

Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Wednesday December 18th 2019 7:00PM - 9:00PM in the Community Center

Commissioners attending: John Orfitelli (Chair), Susan DeMark, and Matt Maley

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Review/Approve November Minutes
3. Community Preservation Initiative
4. Road Side Markers: Riverside Bank
5. Social Media for New Paltz HPC
6. Other

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:25pm with a motion from Susan DeMark and seconded by Matt Maley. Motion carried.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. **Public Comment:** No public comments were received.
2. **Review/Approve November Minutes:** The Commission reviewed and approved [minutes from our meeting on November 20th](#) and John Orfitelli agreed to post.
3. **Community Preservation Initiative:** On December 6th, Senator Jen Metzger's (SD-42) bill was signed into law, allowing Ulster County communities to raise funds for preserving open space, unique ecological areas, agricultural lands, and historic sites. The companion bill in the Assembly was introduced by Assembly member Kevin Cahill (AD-103).

Adding Ulster County to the 2007 Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act gives Ulster County towns and villages the option enjoyed by municipalities in Dutchess, Putnam, and Westchester counties to establish a Community Preservation Fund through a modest real estate transfer tax-- a tool to help municipalities protect resources important to the community, finance conservation and better manage development. In order to set up such a fund, local governments must first obtain the approval of voters through a public referendum.

[Click here to read the full press release.](#)

A workshop was held on December 12th in the Community room for members of the Environmental Conservation Board, Clean Water and Open Space Preservation Committee, and Historic Preservation Commission to outline the work scope and timeline required to bring this legislation to the public in a referendum slated for the 2020 ballot. Topics included:

- Required plan components
- Community survey
- Project timeline
- Public campaign
- Inter-Municipal Partnerships
- Committee/Sub-Committee Formation

Ingrid Haeckel, Chair of the Environmental Conservation Board, recommended that a survey be completed ASAP to update community feedback on the issues related to Open Space, Clean Water, Environmental Conservation, and Historic Preservation. John Orfitelli agreed to acquire a subscription to Survey Monkey which was subsequently done on 12/13. John also met with Josh Simons at the Benjamin Center about obtaining a randomized list of mailing addresses for use in a survey which Josh agreed to do for us. Josh is very knowledgeable about the complexities of

choosing a representative sample and has also agreed to attend the next committee meeting on January 8th to help the committee shape the survey questions to optimize the results. The Committee briefly touched on all of the topics outlined above; however, much remains to be defined so the group will be meeting on a regular basis beginning in January.

Each of the stakeholder groups will be required to articulate a plan for distribution of funds acquired from the Community Preservation Transfer Tax or Fee on real estate transactions. John Orfitelli shared with stakeholders his [draft outline which will serve as the basis for the HPC Plan](#). Matt Maley agreed to develop a cost comparison of repair items between an average house vs historic landmark. These costs will serve to support the grant rationale, process, and specifics such as the proposed contributions for various repairs. Matt Maley and Susan DeMark agreed to attend the meeting on January 8th and prepare a few survey questions specific to the HPC.

4. **Road Side Markers:** John Orfitelli met with John Sorlie, Assistant Vice President, and Branch Manager, Riverside Bank to discuss [our funding request for the Lent House marker](#). John Sorlie, who has been very positive about our request, contacted Dee Harnish, VP Project and Facilities Management at Riverside Bank, who is responsible for community relations. Dee Harnish contacted John Orfitelli on 12/16 to learn more about our request, She was also very positive and agreed to provide a response in a few days.
5. **Social Media for New Paltz Preservation:** Susan DeMark agreed to create a Facebook page for review and implementation by the HPC at our next meeting in January. Each Commissioner will have admin authority to add material to the page. The use of Facebook and Instagram will prove very important to obtaining support within the community for passage of a referendum in 2020 for the preservation law.
6. **Other:** John Orfitelli completed major updates to the [Town HPC website page](#) which consolidated many of the links to make the site more user friendly. John also included new links to the ['Then and Now' videos](#) he created from the Shockwave files previously posted on the HPC Map site. The new gif format will also facilitate posting of the 'Then and Now' videos in Facebook.

Motion to adjourn was made by Susan DeMark and seconded by Matt Maley. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.

Next Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 15th 2020.