

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION
OF THE VILLAGE OF THOMASTON
November 30, 2021**

The Land Preservation Commission met on Tuesday, November 30, 2021 via videoconference at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Donald Stern, Chair, Leila Mattson, Deputy Chair, Miriam Chatinover, Gary Noren, Karen Siegel; Village Administrator Denise M. Knowland; Village Attorney A. Thomas Levin.

Absent: None

Chairman Stern opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Miriam Chatinover was not present at the beginning of the meeting, but joined the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Mr. Stern noted that, due to public health and safety concerns related to COVID-19, and pursuant to New York State law, this meeting of the Landmark Preservation is not being held in person. The meeting will be recorded and a transcription will be provided at a later date, and the recording and transcription will be placed on the Village website and in the Village records.

Mr. Stern then offered introductory remarks about his background, his view of the Village law regarding Preservation of Historic Landmarks, the methods by which potential consultants were identified (through recommendations and reference checks after Mr. Stern had contacted Preservation Long Island, the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Village Attorney), and his intention to run a fair and open process. Mr. Stern stated that, based on advice of the Village Attorney, this meeting was not required to be open to public comment, but Mr. Stern had determined in light of the significant interest of members of the community that the Commission would have a public comment session anyway. He stated his view that the Commission should engage an expert consultant to assist the Commission in making its determinations, and that such a consultant should be free of any conflicts of interest or appearance of conflicts of interest. In response to communications received from residents prior to the meeting, Mr. Stern pointed out that the schedule of the Commission would be adjusted as necessary if, at any point, the Commission believes it needs more time to consider any issue.

Mr. Stern invited comments from the public. The following members of the public spoke: Aaron Halpern, Nancy Sherman, Wendy Halpern, Lynn Zysman, Andrew Cronson, Sarah Blumenstein, Ellen Mones, Nina Gordon, and Helen Gavaris. Among other matters, members of the public questioned Mr. Stern's interpretation of the Village Code, asked for a delay in selecting the consultant pending additional input from persons identified by the residents, objected to one consultant who submitted a proposal as having performed services for the Village, and objected that the timing of the Commission's plans was too fast. Mr. Stern and the Village Attorney answered questions relating to matters such as the time period during which the Commission is required to complete its work, and the manner in which the members of the Commission were selected. Some members of the public objected to the lack of historical/architectural experience of members of the Commission. Some members of the public objected to hiring a consultant at all, saying that the Village shouldn't spend the money and wouldn't need to, had the Commission members been expert themselves in the area of historic preservation. In response to one question, Commissioner Noren stated his view that, particularly in light of the pending and potential litigation involving this property, the Commission would be well served to hire an expert. The Village Attorney confirmed, in response to questions from the Chair and Vice Chair Mattson, that landmark commissions in other villages in comparable circumstances had hired consultants.

For a full text of all questions, comments and responses, please refer to the recording and transcription of the meeting.

The public comment period was concluded at 8:38 p.m.

Consultant Proposals

The Commission considered the consultant proposals, with some back and forth among Commission members about whether a consultant was necessary, and whether the Commission should select a consultant at the meeting or wait to investigate further the qualifications of the potential consultants and possibly seek additional potential consultants. The consensus of Commission members (as had been voiced by members of the public during the public session), was that the potential consultant that had performed services for the Village should not be retained by the Commission, so that the choice was between the two remaining potential consultants. After discussion, the following resolution was duly adopted:

RESOLUTION 21-01

Upon motion of Donald Stern, seconded by Karen Siegel, the following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Preservation Commission has received multiple requests to consider designating 124 S Middle Neck Road, Great Neck, NY 11021 and also known as Section 2 Block 250 Lots 5 and 25, a landmark in the Village of Thomaston, and

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Preservation Commission has the power to retain consultants, including but not limited to technical experts, engineers, architects and historians, to render assistance and advice in connection with any project to fulfill the duties of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and

WHEREAS, such retention of a consultant which involves the expenditure of village funds shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, and

WHEREAS, the Commission solicited a total of ten (10) proposals and received three (3) proposals from the following firms: Archaeology & Historic Resources Services, LLC (AHRs), Cashin Spinelli & Ferretti, LLC, and Simeon Bankoff, and

WHEREAS, the Commission wishes to retain the services of Archaeology & Historic Resources Services, LLC pursuant to its submitted proposal,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Landmarks Preservation Commission hereby selects the proposal of Archaeology & Historic Resources Services LLC in an amount not to exceed \$6,000, and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Village Administrator shall forward the Commission’s selection of Archaeology & Historic Resources Services, LLC to the Board of Trustees for approval and funding.

The vote on this resolution was: Donald Stern: Aye Leila Mattson: Aye
Miriam Chatinover: Aye Gary Noren: Aye
Karen Siegel: Aye

Public meeting date to consider landmark requests for 124 S. Middle Neck Road

RESOLUTION 21-02

Upon motion of Miriam Chatinover, seconded by Gary Noren, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, that a public meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission be held on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom Webinar to consider whether 124 S. Middle Neck Road, Thomaston, NY be designated a landmark, and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Village Administrator is directed to publish, post and otherwise give notice of such meeting as may be required by law.

The vote on this resolution was:	Donald Stern:	Aye	Leila Mattson:	Aye
	Miriam Chatinover:	Aye	Gary Noren:	Aye
	Karen Siegel:	Aye		

At 9:07 p.m. Donald Stern left the meeting.

Adjournment

At 9:08 p.m., there being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Gary Noren, seconded by Karen Siegel, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Knowland
Village Administrator