

**PENFIELD REEF LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, December 8, 2011**

**Sullivan Independence Hall**

**725 Old Post Road**

**Fairfield, CT 06824**

FINAL MINUTES

Members Present: Sandye Mann, Jennifer Carpenter, Pat Conley, Mary Jo Cornell,  
Deanna Hoffman, Sherri Steeneck, Paige Herman, Mike Jehle,  
Dr. Evan Tilley, Linda Cote Crowley

Members Absent: David Agonis, Vice-Chair Dave Peck, Steve Elworthy

Others Present: Town Attorney Eileen Kennelly

I. Call to Order

Chair S. Mann called the Meeting to Order at 4:09 PM in the Basement Conference Room, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Approval of the Minutes

M. Jehle made a Motion to Approve the November 30, 2011 PRLPC Minutes.

E. Tilley Seconded. Unanimous.

III. Correspondence and Communications

Chair S. Mann asked the committee for three reasons why the Town should own the bottomlands of the Penfield Reef Lighthouse. The Committee's response:

A. the Light is a tangible architectural treasure which is a symbol of Fairfield, and should be added to the Town's historic inventory,

B. the consistency of preservation of the Light may be grandfathered in perpetuity sharing an endless supply of volunteers and professional maintenance, and,

C. concern for the Safety and Security of the Light spanning the Fairfield Shoreline.

### III. Correspondence and Communications

Chair S. Mann said that DEEP David Blatt requires a formal letter from First Selectman Mike Tetreau for an official request for the Town to own the bottomlands of the Light.

J. Carpenter distributed E. Kennelly's draft "Bottomlands for Penfield Reef Lighthouse," received in the Office of the First Selectman on December 7, 2011, which states, "The bottomlands are the submerged land immediately below the foundation of the Penfield Reef Lighthouse. The bottomlands are owned by the State of Connecticut. By State Statute, the State may lease the bottomlands for the purpose of promoting the preservation of the Lighthouse. The Town of Fairfield, as a party with an interest in the preservation of the Lighthouse, may be included among those to whom the bottomlands could be leased. In fact, by obtaining a Revision of the Statute through the Legislature, the Town could become the Owner of the bottomlands, instead of the State.

Reasons why the Town wishes to control the bottomlands of the Light:

- \* Ability to Control lessee's actions through lease terms,
- \* Possible rental revenue/property tax, and the
- \* Ability to monitor lessee's performance of lease obligations."

E. Kennelly will forward this information to First Selectman Mike Tetreau, who will include it in a letter to DEEP D. Blatt.

E. Kennelly has prepared documentation for a lease first, and a deed later.

Chair S. Mann will call former lighthouse keeper CJ Sykes to discuss the period of time when Penfield Reef Light was equipped with holding tanks, cisterns, and structural hoists.

P. Herman asked J. Carpenter if the Board of Selectmen would be interested in receiving gratis ownership of the Light without financial input. J. Carpenter could not answer that. What is beneficial is to have on hand a draft copy of the lease as back-up information, and to go to the RTM Meeting and the BOF Meeting to discuss the bottomlands with them.

J. Carpenter asked E. Kennelly about the insurance requirements. E. Kennelly commented that extra insurance over what is in place may not be needed to acquire the bottomlands.

L. Crowley expressed concern over the Safety and Security of the Light on the Shoreline. For all time, the Federal Government watched our beaches from the Light in peace.

P. Conley commented that the BOS reasoned that if we did not have the money to acquire the light and someone else owned it, we can still look out and watch the Light - it's there to see without it being ours to own.

IV. Old Business

A. Discussion of GSA Auction Status

Chair S. Mann stated that the Soft Closing Date for the GSA Auction is Monday, December 12, 2011, at noon - unless extended by the bidding activity- which remains the same as of this date.

B. Discussion of the presentation of the December 7th Board of Selectmen Meeting  
The Request to Bid on the Light was not approved; we shall carry forward with bottomlands. Chair S. Mann reported that the presentation was in need of a Five-Year Revenues Plan, and Town Architect Jim Girardi provided the National Requirements for the lighthouse upkeep. S. Steeneck stated that the Board of Selectmen did not feel any reason why someone else could not own the light, since the Town is not prepared to give any money toward it. M. Jehle suggested that the committee wait until the successful bidder is known and reserve our resources, combined with additional funding toward meeting our goals of preserving the Light.

Chair S. Mann recommended that the committee wait until the outcome of the auction in order to reassess the nature of the committee's activities with the new party, toward resolution of the status quo.

V. New Business

None

VI. Public Comment

None

VII. Adjournment

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

The Meeting Adjourned at 5:10 PM. The next Meeting will be held in the Second Floor Conference Room, Sullivan Independence Hall, Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Cote Crowley  
Secretary