutes of 9/28/04 Meeting

Changes were made to page 4 in order to clarify statements. JT moved to accept minutes as amended; EC seconded, all approved.

B. Tony's Wharf (90 Baker Street) and Old Warren Marina (60 Church Street)

Committee noted that nothing had been received from owners following last month's meeting and subsequent letter outlining next steps.

C. Information Session

JT reviewed the progress in development and execution of the Coffee & Clapboards event.

Posters are in place along Main and Water Streets and beyond. Good response from merchants as the posters were being distributed; many expecting them following meeting with Downtown Merchants' Association earlier in fall.

1200 invitations going out this week. 900 to general public/property owners; 300 to VIPs, contractors and other "special handling" people. Internal goal is to see roughly 100 people at this event.

A lot of hard work is going into preparing the presentation. JT and ET will preview for town officials this week.

Scott Mathison and Harry Adler are going to speak, providing the contractor's viewpoint.

We issued invitations to 17 organizations or companies to become "booth sponsors;" 8 have already RSVP'd yes.

The place and time for the phonathon is set. Please remember to get

your phone numbers in to ER so she can generate final call list.

Coffee & Clapboards has received a \$1000 grant from PreserveRI!

Waiting to hear on other grant applications.

Also, working with Mercier's to position them as the hardware in the heart of the historic district.

D. Mixed-Use and Commercial Ordinance Changes

ET discussed the next steps for the proposed ordinance changes for Mixed-Use and Commercial buildings.

The Next Town Council meeting is right after the election. First, WVHDC needs to approve the proposed changes at the November meeting so it can go to Council in December. Then, the Town Council approves sending it to the state, which must make changes to legislation before it can be enacted. Then, the ordinance returns to the town to be enacted at the local level.

E. Proposed Changes to the Demolition Ordinance

ET asked committee to be prepared to discuss this in detail for approval at the November meeting.

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F. Website Changes

JD updated the committee on his preliminary discussion with the Town Manager to see what could and could not be done in regards to the WVHPP portion of the town website.

He could not get an assessment on the abilities of the current webmasters. JD feels we'll be able to set up a basic website in the short-term. He would like to tap into the Town Manager's budget in the long-term for a greater, enhanced site.

Should be able to get the application PDF online by the Coffee & Clapboards event. May even be able to convert his PowerPoint presentation into the site, depending on the HTML and web/language employed.

JD will suggest to Town Manager that WVHPP be a subpage off the Town Building Official's page, and get our own address.

WH: For the upcoming event, can always include his email and tell people to request an application that way.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Program Eligibility

Committee addressed the eligibility of the Warren Preservation Society building on Baker Street. The first floor is a museum, and they are renting it for meeting/event space. The upstairs is residential (apartments). The WPS has applied for \$100,000 in state museum funds as a 501c3. Question is would they qualify on a local level for our program.

ET: 80% of the property is rentable, yet they're positioning

themselves as a non-profit for the state funding.

JT: Regardless of their state grant approach, if they pay Warren property taxes they're eligible for relief as a mixed-use building.

JD: If we approve, it's based on a percentage of the taxes paid so the rest doesn't matter. If they change their status to truly non-profit, then they'll pay no taxes, so 20% of nothing is nothing. Still, the committee will be asked to approve the application on the merits of the project and they'll need to follow our standards.

WH: And, if the WPS were to apply today, prior to the ordinance changes, they'd only get the 20% on the residential portion of the project.

JD/JT and others noted that this example raises the question of how percentages are being applied now. Is it 50% of a three-story building that is 66% residential?

ET: This will be addressed by the proposed ordinance changes for commercial buildings.

MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

JD: Any idea of how many projects are actually open? As time passes, he'd like to recommend moving "danglers" to the top of the report.

ER: Suggest doing a monthly report that has only open projects with a quarterly report that reviews the entire program including completed projects.

ET: Recommend secretary begin this new approach next month.

NEW APPLICANTS

A. Paula Silva (28 Lyndon Street)

Application is for painting the trim and body of the house (estimated at \$8,500) and for replacing the roof (estimated at \$5,900).

WH recommended approving \$14,400 pending final expenses.

PR moved to accept application for \$14,400; JT seconded, all approved.

OTHER

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. PR moved, EC and JD seconded, all approved.