



TOWN OF ROXBURY CONNECTICUT

Historic District Commission

29 North Street • P.O. Box 203 • Roxbury, CT 06783-0203

ROXBURY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 21, 2016

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

Present: C. Haver, J. Huber, M. Jonker, E. Lacy, G. Miller, W. Walker; D. Anthone, G. McTaggart

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the 17 August meeting were accepted with a clerical error corrected.

BUSINESS

W. Walker made a motion to table the agenda until the next meeting. G. Miller seconded. W. Walker called for a vote: the motion passed unanimously.

HDC candidate

D. Anthone was introduced to the commission. He is a new resident of Roxbury. He outlined his preservation history including his present position as Preservation Officer at the General Services Administration responsible for the Northeast and the Caribbean. He served on the Rhinecliff, NY, HDC and continues his work in the preservation field. He was invited to stay for G. McTaggart's presentation.

Demolition by Neglect

G. McTaggart handed out a review of the issue (attached) and reviewed the contents. The enabling statutes do not cover repairs, etc. to historic structures. The use of the EPA legislation has been partially successful but is very difficult to bring to suit. There is new legislation, PA 71-48, which covers properties on the National and State Registers but does not address the HDC's concern about unregistered properties. The issue is the "intentional factor". Other municipalities use a Blight Ordinance for control. However, an ordinance proposed in a public meeting in Roxbury drew no support. McTaggart acknowledged that a Blight Ordinance works more effectively in urban areas. She looked into other protective ordinances in rural areas, Windsor and Guilford. Neither specifically mentioned historic properties in their ordinances and applied the statute to homes in general. Other examples came from New Orleans, LA, and Culpepper, VA. The HDC agreed that targeting an ordinance to historic properties would garner more support in this town. Southbury had established a task force to look into this specific problem. McTaggart reviewed the report titled "Property Maintenance Ordinance" (PMO). The proposal advocated a pro-active stance for preservation. Unfortunately, the report was not acted upon. However, it does provide the groundwork for such an ordinance, which would protect historic properties from neglect whether intentional or not. (The Alliance Review article advocates much of the proposals in Southbury report.)

There is a Small Cities Grant for towns that Roxbury participates in which can be used in cases of neglect caused by financial distress. This can be used for repairs, interior or exterior, and provides an interest free loan for the repairs. This becomes a lien payable at the property's transfer.

Since Roxbury is Certified Local Government, there might be financial resources to set up a preservation fund to use in a PMO. Another option would be to band with other towns and lobby the State Legislature to amend the enabling legislation to include "repairs".

The HDC was interested in reviewing the PMO report from Southbury and McTaggart will email a copy. She noted that if the HDC would choose to pursue the PMO, it would be the first such ordinance in the state.

The HDC will review the material and discuss at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Georgette Miller
Georgette Miller, Clerk

The next meeting of the HDC is: Wednesday 19 October 7:30 pm Roxbury Town Hall