

Rockland County Historic Preservation Board

June 17, 2024 Minutes

Rockland County Planning Department
50 Sanatorium Road, Building T
Pomona, NY 10970

Members Present: Stacy Alessio, Gillian Ballard, Beth Brown, Mary Cardenas, Claudia Cooney, Marianne Leese, Lisa Levin, Craig Long, Robert Masiello, Peter Scheibner
Members Absent: Charles "Skip" Vezzetti
Staff: Michael Kezner, Rockland County Planning Department
Others in attendance: Diane Buell

Call to Order: The meeting began at 3:30 PM.

- 1. Introductions:** Board Chair Craig Long welcomed everyone to the meeting. Diane reintroduced herself to the Board as a local resident with an interest and background in historic preservation.
- 2. Review of May 20, 2024 Draft Minutes:** Marianne provided minor grammatical corrections. On a motion made by Gillian, and seconded by Claudia, the minutes were unanimously approved.
- 3. Properties of Concern:** The Borsodi house in Airmont was discussed at the previous meeting. Marianne passed around a photo of the house. She also mentioned that Ed Marse contacted the Historical Society of Rockland County to express interest in having a historical marker installed at his house, which is listed on the National Register as the Robert W. and Mary F. McCready House. The building is located on Route 17 in Sloatsburg.

Craig asked Mary if she knew whether Orange County would be involved with the Orangetown Resolutions reading. She hadn't heard anything. She then reminded the Board that the Orangetown Museum would be hosting a reading of the Resolutions at the 76 House in Tappan to celebrate the 250th anniversary of their writing.

Lisa stated that Montebello's Historic Preservation & Parks Commission is involved in planning a jazz festival to be hosted by the Village at their Village Hall on September 6th.

Beth asked if anyone knew what was happening to the Carson McCullers house in South Nyack. When she recently walked past it, she noticed that it looked like they were installing a porch. Marianne believed they were replacing the porch but keeping the historic nature. She knew the owner and would reach out to them. In a follow-up email, she noted that she spoke with an architect in the firm overseeing the restoration of the house. She learned that the house is owned by Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia, and was the birth home of the writer Carson McCullers. She lived in the house

in South Nyack from 1941 until her death in 1967. She had subdivided the second floor into four apartments to rent in order to provide her with a steady income. The house is currently in poor shape, with the exterior being the worst. It is now in the first stage of restoration.

Diane informed the Board that she was recently nominated to the Historical Society's Board. She has been helping with the education opportunities at the museum there. She also received clearance to review the archeological layers on the State's Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS).

Robert mentioned the Chair Factory site in the Village of Haverstraw. A development with approximately 450 units is currently going through the planning process.

Claudia informed the Board that the John Green House is close to getting electricity into the house. They will be holding a fundraiser event in September at the Hudson House.

Craig received a request from someone to inspect carvings on stone at their house. He reached out to Claudia and Diane who both responded that they would be willing to help.

- 4. Old Business:** Michael summarized the response received from the State CLG Coordinator regarding the audit of the County CLG. Overall, the Board/CLG meets all the standards. The suggestions from the State include finding ways to do public outreach, apply for grant funding, and that Board members should attend available trainings.

Since the audit was completed and the annual reports had been filed, Marianne wanted to revisit the completion of a survey of old sandstone houses within the County. The State Historic Preservation Office already has a list of red sandstone houses, but it is incomplete. She would like to then hire someone to determine if any were eligible to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

Michael received a list of potential places to be included on the Historic Places in Rockland County on the Planning Department's website from Marianne, with additional suggestions from Lisa. He will forward it to everyone for review.

- 5. New Business:** Pete noted that 132 acres of land located on Eagle Valley Road in Sloatsburg were acquired by the Open Space Institute and will be transferred to the County. This will be included as part of the County's Open Space Acquisition Program. Marianne stated that there is an Indian rock shelter on the site. A discussion ensued about how the Board could be in the acquisition process. Since they only have the power and authority to make recommendations on County-owned land, they determined that they could make suggestions on what should be done with the properties once acquired.

6. **Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting will be held on September 16, 2024 at 3:30 in the Building T conference room.

Adjournment: On a motion made by Mary, and seconded by Beth, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 PM.