

**Town of Berlin  
Historic District Commission  
Town Hall · Berlin, CT 06037  
October 5, 7:00 p.m.**

**CALL IN NUMBER: 1-701-802-5317      Access PIN Code: 847264#**

**The Berlin Historic District Commission held a regular meeting with a public hearing by remote conference call on Monday, October 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. on the following matters:**

The public was invited to this meeting. To attend the meeting, please call: **1-701-802-5317**, access code 847264 followed by the pound sign.

Chairman Susan Skene called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Roll Call**

**Members Present**

Susan Skene, Chairman, Lorraine Stub, Vice Chairman, Andra Lou Millerd, Amy Prescher, Richard Bennett Herbert Watson seated as member

**Members Absent**

Bill Cink, Pam Pethigal

**Staff Liaison**

Maureen Giusti

**Audience of Citizens**

None

**Review and Action on Minutes – September 14, 2020**

Vice Chairman Stub moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Watson  
Motion Approved with a correction of wording: “damage caused from a fire”.

**New Business**

**Commission Communications** - Discussion of a Demolition Delay Ordinance.

Vice-chair Lorraine Stub noted that the Town has lost a few significant buildings over the years and presented some resources she had found on model Demolition Delay Ordinances, including Preservation Connecticut’s model ordinance language. She recapped that the Town obtained Certified Local Government designation, which makes the Town eligible for grants for planning with the understanding, by the town that the Historical District Commission advocates for historical properties located in the Berlin. The Commission always tries to contact and work with owners to have materials from historical homes salvaged prior to or during demolitions. But the timeline is often tight by the time demolition is brought to the Town’s attention. At 673 Spruce Brook Road, the property was listed on the market and sold to a developer, who subdivided the property, during development the old home was slated for demolition. Over the summer the former owner paid the current owner to salvage some of the materials in the home.

Some towns in Connecticut have adopted Demolition Delay Ordinances. These ordinances follow state guidelines depending on what individual’s towns agree on. This would help preserve historical homes. A separate historical review committee would need to be set up. The commission members would like

to save more historical buildings in town. Maureen Giusti explained to the Commission how an ordinance process works in the town. An ordinance may give more leverage to look at properties before they are demolished. Whether its saving or restoring the Commission should determine the purpose for the proposed ordinance. A sample ordinance document was given to the members. It explains the committee would need to consist of two to five people. A review committee would be set up to make preliminary decisions on whether a structure meeting certain criteria was worth implementing the delay to demo. This would give the ability to access historical homes and document the condition prior to demolition. Commissioner Bennett noted that it's important to keep in mind the cost of delaying a development project, both in costs to the builder and reputation of the Town. Maureen Giusti recommended having a few members do some research and put together some language to see what they would like this type of ordinance to accomplish. The members will gather information and contact other towns that have ordinances. A waiting period would need to be discussed and agreed on. The commission decided that a small group would get together outside some time at the end of the week to discuss the possible ordinance.

Vice Chairman Stub informed the group that the barn on Episcopal Road is in excellent shape and the owner agreed to have materials salvaged. Also work on the Belfort Tower on Worthington Ridge is occurring in the next couple of weeks.

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Bennett moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm and seconded by Commissioner Prescher passed unanimously.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Marlo Matassa, Recording Secretary**