

Minutes
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday, August 11, 2026 at 7:00 PM
REMOTE ACCESS ONLY

Members Present: Eric Gilbertson (Chair), Robert McCullough (Vice Chair), Paul Carnahan, Yana Walder.

Absent: Bryan Jones & Linden Chozinska

Guests attending: Sebastian Delgado, David Schutz, Shawn Brennan, Agatha Kessler, and Patricia Harper.

Staff: Meredith Crandall.

1. Call to Order. 7:04

2. Public Comments: None

3. Approval of the Agenda. Approved unanimously.

4. Review of Vermont State House Entryway Addition. David Schutz, Shawn Brennan and Agatha Kessler presented plans for the new State House addition, explaining the programmatic requirements and solutions for those objectives. Discussion focused primarily on the entrance addition, aided by good schematic drawings of numerous options for the entrance that the committee had considered. That entrance is intended to be the principal focal point for public entry to the building during the legislative session and must meet accessibility requirements as well as satisfy security concerns.

Committee comments centered on issues of whether the entrance should convey a sense monumentality; the absence of a clearly defined entrance door; the sense of power inherent in the building's granite facades and the difficulty of attaining a similar sense of power in walls of glass; and the applicability of the 9th standard used in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which specifies:

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Committee comments focused on the difficulty of applying that standard in certain settings where a dramatic differentiation from the old building creates an incompatibility. In such circumstances, clarity about the period of the new addition can be established in a subtle manner. Yana Walder also noted that the glass façade shown in the most recent drawing may have some practical problems related to temperature control and security.

The State House committee observed that the design process is continuing, and they are still in the stage of soliciting comments. The commission noted that the schematic drawings were helpful in showing that the architects had explored numerous alternatives for the entrance design,

and the commission also commended the architect for a design that resolves the many competing programmatic requirements in a very competent manner.

5. Montpelier Dam Removals: Sec. 106 Review. The commission discussed the pending removal of the Pioneer Street Dam, the Bailey Mill Dam, and the Trestle Dam. The Bailey Mill Dam is within Montpelier's Downtown Historic District, and the Pioneer Street Dam is eligible for the National Register. Demolition of the Pioneer Street dam will have an adverse effect on an historic structure for purposes of Section 106, although the removal of the Bailey dam may not have an adverse effect on the historic district itself, subject to further review of the dam as an archeological resource. Ultimately, the city will prepare a Section 106 letter for the two projects.

Discussion focused on ways to mitigate that adverse effect, including salvaging visible traces of the dam structures or wing-walls if possible and interpretive exhibits. In particular, the Bailey dam played an important role in the industrial history of Montpelier, and it is important to preserve visible remnants of that dam.

The commission also acknowledged the value of the archeological report for the Pioneer Street dam, and Paul Carnahan will continue to review that report with an eye toward determining proper mitigation for its loss.

6. The commission briefly discussed the DRB decision allowing demolition of 144 Elm Street. Meredith will provide copies of the decision in its final form.

6. The commission briefly discussed a pending National Register Nomination for 9 Heaton Street, which will be rehabilitated using the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit. VDHP will send the commission an official notice and the essential forms, and the commission will then review the nomination, address the matter of eligibility, and then forward the nomination to VDHP. The nomination will then be reviewed by the Vermont Advisory Council and forwarded to NPS, assuming concurrence on eligibility by all parties. The nomination will be prepared by a consultant working for the new owner.

8. Meeting Minutes for 06/09/2026 & 07/08/2026 were approved unanimously.

9. Other Business: Meredith has potential conflicts for the normal September meeting, and commission members will be notified when a manageable date has been identified.

10. Adjournment: 8:46 P.M.