

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES-- Wednesday, Feb 22, 2012--Norwich Historical Society, 277 Main Street, Norwich

Attending: Bill Aldrich, Roger Blake, Peter Brink, Phil Dechert, Nancy Hoggson
Absent: Anne Silberfarb
Guests: Cheryl Hermann, Nancy Osgood

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am. Nancy Osgood and Cheryl Hermann, applicants to the Historic Preservation Commission, were welcomed to the meeting. Stuart White and Stuart Richards, who had also applied, were unable to attend because of previous commitments.

1. **Minutes** of December 28, 2011 approved as presented.
2. **Grant award for 2012:** Norwich has been awarded \$9,108 for three projects: National Register neighborhood listing for Beaver Meadow and single listing for Root District School House. The third approved project is for a website focused on historic preservation projects such as the two schoolhouses (Beaver Meadow and Root District), the Grange, and the Norwich Pool. There will be a 40% match bringing the total cost for all three projects to \$15,180. Volunteer time at minimum wage value, staff time (Brink, Dechert, Hoggson) can be charged at their regular hourly fees. All volunteers need to keep accurate track of the hours they spend working on the 2012 projects. Regular meetings of the HPC also can be included in the match figures, including attending HPC meetings and doing any specific work on any of the three projects. Available matching funds also include the HPC carry over from 2011 of \$2,283.53 + an additional \$1,000, which has been included in the Planning and Zoning budget for HPC 2012.
3. **Next steps:** Hoggson, in consultation with Brink and Dechert, will develop the RFP for the National Register consultant, and the mailing will be handled by Phil's office. The RFP will be mailed to all the consultants on the VT Division for Historic Preservation's website. The RFP for the website project will be posted on the Norwich ListServe as in 2011. Using the Norwich ListServe in this way has been approved by Diane McInerney, CLG Coordinator. It was agreed going forward that Hoggson would be the point person for the Beaver Meadow NR listing and the website; Peter Brink for the Root District.
4. **Updates on all of the current restoration projects in the works:**
 - i) **Beaver Meadow Schoolhouse;** they will be part of the SeussFestival on Sunday, March 4th to benefit the Children's Room at the Library and the Root District Schoolhouse. The main needs for this building in terms of fundraising are for water and plumbing.
 - ii) **Root District Schoolhouse:** Brian Cook has organized the SeussFestival. Brink has sent a letter of support from the HPC; Hoggson will do a similar letter of support from the Historical Society. The major issue is the restoration of the foundation; one estimate has that work at \$50K. Other estimates are being sought. The organization is also arranging a new insurance carrier. Brink introduced them to the insurance representative at the National Trust for Historic Preservation., and they are making good progress in arranging the insurance so that there will be no break in the coverage.
 - iii) **Upper Valley Community Grange:** finished their Condition Assessment, with Preservation Trust of Vermont matching grant with architect Tom Keefe as the preservation expert; report has been received; building is in good shape; some work to be done. Hoggson will be in touch with Grangers to set up a meeting to discuss the building needs and begin to plan for next steps. Blake's research at Tracy Hall shows ownership of this Grange is the Upper Valley Community Grange vs. the State Grange.
 - iv) **Norwich Pool:** Dechert gave an update on the pool. No FEMA award as of today, but it looks as though the Town will be successful in this, though nothing definite. Because of new and

more stringent regulations, the reconstructed pool might not look exactly like the old one, but it will be similar in look and feel.

- v) **Library:** has applied for and received a PTV matching grant for a condition assessment, and their report is being prepared by Smith & Vasant, Norwich.
- 5. **Norwich Times** is willing to feature articles about historic preservation projects in Norwich. Brink wrote a lively piece on the two school house projects for the upcoming spring 2012 issue. All agreed that the Norwich Pool would be a good article for the summer edition, following Bill Aldrich's pool piece posted on the ListServe recently. Aldrich agreed to write this and will coordinate with Hoggson on this. The deadline is mid-May. For the fall 2012 issue, an article on the Grange was proposed.
- 6. **Historic marker:** there had been discussion at an earlier meeting about the possibility of another historic marker which would sit on the NHS property marking the beginning of the town's Historic Register District listing. Hoggson has researched this, and a draft needs to be developed and sent to John Dumville's attention at the Division for Historic Preservation. The town would be responsible for the installation of the marker; posts come from the Calvin Coolidge Historic Site in Plymouth and the sign is paid for by the State of Vermont. Because of her extensive knowledge of Norwich history, Brink expressed hope that Osgood would take this on, and she agreed to do so. Hoggson will send Osgood all the information from the State on developing this sign.
- 7. **New members of Historic Preservation Commission:** Aldrich, Blake and Brink voted to recommend to the Selectboard that the following new members be appointed to the commission following the National Park Service guidelines: Cheryl Hermann (Norwich real estate), Nancy Osgood (Norwich history), Stuart White (architect). Hoggson, as Chair, abstained. With the appointment of these three, that will bring the total number to 7. This is the maximum permitted by the ordinance passed by the Town which established the Commission and falls within the guidelines of the skills recommended for members of the Historic Preservation Commission.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoggson, Chair