

MIDDLETOWN PRESERVATION BOARD

Minutes

February 8, 1995

PRESENT

J. Bianco, Chair
F. Patnaude
J. Fortuna
P. Evans
B. Kronenberger
A. Tommasi
N. Goff (5:30)

ABSENT

R. Santangelo
E. Rak-Roberts

ALSO PRESENT

C. Wilcox, Staff

Chairman Bianco called the meeting to order at 5:12 p.m. and opened the public forum. Nobody from the public wished to speak.

Minutes of the January meeting will be submitted for approval for approval in March.

Chairman Bianco reported on the status of historic buildings about which the Board had concerns. He noted F & M Bank had taken title to the Pythian Building and was, in theory, interested in putting back the green marble. Chairman Bianco is advocating to them that preservation makes economic sense, and B. Kronenberger is talking to some masons to get a price for putting it back. He also commented on the need for facade grants for historic buildings downtown; and cited Norwich and East Hartford as having good programs.

Liberty Commons: Chairman Bianco reported on the progress of the project at Main and Liberty Streets, i.e. Arriwani/Liberty Commons. Construction has started, hazardous waste is being removed and most of the exterior work envisioned in the plans has been contracted for in the alternates. Chairman Bianco has met with J.L. Pizzaro to hunt for a retail tenant, and completion of that space could be expedited long before the residential area is finished.

St. Sebastian's Convent: No news to report.

241 Court Street: As for 241 Court Street, staff reported there may be a parking requirement for this building since it has been vacant so long. She was asked to find out from Bill Warner.

Watkinson Mill: Chairman Bianco was happy to report that the financing was in place for the parking structure at Watkinson Mill, which would allow that property to get a Certificate of Occupancy.

Long Hill Estate: B. Kronenberger, who Chairs the Long Hill Estate Subcommittee on current oversight, reported that a permanent roof system had been installed, two gates and small fence put up. The *No Trespassing* signs do not mean that well-intentioned visitors should stay out - only those

intending harm or mischief. They are putting back the electric power and spot lights, and contracted with Sonitrol for a phone link security system to the Police Department. Presently there is not a person living on site, since rental of a house would be over \$25,000 a year. A lot of mowing has been done and the Department of Public Works is increasing the activities of Town crews. It will become off-limits to kids and there may be a fence on the perimeter of the building itself.

Awards: The Board was united in their wish to give a special award this year to Ann Street, retiring Director of the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust.

Buildings considered were: a) deKoven House (B. Kronenberger described the work that was done); b) Oddfellows Playhouse; c) Masonic Hall; and, d) YMCA Crescent Street entry.

The Board noted that they were considering only recent restorations/renovations (two years or so). They also considered doing a proclamation commending the City for the acquisition and decision to renovate and reuse the Long Hill Estate mansion.

Upon a motion by P. Evans, seconded by J. Fortuna, the Board voted unanimously to give awards to two buildings, Ann Street and a proclamation to the City during Preservation Week in May 1995.

Other: Staff will keep the Board informed about any proposed changes in its charge and make-up in order to comply with the Planning & Zoning "Vision 2000 and Beyond" Plan. A draft of the ordinance should be ready soon. The main change would be to take on design review tasks at the request of Planning & Zoning, and advising them.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:10.


Cynthia G. Wilcox

CGW/bds