



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION

Old State House 150 Benefit Street Providence, RI 02903

Telephone 401-222-2678
TTY 401-222-3700

Fax 401-222-2968
www.preservation.ri.gov

MINUTES
RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
February 1, 2021 9:30 am
via video conference

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Michael Abbott, AIA [joined the meeting at 10:26]
Dr. Tripp Evans
Dr. Patrick Malone
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
Dr. Ronald Onorato, Chairman
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson
Ms. Martha Werenfels, AIA

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Marisa Angell Brown
Vacant (archaeologist)
Vacant (landscape architect/historian)

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Enerida Ademi, Data Control Clerk
Ms. Donna Alqassar, Heritage Aid
Ms. Joanna Doherty, Principal Architectural Historian
Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, Deputy Director
Mr. John Paul Loether, Executive Director/SHPO
Ms. Elizabeth Rochefort, Principal Architectural Historian
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Principal Special Projects Coordinator

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 A.M. by Chairman Onorato.

2. Meeting procedures overview

Dr. Onorato explained the procedures that would be followed by Board members and attendees of the meeting.

3. Roll call

Dr. Onorato called the roll of Board members. See page one of these minutes for the attendance list.

4. Approval of minutes of December 7, 2020 meeting

Dr. Onorato pointed out a typographical error in his name at the top of page five. Mr. Emidy stated that he would make the change.

On a motion by Mr. Sanderson, seconded by Ms. Werenfels, the Review Board unanimously VOTED TO APPROVE the Minutes of December 7, 2020 with the change that Dr. Onorato pointed out.

5. Deputy Director's Report

a) National Register of Historic Places (NR) Nomination processing updates

- i. Mr. Emidy reported that Joanna Doherty, Elizabeth Rochefort, and he have, collectively spent more time reviewing properties owned by people who are interested in listing them lately than in reviewing actual nominations, but there have been some of those, as well. Sarah Zurier has also spent some time on reviewing documents. As always, we have also been pitching in to help our peers inside and outside the office. Additionally,
- ii. Joanna Doherty coordinated our staff review of a draft nomination for the Beaver River Road Historic District, in Richmond. This is a district that had previously been determined eligible for listing through the Section 106 process, but a group of interested citizens has hired PAL to make it into a formal nomination with slightly larger boundaries. We plan to present that to you at the next meeting for final review.
- iii. Ms. Doherty also has been wrapping up the preparation work to submit Providence's Plymouth Congregational Church nomination to the National Park Service. She has been waiting for a Spanish translation of the nomination from the city and plans to submit the nomination this week.
- iv. Among the properties for which we have received initial information for NR review and which Ms. Doherty has reviewed are the Copley Chambers building in Providence, Neutaconkanut Hill Park in Providence, and Memorial Hospital in Pawtucket. Neutaconkanut Hill is still very early in the process, but she may present Memorial Hospital for a preliminary review at the April meeting.
- v. Elizabeth Rochefort has almost wrapped up all of the planning work that has been occupying the majority of her time for a while. The State Historic Preservation Plan is in Washington for review and we should hear by the end of the month.
- vi. Ms. Rochefort has corresponded with the owners of St Mary's Church in Portsmouth about the nomination that she has in progress for that property and potential impacts of a renovation project that the church wants to conduct that would affect the original plaster, which is scored to look like masonry block. Roberta Randall has also been involved in that conversation.

- vii. Ms. Rochefort assisted Katherine Pomplun with the request for proposals for an NR consultant for the Newport Spring Certified Local Government grant, including having a meeting with the owner. PAL was recently submitted to work on that project.
 - viii. Ms. Rochefort fielded NR questions on properties in Cranston and Pawtucket and with Ms. Doherty, Ms. Zurier, and Mr. Emidy also reviewed the draft Beaver River Road Historic District nomination and information that was submitted for Copley Chambers, Neutaconkanut Hill Park, and Memorial Hospital.
 - ix. Mr. Emidy reported that he has been working on the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Complex document and preparation work for today's meeting.
 - x. Mr. Emidy has also reviewed information sent in for a few properties. These have been initial inquiries trying to gauge NR eligibility. Two of them are potential tax credit projects. We have reviewed the information that was submitted and returned questions and comments to the preparers toward the goal of having enough information to determine whether or not the staff think they are eligible and to be able to present them to the Board for preliminary review.
 - xi. No properties in Rhode Island have been listed since our last meeting.
- b) Mr. Emidy explained to the Board that the changes to the NR program that were proposed under the Trump administration were not acted on before the administration ended, so they were not enacted. We are waiting to hear what the Biden administration will do with them. He does not expect that they will be enacted.
6. National Register of Historic Places Final Review:
Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Complex
49 Westfield Street, Providence

Mr. Emidy made a presentation for final National Register approval for the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Complex. The nomination was prepared by Roysin Younkin, of MacRostie Historic Advisors, as part of a tax credit application. The property, at 49 Westfield Street, in Providence, is bounded by Warren Street on the north, Fuller Street on the east, Westfield Street on the south, and Harrison Street on the west. It consists of three interconnected brick industrial buildings.

The Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Building was constructed in 1885. The red brick factory building rises two stories over a raised basement. It features an overhanging, shallow gable roof with exposed rafter tails. The four-bay façade faces north onto Warren Street. The main entrance was located in the westernmost bay and led to the company offices, which were located on the ground floor. The double-height entrance is deeply recessed and features a transom light currently filled with glass block. The façade was originally characterized by regularly spaced, segmental arched windows in each bay on the first two floors with two smaller windows centrally placed in the attic story. The south elevation is similarly arranged with regularly spaced, segmental arched openings with quarry-faced granite sills. The west elevation originally featured a two-story projecting stair tower with a shallow gable roof centrally located on the elevation. The tower was enclosed

within two vulcanizing rooms built in two phases ca.1920 and ca. 1950 and converted to an elevator shaft by 1950. The vulcanizing rooms form a two-story brick block that encompasses six bays of the elevation. They are utilitarian in appearance with minimal fenestration and a flat roof. A brick freight elevator shaft is located one bay south of the vulcanizing rooms addition, and a small, two-story, concrete block stair tower located one bay further south on the elevation is of relatively recent construction. Many segmental arch window openings are visible. Most are now bricked-in, glass-brick filled, or partially bricked-in with small, rectangular, mid-20th century windows inserted.

The interior of the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Building retains open floor plates, wood floors, exposed, brick perimeter walls, and rows of regularly-spaced, round, steel, columns. Ceilings are exposed wood decking with heavy timber wood beams, many of which have been wrapped in fiber cement and painted. Stairs located along the west elevation within the concrete block are metal with metal handrails.

The Bourn Rubber Company Receiving Building was constructed ca. 1920, attached to a now-demolished cluster of frame buildings. The 70' x 90', brick building is five bays by six bays, one story tall, with a flat roof. A wide garage opening is centered on the north elevation and a pedestrian entrance is located one bay east of the garage entry. Large, rectangular window openings set between brick piers with recessed brick panels beneath them are located on all elevations. The openings are infilled with mid-20th century decorative concrete block with an open, rectangular pattern. Original, 6/6, double-hung, steel sash remain on the interior. The interior of the building has an open floor plan with a concrete floor and regularly-spaced rows of square, steel columns. The ceiling is exposed with heavy timber wood beams and wood decking. A concrete block office is located along the southern wall and an enclosed wood entry vestibule is located on the northern wall.

The Phillips-Baker Rubber Company Main Building was constructed ca.1930. The two-story, brick building has a roughly L-shaped plan. It abuts the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Building on the west, as well as the Bourn Rubber Company Receiving Building on the north. This is a flat-roofed, pier-and-spandrel building. The façade is punctuated by simple brick piers that continue onto the secondary elevations. The main block of the building extends 23 bays along Westfield Street and four bays along Fuller Street. A recessed pedestrian entrance is located in the tenth bay moving from west to east. Window openings between the piers are regularly spaced and rectangular, and infilled with glass-brick with rectangular window inserts or with mid-20th century decorative concrete block with an open, rectangular pattern. The second floor of the entry bay contains an original, multi-light, steel sash with a hopper. A large, modern, double garage door is on the east elevation. Modern, single-story, concrete block shipping and receiving rooms extend from the north elevation.

The interior of the Phillips-Baker Rubber Company Main Building includes a predominantly open plan with exposed brick perimeter walls, wood floors, and exposed ceiling structure and support columns. Many of the floors have been covered in tile and plywood. The ceiling structure is comprised of steel beams, many wrapped in fiber cement, supported by round, steel columns, with wood decking above. The main stair is located along the south wall slightly west of center. It is comprised of metal risers and treads with metal handrails

and newel posts.

The Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company were producers of card clothing, a thick foundation material through which fine, closely spaced wires were pressed. When wrapped around rollers in carding machines, the wires cleaned and straightened cotton or wool fibers so that they could be spun into thread. The company was named for Samuel M. Stedman (1821-1887) and George A. Fuller (1827-1899). Fuller moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts, ca. 1854 to work for the firm of Warren and Bryant one of the oldest card clothing manufacturing firms in the country, where he met Samuel M. Stedman. In 1856 the two men purchased half an interest in Warren and Bryant and renamed the company Stedman & Fuller. In 1885, the firm was incorporated under the name Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company and relocated to Providence. Stedman, who remained in Lawrence, retired from actively running the business at the time of the move. He died just a few years later, in 1887.

The Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company moved into a brick factory that had been recently constructed on Westfield Street by an investor, General George Lewis Cooke. The lot on which Cooke constructed the building included single family residential dwellings as well as industrial buildings by 1882, and had been part of the holdings of the A. & W. Sprague Company in the 1870s. A few years after moving to Providence, the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company plant was featured in a compilation of significant manufacturing concerns in the city, where it was deemed “the most prominent concern in Providence” that combined the manufacture of leather belting and card clothing.

The Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company operated in Providence from 1885 until it was absorbed into the American Card Clothing Company combine five years later. George Fuller remained a significant figure in the field until his death in 1899. As part of the liquidation of the American Card Clothing Company combine in 1905, the former Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company building was sold to the Bourn Rubber Company.

The central figures in the Bourn Rubber Company were George O. Bourn (1809-1859), and his son Augustus O. Bourn (1834-1925). George Bourn began his rubber business as early as 1838. His son, Augustus, joined Bourn, Brown & Chaffee in 1855 and became a partner when his father died in 1859. The firm was incorporated as the Providence Rubber Company in 1861. Augustus Bourn founded the National Rubber Company in Bristol, Rhode Island, in 1864, which he merged with the Providence Rubber Company in 1867. The company manufactured shoes and boots, rubber clothing, rubber belting and hoses, and various other rubber goods. Augustus Bourn continued his affiliation with his rubber enterprises and also entered politics as a state representative for Bristol beginning in 1876 and as governor of Rhode Island from 1883 to 1885. He served as Consul-General of the United States in Rome from 1889 to 1893. When he returned to Rhode Island, the Providence branch of the National Rubber Company was reorganized as the Bourn Rubber Company and located on Westfield Street in 1894. The company was incorporated in 1901.

The Bourn Rubber Company consolidated earlier factories on the Westfield Street site in 1895. Within a few years, the company had expanded the complex. None of the buildings associated with this period of expansion survive. The next major expansion of the rubber

plant occurred in the early 20th century, when the Bourn Rubber Company purchased the former Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Building and the two buildings were connected. Two adjacent houses were demolished for the construction of the Bourn Rubber Company Receiving Building by 1920. The death of Augustus Bourn in 1925 heralded change for the Bourn Rubber Company.

Victor B. Phillips purchased the Bourn Rubber Company for \$150,000 in 1925. Phillips ran the rubber company as its president while residing in Ohio, and his business partner, Charles H. Baker, resided in Rhode Island and served as vice-president. The company was renamed the Phillips-Baker Rubber Company and continued to produce rubber boots and rubber-soled canvas shoes in the Bourn Plant. During the Phillips-Baker ownership, the frame buildings that comprised the 19th century rubber facilities were demolished and replaced ca 1930 with a large, brick, L-shaped building that extended from the former Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company building to Fuller Street.

In 1936, the Phillips-Baker Rubber Company was liquidated due to unresolved labor disputes. The plant was auctioned in 1937 to the Goodyear Footwear Corporation. The sale included not only the real estate, machinery and equipment contained within the plant, but also patents and trademarks owned by the company. Charles H. Baker became the vice president of Goodyear and later served as its board chairman. Goodyear continued to operate as a boot and shoe manufacturing plant until the late 1960s. This marked the end of the plant's association with rubber manufacturing. Klitzner Industries, a local jewelry manufacturer established in 1907 as the Harry Klitzner Company, moved its operations into the plant by 1971 and was the last tenant of the plant.

Constructed between 1885 and ca.1930, the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Complex is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with several locally significant manufacturing concerns: the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company, the Bourn Rubber Company, and its successors the Phillips-Baker Rubber Company and the Goodyear Footwear Corporation. The period of significance extends from 1885, when the Stedman & Fuller Manufacturing Company Building was constructed, until 1969, approximately when rubber production at the complex ceased.

Dr. Onorato asked about the location of the office. Mr. Emidy confirmed that the offices ran across the north elevation.

Ms. Werenfels noted that the decorative concrete block and the glass block with hopper windows in the window openings probably date to within the period of significance, which ends in 1969 and asked how those features would be looked at. Mr. Emidy replied that he doubts the developer wants to retain those features, but he would defer that determination to the tax credit reviewers in Washington. Mr. Onorato questioned if nominating it under "broad patterns of history," rather than for architecture, makes a difference in that determination. Kim Smith Barnett, of MacRostie Historic Advisors, made a comment from the guest room that the National Park Service has approved the removal of the concrete block and glass block.

Ms. Werenfels asked if the U.S. Rubber Company was a competitor of these rubber

companies or somehow related. Dr. Malone stated that he didn't know exactly, but believed they were competitors, indirectly, with niche products and that there was plenty of room for rubber manufacturing in Rhode Island at the time.

Mr. Sanderson asked if we know what the source of the canvas for the carding cloth was. Mr. Emidy replied that it is not in the nomination. Mr. Sanderson stated that it is potentially an interesting connection between cotton canvas manufacturing in Rhode Island and it being vulcanized for use in carding cloth.

Dr. Malone pointed out a correction concerning the introduction of slow burning construction. Until 1989, Zachariah Allen was usually given credit for the first American use of this building form. That interpretation assumed that he had used it in his Allendale Mill in 1822. The interpretation of Allen's role is out of date in the nomination. *The Texture of Industry*, by Dr. Malone and Robert Gordon, has the correct story and should be used in the mill architecture and safety section. Allen did not use slow-burning construction in his Allendale Mill until he lengthened it in 1839. The physical evidence is clear. The first known American example is in the Woonsocket Manufacturing Company's mill #1 of 1827.

Dr. Malone raised concerns about the presentation of the photographs and the topographic map annotation in the draft nomination. He said that he approves of the nomination, with the above correction. There is little to praise about the architectural quality of these functional buildings, and they seem to be in terrible condition, however, the historical fabric, other than windows, seems to be largely intact.

He continued that the written building descriptions are fine and include many valuable details, and the industrial significance is explained well enough. The attention given to both the card clothing and rubber product industries is sufficient, and there is also some mention of leather belting, another important product line in the age of mechanical power transmission. The industrial activities on this site and the participation of the Bourn family, who were highly important in rubber fabric development, make the complex worthy of the National Register. He stated that he is glad to see another nomination that adds to our understanding of the textile and rubber industries in Rhode Island. This complements the highly impressive scholarship by Edward Connors and Scott Molloy that we have already seen.

On a motion by Ms. Werenfels, seconded by Mr. Sanderson, the Review Board unanimously VOTED FINAL APPROVAL for the nomination, with Dr. Malone's comments to be incorporated into the nomination.

[Michael Abbott joined the meeting]

7. National Register of Historic Places Preliminary Review
Copley Chambers
206 Broad Street, Providence

Ms. Doherty made a presentation for preliminary National Register approval for the Copley Chambers, at 206 Broad Street, in Providence. The information was submitted by MacRostie Historic Advisors, and Kim Smith Barnett and Ryan Cameron were at the virtual meeting.

Copley Chambers is a ca. 1913, commercial/residential, four-story, brick, north-facing building with a symmetrical, five-bays-wide façade with a recessed central entrance; full-height piers between the bays; regular fenestration, including storefront windows on the first story and segmental-arch window openings on the fourth story; and a shallow parapet roof with a dentil cornice. The building sits right against the sidewalk and its side elevations are set at an angle, giving it a parallelogram footprint. The front block of the building is constructed of buff brick, while the less visible rear portion is red brick. The side elevations of the rear part of the building are stepped back above the first floor, creating a T-shaped floor plan on floors two through four. The rear wall of the building was once red brick but was replaced with concrete masonry units due to its deteriorating condition. Many window openings are filled with plywood, but a number of paired, six-over-one wood sash remain in the front part of the building along with numerous wood transom window sash in the rear. The first-floor storefronts, currently covered with plywood, have non-historic doors and window sash.

The interior of Copley Chambers retains important elements of its historic floor plan, including a central, double-loaded corridor with door openings and transom windows in their historic locations. The interior consists primarily of large, open spaces, with most of the demising walls having been removed. Physical evidence of the walls' locations is apparent on floors two through four, though less so on the first floor, where most of the plaster has been removed from the walls. A stair hall, which services the basement through fourth floors, is located midway down the east side of the building. The stair hall has wood treads, risers and baseboards; original paneled doors; plaster walls and ceilings; and beadboard wainscoting at the basement level. Wood flooring survives through most of the building, though it has been covered with plywood or concrete on the first floor. Overall, about 10 percent of the ceilings and 60 percent of the walls have historic plaster; thirteen historic doors survive, representing about 20 percent of the original total; and about 50 percent of the original wood door trim, window trim and baseboards are intact. In general, the upper floors retain more finishes than the first floor.

When Copley Chambers was constructed ca. 1913, it was at the edge of downtown Providence prior to the construction of I-95 in the mid-20th century. The significance of the building's name is not known at this time, but may have simply been an effort to lend an air of respectability to the project by referencing Copley Square in Boston. The 1918 Sanborn atlas lists the building's owner as H.T. Arnold, and the 1920 Sanborn notes that the first floor housed "Auto Ware R'ms" while apartments were located on the upper floors. Though a popular form of housing in many cities, apartment buildings were relatively rare in Providence, and mostly concentrated in Elmwood and the East Side. There were, however, other apartment buildings in the vicinity of Copley Chambers: the Raleigh Apartments, built before 1904 and not extant, and the Aylesworth, built in 1888-1889 and listed in the National Register in 1982, stood immediately to the east, while several other buildings on the block are labeled as flats on Sanborn atlases.

Directories from the 1910s and 1920s indicate that the apartments at Copley Chambers were occupied by single men and that turnover was frequent. Residents' occupations included salesman, lawyer, insurance broker, chemist, and manager. A proprietor, Mrs. W.R. Wattles, lived in the building for several years. Directories from the late 1920s and 1930s suggest the number of residents had declined significantly by that time. By mid-century, the apartments had been converted to hotel rooms. The building was known as the Milner Hotel in 1951 and, by 1976, the Continental.

The first floor of Copley Chambers has consistently been in commercial use. Tenants in the 1910s and 1920s included Union Motor Car Company, Knight Automobile Company, Indiana Motor Sales Company, Vanasse Armand Automobiles, and M&Z Auto Exchange. In 1927, a Chevrolet dealership appears to have occupied a portion of Copley Chambers as well as the ca. 1915 building to its immediate west. Automobile-related businesses were gone in the 1930s, replaced by a piano dealer and a restaurant.

Ms. Doherty stated that if this nomination were to move forward, NR criteria might include Criterion A in the area of community planning and development. Copley Chambers was built in the nineteen-teens when Providence's population was booming and apartment buildings though not tremendously popular, were being erected in the city. At the time, this was the edge of downtown, so the building's historical context and use would need to be looked at in that context. Use of the first floor for automobile-related businesses is also interesting and could relate to the rise of the automobile in the early 20th century.

Criterion C for architecture is also a possibility, perhaps less for the building's design and more for its embodiment of a building type – an early 20th century mixed use commercial-residential building. The period of significance would likely begin with the building's construction circa 1913 and the end date would depend on a number of factors, including what criteria are invoked. It could potentially end with the 50-year cutoff, or when the building transitioned from apartments to hotel use. All of that is to be determined.

Ms. Werenfels asked what the panel treatment is on the façade, below the windows. Ms. Doherty stated that she is not sure but that it looks like concrete with giant aggregate. Ms. Smith Barnett replied that it appears to her to be concrete, as well. It appears to have been applied over the brick and is missing in some locations.

Dr. Onorato asked what the structural member is over the first floor window openings. Ms. Smith Barnett stated that she believes it is steel, but she can't confirm that for sure.

Mr. Sanderson stated that the building looks like it would be contributing in a district, but he is not clear what the significance is. The condition is iffy, but it doesn't look like the building was ever elaborately detailed inside or out. It could be an attractive rehabilitation, but he is struggling to see it as an individual NR listing. The automobile association is interesting, but he does not see any diagnostic or characteristic physical signs of it. Other automobile-related buildings in the city still show those characteristics. Overall, he is underwhelmed with this as an individual listing. Dr. Onorato stated that was the reason he asked about the storefronts; he wondered if they might give some suggestion of automobile use. Ms. Doherty stated that she believes the automobile aspect is a part of the story, but

probably not where the building derives its significance. She stated that it would only be significant at the local level and they would be looking into how it fits into other mixed-use early 20th century buildings in Providence. It doesn't have to be exceptional, it can be typical and still eligible, so they will look into whether it exemplifies a typical early 20th century building in Providence.

Dr. Evans stated that he goes by this building all the time and he can attest to the way that it contributes to the streetscape of Broad Street. Places like this served a transient population into the 1950s and 1960s, so they are a part of the history of the neighborhood.

Ms. Doherty stated that she believes the transition from apartments to a hotel is something we don't have enough information on to really evaluate right now, but it might be a worthy area to pursue. Dr. Onorato stated that he thinks that the transient population aspect may just be an urban phenomenon.

Dr. Malone stated that he thinks the form of the building is interesting - it reminds him of the head house of a railroad terminal – and the façade is quite handsome.

Dr. Onorato stated, in summary, that it sounds like, if this were to move forward, it would require a lot more information. If we were to make a motion to move forward, it would be to say that it needs more information, but it doesn't necessarily suggest that it will pass a final nomination. Ms. Werenfels agreed with this, adding that in a district it seems eligible, but individually there are more questions.

Dr. Onorato asked if there is a motion to make stating that this property can move forward pending much further research into those areas that we just noted. Mr. Sanderson stated that he would phrase the motion differently. Based on the information presented, it is not clear that the property is individually eligible, and it is also not clear that it isn't. His reaction to the presentation is to want to tell the owners that the case for individual listing has not been made, but of course we would be open to receiving more information. Dr. Onorato asked Mr. Sanderson if he was making a motion to that effect. Mr. Sanderson said that he is.

Ms. Doherty asked if Mr. Sanderson is saying that he would want to see another preliminary presentation with more information. Mr. Sanderson replied that it is up to the owner. While in some cases even if the information isn't all there in the preliminary presentation, the path forward is clear. In this case, it's not clear to him what the path to nomination is even if those gaps are filled in.

Jeffrey Emidy stated that, since this is a potential tax credit project, it is really up to the National Park Service to make the determination of eligibility, so they could come back to the Board, or they could take these comments, incorporate answers, and just present it to the Park Service.

[Ms. Werenfels left the meeting]

Mr. Loether stated that the Park Service will not necessarily give an absolute determination on a Part 1 review, either. They might say that, in order to complete the process, the

nomination has to be filed.

Dr. Evans stated that he would be hesitant to characterize it to the owners as though we would still be skeptical, even if they came back with more information. Dr. Onorato stated that he wants to be clear that even if we do approve this now, we are not making a guarantee of approval at the next level.

Dr. Onorato asked if there was a second for Mr. Sanderson's motion. There was none.

Ms. Doherty stated that the staff opinion is that the building is eligible.

Dr. Onorato made the motion to make a preliminary approval of the nomination to go forward with the caveat that it needs further research into the areas that we have already discussed in order to make a final decision. Dr. Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed with Dr. Evans, Dr. Malone, Dr. Morenon, and Dr. Onorato voting "yes", Mr. Sanderson voting "no", and Mr. Abbott recusing himself. Ms. Werenfels had previously left the meeting.

8. Old business

i. Commission vacancies update

Mr. Loether reported that he is working with the Governor's Office's. The provision for staggering terms in the statute was departed from and we are trying to reestablish that. Six current members of the Commission will be recommended for reappointment. Dr. Morenon has decided to step down from the Commission and there are two other vacancies. He is recommending Dr. Rod Mather, the chairman of the graduate history program at the University of Rhode Island and an archaeologist, as well. He would fill the statutory position for an archaeologist. Anjali Joshi, who was recommended by Ms. Werenfels, is being put forward for the landscape position. Loren Spears, the director of the Tomaquag Museum, is a long-standing museologist and would fill that position. He has been talking with a couple of these people about also serving on the Review Board, but those discussions haven't finished yet. He is hopeful to have suggestions for Board members to the Commission in March or April.

For those not aware, to serve on the Commission you must be a resident of Rhode Island and must be confirmed by the Senate.

ii. 2021 Statewide Historic Preservation Conference update

Sarah Zurier reported that the conference entitled "Back to the Future" was cancelled, so this year, we are going to "Come Back to the Future." It will be a virtual conference for three half days – April 21st through 23rd. The first half day will be an afternoon with historic district commission training for Commissioners and staff. The other two days, in the mornings, will be more in the spirit of our traditional

conference. There will be a keynote speaker each day: George Smart, a modernist, and Kofi Boone, a landscape architect. There will be breakout sessions and virtual tours, as well. She will reach out to the Board members in terms of inviting their students and communities. So please, save the dates: April 21st to 23rd for the virtual conference.

9. New business

Mr. Loether reported that there are three active proposals for offshore wind projects right now, all almost midway between Martha's Vineyard and Block Island. They are between 15 and 19 miles from Block Island and 15 to 19 or 20 miles from the coast of Rhode Island. One is Sunrise Wind, which ties directly to New York. Another is South Fork, which is the smallest, with 18 turbines. Revolution Wind is the largest and closest to the Rhode Island shoreline, though still fairly distant; they are proposing 100 turbines. We are looking at those and what impacts they may have. BOEM has already determined that there is an adverse effect for all of these wind farms. Mr. Loether is looking at visualizations for them right now under a Section 106 review. The discussions are really just beginning.

10. Announcements

The next meeting will be held on Monday, April 5, 2021. It will be held virtually.

11. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Morenon and seconded by Mr. Abbott. The meeting adjourned at 11:18 A.M.

Minutes recorded by,



Jeffrey D. Emidy
Deputy Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer