Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday April 16th 2024 7:00PM – 9:00PM
Via Zoom

Commissioners attending: John Orfitelli (Chair), Joe Marianek, Vinny Sickles, Matt Maley, and Susan DeMark

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Map Site Release 1.0
3. HPC Web Site
4. CPF for Historic Preservation
5. CPF Advisory Board Update
6. Review/Approve March Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm with a motion from Susan DeMark and seconded by Joe Marianek. Motion carried.

Pledge of Allegiance and Recognition of the Lenni/Lenape Nation

Minutes:

1. **Public Comment:** No public comments were received.

2. **Map Site Release 1.0:**

   ### Future Changes

   - The Commission discussed the importance of recognizing Native American Heritage sites along with sites related to Black History on the map site. John Orfitelli reached out to the Town Historian, Susan Stessin-Cohn, and Town Board member Esi Lewis to solicit their support for reference materials associated with Black History for inclusion on the map site.

     Susan Stessin-Cohn is creating a Story Map of every house they could find in the county that held enslaved people. She agreed to share that data as soon as it is completed on or about June 8th.

     Esi Lewis: John will need to follow up with Esi who has not yet responded to his request.

     Tom Olsen: Agreed to help with checking the 12 properties that have been designated as local landmarks by the Village HPC for location accuracy, correct reference materials, and to provide any additional materials such as photos. Valerie McAllister agreed to provide Peace Park information.

     Re: Native American sites, the Village HPC approved the construction of a wigwam on Huguenot Street, on a temporary basis (7 years, as I recall, with option to renew). Val, to forward info on our approval decision.

   ### Public Release

   Accessibility level for the map site **is acceptable** per analysis and changes by Dr.Pham and John G.

   Joe Marianek: *I think it's clear that we are now in safe territory with a score close or near to 100. For what it's worth, earlier when a colleague of mine and I tested with several tools (others, including these) there were lower scores that could be flagged for non-compliance. Fixes completed by D.Pham*

and John G. have improved the scores greatly.

Test Results provided by Dr.Pham:

A) IBM Accessibility Checker

Per your request, John G downloaded and installed the IBM Accessibility Checker. He used it to check our Map website. He also checked New Paltz town's website, the webpage of our Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) which our Map website will be a part of (linked to), and also some other public and government websites, just to compare.

Here are the results:

1) Our Map website
(currently, after John G. fixed it a bit)
Violation=1, Needs review=5, Recommendation=4, Total=10 issues found

(before John G.'s fix)
Violation=4, Needs review=5, Recommendation=5, Total=14 issues found

2) The website of New Paltz Town:
Violation=8, Needs review=48, Recommendation=19, Total=75 issues found

3) The website of Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):
Violation=7, Needs review=62, Recommendation=28, Total=97 issues found

4) SUNY New Paltz Website:
Violation=51, Needs review=17, Recommendation=12, Total=80 issues found

5) NY State DMV Website:
Violation=73, Needs review=29, Recommendation=26, Total=128 issues found

So, it looks like our Map website (1) actually **has the best score** (even before John G.'s fix).

As our Map website is linked to (3) which is linked to (2), our Map website will be basically just a part of (2) and (3). Given that the scores of (2) and (3) are worse than the score of our Map website and that the town's and the HPC's pages have been used by the public, then the question would be: why do we still have to improve our part (1) in order to make it public? especially when ours actually has better score and less issues?

I also believe that SUNY New Paltz college website (4) and the NY State DMV website (5) must have already met the Accessibility standards. At the same time our Map website has a better score and less issues than theirs. So, shouldn't it mean that our website OK?

B) Silktide

Similar results as above, our Map website (1) **has the best score**, compared with (2), (3), (4), and (5). We will provide the screenshots in a separate email as this one is already too long.

C) RAMP

Our MAP website **passed** the test (from Joe's email).

D) Google Lighthouse

In addition to the above tools, about a week ago, John G used another tool called Lighthouse to test our Map website (1) and the score is **100/100** after John G's fix. Lighthouse is a Google tool that is integrated in the Chrome web browser and is quite popular.

Release Plan: Susan DeMark agreed to draft a press release for review at our next meeting in May. Target for publication in HV1 is the June timeframe.
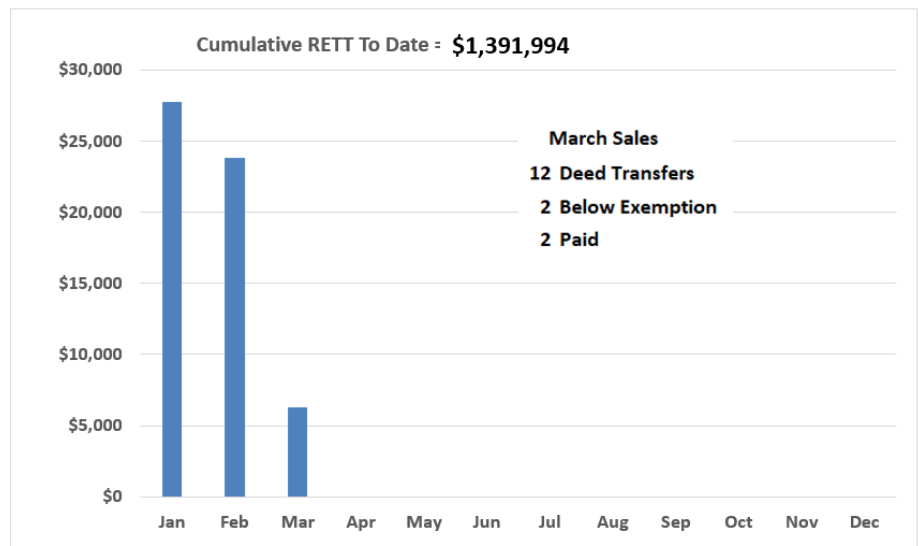
3. **HPC Web Site:** In preparation of our workshop meeting in May, Joe Marianek described the need to have the Commission provide their feelings and ideas about the importance of historic preservation and the role and purpose of the HPC. Joe requested that each Commissioner provide three reasons why historic preservation is important to them and to find examples of websites that have attributes and features that would be great to have for the HPC site. Joe highlighted how the website content should include past experiences we have had with designations and other examples that highlight our successes.

4. **CPF for Historic Preservation:** John Orfitelli arranged a Zoom call with attorney, Christine Chale, with members of the Commission to discuss their ideas on various approaches for applying the CPF for historic preservation. Unfortunately, the façade easement remains the only viable method which is very complicated and costly. John Orfitelli agreed to reach out to Christine to understand if and how changes could be made to the law to make it easier to apply the CPF for historic preservation.

5. **CPF Advisory Board Update:** John Orfitelli provided the following RETT report for March 2024:

New Paltz Real Estate Transfer Tax for 2024
Exemption per Ulster Median Sales Price
1/1/23 - 4/6/23 $350,000
4/6/23 - 12/31/23   TBD

Receipts

Month	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jan		$72,388	$38,115	$27,776
Feb	$0	$81,769	$27,224	$23,813
Mar	$14,673	$114,753	$66,467	$6,300
Apr	$6,675	$29,248	$13,035	
May	$25,163	$17,790	$32,738	
Jun	$17,014	$73,441	$31,156	
Jul	$79,448	$25,913	$31,126	
Aug	$40,845	$62,535	$26,619	
Sep	$41,297	$58,067	$35,746	
Oct	$31,136	$28,335	$27,371	
Nov	$27,495	$50,016	$20,100	
Dec	$29,549	$35,273	$21,585	
TOTAL	$313,295	$649,528	$371,282	$57,889
Average	$31,330	$54,127	$30,940	$19,296

Cumulative RETT To Date = **$1,391,994**

March Sales
12 Deed Transfers
2 Below Exemption
2 Paid

6. **Review/Approve March Minutes:** The Commission reviewed and approved *minutes from our March 19th meeting.* John Orfitelli agreed to post on our Town *HPC website.*

Motion to adjourn was made by Vinny Sickles and seconded by Joe Marianek. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Next Meeting will be at 7:00pm on Tuesday, May 21st 2024, at the Town Community Center.