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VILLAGE OF GREENPORT
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK : STATE OF NEW YORK
-----x
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL WORK SESSION
-----x
1840 Schoolhouse Museum
Greenport, New York 11944
October 7th, 2024
3:00 p.m.

Before:

- JANE RATSEY-WILLIAMS - CHAIRPERSON
- ROSELLE BORRELLI - MEMBER
- JANICE CLAUDIO - MEMBER
- DENNIS MCMAHON - MEMBER
- FRANK DEGEN - MEMBER (Absent)

1 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Okay, good to go.

2 Good afternoon, my name is Jane Ratsey-Williams
3 and as Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission,
4 I'm calling this meeting to order.

5 Would the other members identify themselves,
6 please.

7 MEMBER CLAUDIO: Janice Claudio.

8 MEMBER MCMAHON: Dennis McMahon.

9 MEMBER BORRELLI: Roselle Borrelli.

10 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Thank you. Please note
11 Frank Degan is absent, but we have a quorum.

12 A Notice of Special Work Session for the Village
13 of Greenport Historic Preservation Commission appeared
14 in the legal notices.

15 Please take notice that the Historic
16 Preservation Commission of the Village of Greenport
17 will hold a Special Work Session on Monday, October
18 7th, 2024, at three o'clock, at The Schoolhouse, Front
19 and First streets, in Greenport, New York 11944.

20 The purpose of this Special Work Session will be
21 to consider the inclusion of Sandy Beach area into the
22 Greenport Historic District. This is dated October 1st,
23 by order of the Historic Preservation Commission, Jane
24 Ratsey-Williams, Chairperson.

25 Thank you.

1 So as we discussed individually, about different
2 areas of the Village coming into the Historic District,
3 Joe Corso from Sandy Beach has gone before the Village
4 Board, and the Mayor has visited the area as well, and
5 is very concerned about saving it and making it part of
6 the Historic District.

7 The land is not contiguous but once -- the
8 acceptance is within the boundary of the State Historic
9 Preservation office. So it's eligible.

10 Okay. I have here on my computer, I'm sorry it
11 was not printed out, but we just got new Optimum and
12 all my passwords changed and have not been changed on
13 my printer. I can share this document. Janice has
14 marked the property, as have I.

15 (Board Members perusing photographs).

16 This is just quick shots of the fronts of the
17 cottages. This area is out towards the bulkhead. They
18 are not in proper order here, but you can see the
19 architecture is very varied. The homes are close
20 together, but have always been. And just a few more.

21 And then the last picture shows, this is the
22 only one partly on stilts.

23 MEMBER MCMAHON: I don't know that that's one
24 that I looked at before, because somebody asked me -- I
25 don't think it is, because where I was down more toward

1 the end, the north end, there was no place to move a
2 house off the property in order to put piles in. So I
3 got a feeling that this is a different house than what
4 I was asked to look at.

5 MEMBER BORRELLI: This one is cedar shingled, but
6 yesterday I was on the boat, we went right past the
7 coastal, we took a client, and there is a grey one, I
8 think, on the stilts also. There is this brown
9 shingled, but -

10 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes. This is the only
11 one.

12 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes, it is. Yes.

13 MEMBER BORRELLI: Okay. Do they change colors?
14 I'm not sure.

15 MEMBER MCMAHON: (Affirmative nod).

16 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: I have more pictures. I
17 have photographs here. Joe Corso was kind enough to, I
18 asked him for some history of the area, and he gave me
19 this amazing book, which I'm going to try and get
20 copies of for everybody. Or have copies made. He's
21 interested in it also.

22 But one of the interesting things is the
23 photographs here, of originally before the bulkhead was
24 in -- I'm sorry --

25 (Displaying images to Board members).

1 MEMBER BORRELLI: Yes. They are all under water
2 now.

3 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes.

4 MEMBER BORRELLI: I know one of the girls that
5 their grandmother owned one, she told me the water used
6 to lap up underneath the bottom of the porch when they
7 were sleeping. So the porch faces the water, they would
8 have the water come through the bottom.

9 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: This one is Joe Corso's
10 house now, but when the bulkhead went in, they put
11 cement foundation, but he said they only put it around
12 the outside, the edges.

13 MEMBER MCMAHON: Sure.

14 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: To shore it up. They
15 didn't fill underneath it.

16 MEMBER MCMAHON: No, they probably didn't go down
17 three feet.

18 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes. He said originally
19 it was not cedar post but some kind of post.

20 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes. Locust.

21 MEMBER CLAUDIO: Locust.

22 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes.

23 MEMBER CLAUDIO: The restaurant still has them.

24 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Pardon?

25 MEMBER CLAUDIO: The restaurant still has them.

1 CHAIR-RATSEY WILLIAMS: Yes. It's amazing we
2 still have a few.

3 So the history goes way, way, back to it when it
4 was a scallop-shucking shack. Most of them. They had
5 bunk beds in it, and crews were left over there, given
6 probably a hot plate or maybe a stove, like some kind
7 of --

8 MEMBER MCMAHON: And a bottle.

9 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes, and a bottle.

10 MEMBER BORRELLI: And a knife to shuck.

11 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes. But anyway, I think
12 that this is firsthand accounts of different people and
13 it should be part of our formal presentation to the
14 Village Board because of the history that is involved
15 here.

16 MEMBER MCMAHON: That's pretty deep. That's
17 good. The pictures really say a lot.

18 MEMBER BORRELLI: The can scan those and then
19 they can put those into the record, possibly.

20 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: That's a good idea. I
21 thought Janice had used Rita over at Academy Printing,
22 so I was thinking of seeing, because she is so
23 meticulous.

24 MEMBER CLAUDIO: And she is historic-minded.

25 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: That she could some way

1 unbind this and then make copies --

2 MEMBER BORRELLI: Yes.

3 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Okay? But I'll check with
4 the Village about arranging to have that done.

5 Certain things in, this was the Reconnaissance
6 survey that was done in 2020. It was done before 2020.
7 It was published in 2020. And there are a couple of
8 references to I would like to share.

9 Capt. James Monroe Munsell was a leader in the
10 region's oyster area in the 1880s. Munsell planted seed
11 oysters in order to cultivate them at maturity, a
12 process that greatly economized the oyster trade.

13 Munsell founded his own company, The Greenport
14 Oyster Company, and by 1908, about 30 oyster companies
15 operated in the area.

16 At some point during the industrialization of
17 the industry, the shellfish shacks along Beach Street,
18 which was then called Young's Point, and later renamed
19 Sandy Beach, fell out of use as most industrial
20 processing plants appeared in and around Greenport, and
21 these shacks later became seasonal residences.

22 MEMBER MCMAHON: Young's Point is still used as a
23 reference. I just saw it on a map.

24 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Young's Point.

25 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes.

1 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes, I did, too. We call
2 it Gull Pond.

3 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes.

4 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: I think what happened,
5 when they dredged, Joe told me, if you are going by the
6 boat or you're walking by the cottages you can see
7 pilings out probably about 30 feet away. Some people
8 tie their boats to it, they put their oyster farms off
9 there. But right past that, I guess walking out to
10 that, is very, very shallow, and then it drops off.
11 It's where they took the sand to bulk, you know, to put
12 bulkheading in. And so --

13 MEMBER BORRELLI: Yes.

14 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: In this book it says
15 "Protecting Scenic Views and Vistas." Widows Hole
16 Preserve is one on Fourth and Clark, Fifth Street Beach
17 and Sandy Beach, along with the monument lost at sea.
18 But I don't think the monument touches -- that beach
19 touches Sandy Beach, does it?

20 MEMBER CLAUDIO: You can walk there.

21 MEMBER BORRELLI: You can walk right over to the
22 shack.

23 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Oh, you can. Okay.

24 MEMBER CLAUDIO: Yes. Just low tide, you just
25 walk past it.

1 MEMBER MCMAHON: Right. And the boat launch.

2 MEMBER BORRELLI: Which they need to dredge.

3 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes, that faces -- yes.

4 And here in this book it says Sandy Beach
5 Historic District may be eligible under "Criterion A"
6 in industry ports association with early local
7 commercial scalloping on the east end.

8 The first evidence of commercial scalloping on
9 the north fork of Long Island comes from newspaper
10 accounts of local people observing a boat from
11 Connecticut harvesting scallops just northeast of
12 Robbins Island.

13 By 1873 commercial scalloping was local and
14 scallop shacks began to appear. This small peninsula of
15 land is located at the entrance of Sterling Basin, at
16 the southernmost point of the Village along Beach Road.

17 Former scallop shacks were located on this site
18 but around 1886 local residents turned the area into a
19 summer resort and the former shacks were cleaned out
20 and converted into bungalows.

21 A historic building inventory form on file at
22 the State Historic Preservation Office lists a building
23 at 24 Beach Road as constructed in 1872 and as being
24 the last shellfishing shucker's shack on Long Island.

25 That's pretty cool.

1 Joe Corso also told me, which is interesting,
2 that as we would call Sandy Beach, it runs north and
3 south, but on there they call it east and west.

4 MEMBER MCMAHON: Sure. It's not wide enough to be
5 east and west.

6 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: East would be where Gull
7 Pond is. Like the hospital would be west. Sandy Beach
8 would be east.

9 MEMBER MCMAHON: If you look out at the end of
10 Bay Avenue, the Village dock, you are looking at the
11 entire face of Sandy Beach, which would be the west
12 side. The east side being of course the Gull Pond side.

13 But anyway, because, if you had to walk from the
14 north to get to the end of it, with the north, I get
15 it. I understand it.

16 MEMBER BORRELLI: Yes.

17 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Does anyone have anything
18 to contribute to this conversation?

19 MEMBER BORRELLI: On this map, I don't know, this
20 isn't it, right? Is this Sandy Beach?

21 MEMBER CLAUDIO: Yes.

22 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes, that looks like it would be
23 proper.

24 MEMBER BORRELLI: Right? So it's really just like
25 an annex to our map, across the wire.

1 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes, Bay Ave. End of Bay Avenue
2 is where? (Indicating)

3 MEMBER BORRELLI: That's Central.

4 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Central, then Bay would
5 be here. This is Sterling.

6 MEMBER BORRELLI: And Sterling is the last one.

7 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: I don't think it is, I
8 think it's further along.

9 MEMBER CLAUDIO: I'll take a look. (Perusing).
10 I'll give you a map.

11 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: It's clear on the dock
12 print, right?

13 MEMBER BORRELLI: If it's not, I mean I don't
14 know what it is.

15 MEMBER MCMAHON: This is Bay Avenue. The Village
16 dock is between Sand Cove here, and you are looking
17 directly across. It's not a real accurate, you know,
18 it comes up further and you look. This comes further
19 this way. It's cut off. Bay Avenue, (indicating) That's
20 Village dock.

21 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: So they are just showing
22 you that part.

23 MEMBER MCMAHON: Yes, they're showing just the
24 part.

25 MEMBER CLAUDIO: Missing this one.

1 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Yes. Do you want that? I
2 made copies for everybody.

3 MEMBER MCMAHON: I don't need any, thank you.

4 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: So I think with the
5 historic information we have, the recommendations from
6 the Reconnaissance survey, and we can make copies, see
7 if we can make copies of this.

8 I'm suggesting that we make a motion, not today,
9 but at our October meeting, for the Village Board to
10 consider adding Sandy Beach to the Historic District.

11 MEMBER BORRELLI: Okay.

12 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: All right?

13 MEMBER BORRELLI: Yup.

14 MEMBER CLAUDIO: Do we vote on it now?

15 MEMBER MCMAHON: No, but we can all agree to each
16 other, if we all agree, that that is where we are
17 heading with it.

18 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: That's right. All right?
19 And then the Village will have to make the resolution,
20 correct? We'll just do the motion.

21 MEMBER BORRELLI: Perfect.

22 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: Anyone have any other
23 things?

24 (No response).

25 I would like to say thank you very much for

1 coming. I also would like to say that I would like to
2 schedule another work session. I'll try and find out
3 what date works best for us. Janice has a couple of
4 projects she has been passionate about and really,
5 really amazing research. And we will provide you with
6 materials on that to study and look forward to. Okay?

7 MEMBER BORRELLI: Can we switch it from 3:30 to
8 4:00?

9 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: It's fine with me. We'll
10 go for four o'clock.

11 MEMBER BORRELLI: Perfect.

12 CHAIR RATSEY-WILLIAMS: All right, I'm going to
13 say then we are closing our meeting. Thank you.

14 (The time noted is 3:21 p.m.)
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