

**Norwich Historic Preservation Commission  
At  
Norwich Historical Society  
277 Main Street  
Norwich**

Tuesday, May 5, 2015, at 10:30 AM at NHS.

**Minutes, Approved**

Present:

Members: Peter Brink, Vice-Chair  
Anne Silberfarb, Secretary  
Nancy Osgood  
Cheryl Herrmann;  
Planning Director, Phil Dechert  
NHS President, Jane Korey

Guests:

Lyssa Papazian, Contractor for the Windshield Survey  
John Carroll, Campbell Flat Road, 649-1988  
Courtney Dobyms, Union Village Road, 649-3926  
Deb Van Arman, Union Village Road, 649-1723  
Karen Lubell, Spring Pond Road, 649-7230  
Alan Berolzheimer, Union Village Road, 649-2857

Meeting began at 10:32AM

1. Introduction:

Guests knowledgeable about different parts of Town were invited to share their knowledge in this discussion with Lyssa about the windshield survey. Peter referenced the statement on the List Serve about the Windshield Survey. He noted that one outcome of the survey would be recommendations by Lyssa that particular areas or properties be nominated for listing on National Register of Historic Place. He reiterated that such listing, which is not done if the property owner objects, does not restrict what the owner can do with his property.

Listing officially recognizes the properties' historical importance. In addition, it is a condition to qualifying for the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits – a 20% credit against income tax related to the “substantial rehabilitation” of “income-producing properties”. Since 1976 this credit has leveraged \$69 Billion in private investment in rehabilitating 39,600 historic structures. Listing also ensures a consultation process should a proposed “federal undertaking” be likely to have an “adverse effect” on a National Register listed property.

Our project is to photograph and briefly document all structures in the Town of Norwich outside the area of the Village Center that was listed as a National Register District in 1991. Our project is generally referred to as a Windshield Survey. The Town of Norwich and NHPC obtained a grant of \$5,123 from the VT Division for Historic Preservation with funds from the National Park Service, with \$3,415 in match provided by \$805 from the annual Town support for NHPC and \$2,610 in donated time by NHPC volunteers. The windshield survey will include recommendations as to more detailed survey work and potential nominations for future listings in Norwich to the National Register (outside the current district).

2. Update by Lyssa Papazian regarding the Windshield Survey, followed by an informal discussion with members and guests about areas of Norwich to assist her in doing the survey:

- What is a windshield survey? It involves taking a photo of every structure in town from the road. This includes barns, outdoor monuments, cellar holes, and others. Many images, especially in more rural parts of the Town, are not very good as the houses are hard to see from the road, even without leaf cover. In those cases she then refers to the Lister Photos, which are often good, but their goal is not to capture the architecture of a structure. (As Google street view gets online, it might be a better source of photos.)
- Lyssa has been taking photos around the Town, mostly in the more rural areas, with Bill Aldrich's help. Lyssa still has to do the area closer into the Village. She has taken 2,400 photographs to date.
- Lyssa is scouting out areas that might qualify for future listing as districts or individually on the National Register.

- Lyssa is taking photos of houses in part to get an impression of neighborhoods. All houses are photographed because, in 30 years these newer houses may be considered "historic". Lyssa has noticed recent construction includes historic reproductions or references that provide a certain esthetic that is important. "Historicism" in architecture is important historically: in Norwich a number of newer structures are trying to be historically accurate while adapting to contemporary needs. Modernist architecture (e.g. Mid-Century Modern) is of particular interest as Norwich has a number of such structures – an interesting counterpoint to the wealth of 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> century structures in the Town. Examples include: Pine Tree Road (with houses built in 1950's and early 1970's) - this area could possibly be part of a thematic listing that could include houses in different parts of town. Also of interest are areas in the west of Norwich where well-done renovations and some restorations may be worthy of nominations to the National Register in the future.
- Lyssa's work could lead in the future to more detailed surveys of selected areas; in those cases we would seek an owner's permission to come on the property to take better photos.
- Phil suggested real estate websites as an additional source of photographs.
- Lyssa solicited impressions and information from those at the meeting regarding Goodrich Four Corners, Pompanoosuc, Union Village, and Beaver Meadow. Courtney suggested the West Norwich area which once had a post office, blacksmith shop, a Minister's house and a church, which remains; other areas noted were Brigham Hill Road, Douglas Road, and Waterman Hill.
- Lyssa will review the photographs of the graveyards of Norwich as well as schoolhouses of Norwich. Lyssa suggested considering a survey of historic farms of Norwich, including those no longer farms. This might qualify for a matching grant from the Division toward a National Register nomination.
- Lyssa is doing a survey for Hartford for a neighborhood with housing built between 1920-1950. This raises questions as to the best ways to document and assess more recently constructed houses. In doing this survey, Lyssa defines a context for the particular neighborhoods and also considers alterations to the original structures.

- The Town has given Lister Records from 1950's to 1970's to the NHS. Bill Aldrich is reviewing those records, and can provide access to Lyssa once he returns from his current trip.
- Lyssa will also review Tax Maps, which began in the 1980's and were digitized in the 1990's.
- The National Register has 4 criteria for listing: architecture, history, people, and archeology. Norwich has a number of famous athletes and intellectuals whose homes should be considered. Notable clusters of ethnic immigrants is another area to consider, but so far we've not found these in Norwich: Alan has reviewed Norwich records of people moving to Town, and he has not found any significant clusters of immigrants from particular countries.
- Notable growth in Norwich occurred in the 1970's, as a result of the extension of Interstates 89 & 91, with a Norwich/Hanover Exit; but the largest growth was in the 1980s: mainly in the rural area such as Turnpike Road, Douglas Road and New Boston Road.
- Lyssa needs to know from those at this meeting areas she hasn't considered. Suggestions included: The "Sample" area on Hopson Road; Chapel Hill North; Brigham Hill (Paul Brigham); Freya Von Moltke (Eugene Rosenstock-Heussey, Freya's companion); Janet Flanders her granddaughter on Hopson Road; Conrad VonMoltke, Freya's son, a well known environmentalist at Dartmouth College; Captain Alden Partridge's farm outside of the Village. Noted architects working in Norwich in the past: Allan Gelbin, a Fellow with Frank Lloyd Wright - 4 houses: one at 23 Spring Pond, owned by Karen Lubell, another on Spring Pond owned by Clint Gardner; one on Penny Lane; one on Overlook Drive off Willey Hill Road.
- Other areas of interest: Viking caves? copper mines??, cellar holes- note lot# 5 on Beaver Meadow and two on New Boston Road (Jane Korey will walk Lyssa to the cellar holes on New Boston Road), and at original site of Town on Alcott Road, which includes an old school house foundation.

3. With completion of the discussion about the Windshield Survey, Lyssa, our special guests, and Cheryl (member) departed. Because we now had only three members present (Anne, Peter & Nancy), insufficient for a quorum, the approval of minutes from the meeting of Monday, April 13, 2015, was postponed until the next meeting. A date for the next meeting will be arranged via email. We did proceed with informal discussion.

#### 4. Informal discussion:

- Grant for documenting artifacts. Jane Korey reported that NHS is planning to submit an application for a COMMON HERITAGE GRANT from the National Endowment for the Humanities. If successful, such a grant would support NHS in documenting historic artifacts, papers, and photographs owned by individuals or families in Norwich. NHS would organize a day on which people could bring historic objects from their private homes/collections to be photographed and scanned for documentation. The program would be implemented next year. Jane invited NHPC to partner with NHS in applying for the grant. All present were fully in favor of NHPC doing this. In addition, Phil said that much of the scanning and printing equipment needed might be available from the Town for the day.

Jane also reported that NHS is planning a coordinating program later this year. It would include a workshop and book group sponsored by the Vermont Community Foundation. Subjects would include historic architecture of Norwich.

- Cycles of Change. Peter reported that he was at the Farmer's Market from 10:00 – noon this past Saturday with an exhibit table to invite people to visit Cycles of Change, Farming in Norwich. Meanwhile Jane Korey was at NHS during this time. Despite good interest at the Market, Jane reported that no one showed up at NHS during that time. Peter did hand out the full supply of NHS cards showing the ongoing hours to see the exhibit. Jane stressed that the visibility was important for the longer term and that most folks going to the Market already had their day planned. NHS is discussing additional ways of marketing the exhibit. Peter will be at the Farmer's Market again on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – Noon, and Nancy Osgood will be at NHS. Peter also noted that of the several score people he talked with only 1 or 2 responded that they had already seen the exhibit.

- Certified Local Government Grants. Phil Dechert reported that the deadline for the next round of grant applications will be in January 2016 and that specific information will not be available until October 2015. He noted that there is a special grant round coming up this summer for

Underrepresented Communities, but he discussed this with the Division and they concluded that Norwich does not qualify for this.

6. Date for the next NHPC meeting is to be determined later by email.

7. Adjournment at 12:10PM

Respectfully submitted by Anne Silberfarb, Secretary, 5/6/15

*APPROVED 11/30/15*