

Town of Wallingford
Wallingford Historic Properties Commission
Minutes
Meeting 2-17-2010. Town Hall

Present: (reg.mem)Robert Beaumont, Candice Brashears, Barbara Sibley; (alt)Tara Knapp
Absent: (reg mem) Peter Fresina, Cheryl Christie Collett; (alt) Linka Lewis, Rosemary Rascati

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Motion by Beaumont to accept minutes of 3/9/09, second by Sibley. All in favor- motion carried.

3. Discussion: - 153 S. Main St., known as the “Johnson Mansion” site: Demolition of Barn.

Owner: Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust.

The c.1900 barn was demolished between Jan. 11th and 16th, 2010. The commission was unaware of this activity until Jan. 16, 2010, after the barn was already demolished. The c.1900 barn was one of three contributing structures on a National Historic Register property and a property within the jurisdiction of the commission. Initial inquiries by the commission found: a Sept. 9, 2009 order of the building inspector (by certified letter to the owner) for demolition due to deterioration and unsafe conditions. On Oct. 8th a second letter was issued to the owner asking for status of project. A demolition permit was issued Jan. 11, 2010.

Brashears sent a letter to the president of the Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust (WHPT) asking for an owner’s statement regarding the circumstances surrounding the demolition. The commission reviewed an undated, unsigned letter (received via email 2/16/10) from WHPT which, in part, asserts the structure was not a historic barn, but a 1920s or 1930s garage constructed when house “was converted into a two family home in the 1920s”; that it was deteriorated and they had no use for it that would pass zoning restrictions. Brashears pointed out that all buildings on this property, regardless of age, are regulated by CT statute Chapter 97a “Historic Districts and Historic Properties”, Section 7-147a-y; the National Register of Historic Places report of record for the Johnson site - prepared by a respected, qualified architectural historian – identifies the building as a c.1900 barn and one of three contributing structures on the property; and cited Wallingford census records for years 1900 and 1910 identifying the main house as already converted as a two-family dwelling.

Further discussion postponed to a future meeting after additional inquiries are made.

4. Discussion - 1211 Barnes Rd “Blakeslee” site: The Town of Wallingford is waiting for the signed copy of the title to the property from the Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust. Once received and recorded in the land records, the Commission can record the new ownership and forward correspondence accordingly to the new owner.

5. Discussion - 538 N. Main St; known as c.1672 “Royce House”. Owner: Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust. The status of a proposed restoration is unknown. Beaumont showed photographic images of the west elevation of the Royce House which raised immediate concerns of commission members. The images showed a large hole in the upper right corner and several missing clapboards at the attic and second story levels (between 10-12 feet in length) with (probably) Tyvek-like material hanging loose down the side of the house – and importantly - exposing the structural components (studs are clearly seen) to the elements. Beaumont offered to discuss with the owner and report back at next meeting.

6. No public comment.

7. The annual meeting will be scheduled for March pending availability of commissioners. The regular seat now held by Beaumont is expiring. Sibley nominated Beaumont to retain the seat. The nomination and any others that may arise will be discussed at the annual meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm per motion by Beaumont, second by Sibley. all agreed – motion carried.

Respectfully,

Candice C. Brashears, Chair