

**PENFIELD REEF LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, November 30, 2011**

**Sullivan Independence Hall**

**725 Old Post Road**

**Fairfield, CT 06824**

FINAL MINUTES

Members Present: Sandye Mann, Vice Chair Dave Peck, Jennifer Carpenter, Pat Conley, Deanna Hoffman, Sherri Steeneck, Paige Herman, Steve Elworthy, Linda Cote Crowley

Members Absent: David Agonis, Dr. Evan Tilley, Mike Jehle, Mary Jo Cornell

I. Call to Order

Chair S. Mann called the Meeting to Order at 4:35 PM in the Second Floor Conference Room, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Chair S, Mann made a Motion to Approve the November 17, 2011 PRLPC Minutes. S. Elworthy Seconded. 8 In Favor. 0 Opposed 1 Abstention. Motion Passed.

Vice Chair D. Peck made a Motion to Approve the November 21, 2011 PRLPC Special Meeting Minutes. S. Steeneck Seconded. 6 In Favor 0 Opposed. 3 Abstentions. Passed.

Vice Chair D. Peck made a Motion to Approve the November 28, 2011 PRLPC Special Meeting Minutes. J. Carpenter Seconded. 7 In Favor. 0 Opposed. 2 Abstentions. Passed.

III. Correspondence and Communications

Chair S. Mann reported the resignation of PRLPC Member Bill Sapone, and thanked Him for his service and donation. L. Crowley made a Motion for Chair Mann to write to PRLPC Member David Agonis regarding his participation. P. Herman Seconded. Unanimous. At this time, there is no need for new members, since the PRLPC has the required minimum of nine members on the committee.

Chair S. Mann will write to Town Clerk Betsey Browne and inform her that PRLPC will continue to meet on the regular weekly Thursdays at 4:00 PM until further notice, when there is a newly formed Penfield Reef Lighthouse Preservation Committee.

IV. Old Business

A. Discussion of GSA Auction Status

Chair S. Mann notified the committee that the Soft Closing Date for the GSA Auction is Monday, December 12, 2011, unless extended by the bidding activity.

B. Discussion of Documents requested by the Board of Selectmen

1. Document of a Five-Year Plan for the scheduling of necessary repairs of the Penfield Reef Lighthouse

Chair S. Mann distributed a revised version of the Penfield Reef Lighthouse Five-Year Plan For years 2012 to 2016. This work-in-progress sheet was compiled by Town of Fairfield Building Supervisor E. McCourt and Town Architect J. Girardi, who are invited to attend The Board of Selectmen December 7, 2011 Meeting. S. Elworthy recommended changing Combined group work tasks listing the abbreviation TBD– to be determined to “Included”. P. Conley indicated that the Restoration Work on the light is done in accordance with the US Department of the Interior as required by the National Lighthouse Historic Preservation Act. Notation was added in Year 2015 for work done by the Town Engineering Department. Vice-Chair expressed concern that the figures shown are low. Chair S. Mann credits the sources from the Town’s Departments are accurate. S. Elworthy stated that we must be realistic that such a commitment is expensive and requires a lot of money.

2. Provide an Evaluation of Potential Maintenance Costs on an Annual Basis for The Penfield Reef Lighthouse.

This scope is included in the Five-Year Plan as itemized tasks.

3. Consideration of various fund-raising activities to provide funding for the light On an Annual Basis

Chair S. Mann discussed having an annual Festival of Light, such as the General Electric Holiday Light Parade on New Haven’s beach. L. Crowley recommended the boat rides offered by Bruce at Captain’s Cove for touring Long Island Sound and circling the light. Chair S. Mann reported that interested bidder Michael Hennenberry was unable to attend a meeting to personally speak with us, and is disappointed the light is not for personal use. Chair S. Mann will reply to interested bidder Arthur Lenius to advise him to do his due diligence in contacting the State regarding that the light is not available as a residence. S. Steeneck recommended partnering with the Norwalk Seaport Association during their Shoreline Oyster Festival. Chair S. Mann recommended a Lighthouse Walkathon.

## IV. Old Business

## C. Discussion on the status on the lighthouse bottomlands acquisition and contract requirements – per the Selectmen’s request

Via a telephone conference call, Town Attorney Eileen Kennelly reported her written and Phone conversation with State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Long Island Sound Supervising Coastal Planner David J. Blatt. With regard to the State of Connecticut Statute Public Act 09-04, it appears that the Lease is not tied to the ownership of the lighthouse, but to the purpose of “facilitating the preservation of the lighthouse”, and the interest of the State “in reasonable public access, preservation of historic structures, and education of the public regarding such structures,” all of which are the Town’s interest in the Penfield Reef Lighthouse. Since the lighthouse is in sight of Fairfield’s shoreline, the Town has a great interest in ensuring that the light is secure and preserved. The Town wants to have the ability to control the bottomlands and ideally own the light. E. Kennelly asked DEEP D. Blatt regarding the State’s willingness to consider a \$1 Per Year Lease (and later – acquisition of a Quit Claim Deed through further action of the State Legislature) with the Town of Fairfield. He agreed that the State Statute does not appear to be anything that would preclude such an arrangement to acquire the bottomlands and is willing to consider this. The State does not want the property to be used as a residence. The State is willing to Lease with the new owners to have the property taxes payable to the Town of Fairfield, and is open to further study. E. Kennelly opened the conversation to the committee for discussion and their concerns. Chair S. Mann asked for a Letter of Intent. S. Elworthy commented that it would be interesting to see how quickly the State moved. Chair S. Mann asked E. Kennelly about a Quit Claim Deed. E. Kennelly replied that she is working on this. J. Carpenter stated that the Quit Claim Deed includes the purchaser’s requirements. L. Crowley stated that it is important that the language of the document include offshore Light SECURITY. J. Carpenter asked about the Historic Preservation Rules. E. Kennelly replied that there is a brief outline. The committee thanked her for her time and effort in her research.

The committee was made aware that there is not enough time for a Quit Claim Deed and it cannot be acquired without RTM approval which meets on December 19<sup>th</sup> - past the December 12<sup>th</sup> GSA Auction Closing Date. Chair S. Mann asked J. Carpenter if the committee needs approval from the Board of Selectmen before proceeding to acquiring the bottomlands. J. Carpenter stated that the committee does need the Board of Selectmen approval at their December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to acquire the bottomlands by Lease. L. Crowley said that at this time, the Lease would be in lieu of a Quit Claim Deed due to the fact that the State Legislature does not convene within the required ninety days from the closing date of the purchase of Penfield Reef Light, allowing a later time for a deed in perpetuity. The GSA sends a copy of the executed Deed to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for preservation compliance with the new lighthouse owner’s information at the time of closing. S. Elworthy asked if the committee needs approval from the Board of Finance. The answer was not at this time.

S. Steeneck made a Motion that the Penfield Reef Preservation Lighthouse Committee wants the Town to proceed to acquire the bottomlands of Penfield Reef Light and obtain a Lease with the State in lieu of a Quit Claim Deed in order to secure them in perpetuity. S. Elworthy Seconded. Unanimous.

J. Carpenter made a Motion that should the other bidders back out of the GSA Auction, and, if the Penfield Reef Lighthouse Preservation Committee has sufficient funds to make a bid, the committee requests the Town to bid on the Penfield Reef Lighthouse. L. Crowley Seconded. 7 In Favor. 2 Opposed. Motion Passes.

V. New Business  
None

VI. Public Comment  
None

VII. Adjournment

S. Steeneck made a Motion to Adjourn. P. Conley Seconded. Unanimous.

The Meeting Adjourned at 6:06 PM. The next Meeting will be held in the Second Floor Conference Room, Sullivan Independence Hall, on Thursday, December 8, 2011 at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Cote Crowley  
Secretary