

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting held on June 23, 2005 at the Department of Land Use and Growth Management

Members Present: Peter Himmelheber, Chairman
Harold Willard, Vice-Chairman
Robert Gibbs, Member
Mary Hayden, Member
Margaret McCoy Padukiewicz, Member
Jack Williamson, Member
Teresa Wilson, LUGM Staff

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the April 28, 2005 meeting were approved.

Renovators Round Table Videos:

The HPC discussed how to use the newly purchased Renovators Roundtable Videos. Some of the ideas the members developed were:

- 1) Find out about copyright issues and explore presenting them on Channel 12.
- 2) Checking on copyright issues, make them into DVDs that can be presented without the use of a VCR: a go anywhere presentation format.
- 3) Present the videos as part of a class at the Tech Center to stimulate interest in the preservation trades.
- 4) Partner with the public libraries and offer the videos as a "This Old House" series.
- 5) Notify the Chamber of Commerce that the videos and preservation planner are available for their speakers' program.

Report on Baltimore Conference

Maryland's Annual Preservation and Restoration Conference was held in conjunction with the National Main Street Conference.

Robb Gibbs reported that the sessions he attended:

- 1) were either very broad such as renovation of an entire historic district in Baltimore or very narrowly focused such as the session on Olmsted-designed parks in Baltimore.
- 2) He also mentioned that there were many vendors selling "historic" street furniture such as 1890s style clocks. Mr. Willard remarked that the offerings were "the newest old stuff you've ever seen."

Mr. Willard reported the following highlights of the conference for him:

1) He spoke to a vendor whose display was of tapestries, table runners and blankets with historic sites on them which groups use for fundraising. He mentioned that St. Mary's was cooperating with nearby counties to save tobacco barns. She gave him a table runner with historic barns of Ohio, which was produced for their bicentennial to take with him. Mr. Willard has her card and company information for future reference.

2) He attended a session by the Maryland Highway Department that addressed their new road standards for preserving the viewscape along state highways. Their graphics illustrated mature trees along roadways with power lines threading through them. Mr. Willard mentioned to the presenters that the reality on the ground is different. A tree on his property which extended over

power lines was cut in half. SHA representatives took notes on his remarks. Maybe SHA needs to consult with power companies across the state before publishing the new standards??

- 3) He attended the three hour bricks and mortar session which was presented by Jimmy Price and his son, who are working on the Chapel in St. Mary's City. The presentation provided excellent information about how historic masons work.

Mr. Himmelheber commented that the HPC may want to inquire if they could convene a regular meeting in St. Mary's City and request a short tour of the Chapel project from Mr. Price

Ms. Wilson reported she attended the following sessions at the conference:

- 1) Preservation Trades Education: Building Craftsmanship, Building Community
- 2) Substitute Materials: What Works and What Doesn't
- 3) Updates from the Field: report on Survey work in Charles and Howard Counties.
- 4) Restoring Cultural Memory through Slavery.

Certified Local Government Grant

Ms. Wilson reported that the County has received a Certified Local Government Grant for FY 2006 for a Scenic and Historic Roads Survey. The contract from MHT is being written, and after all parties have signed, the effort to find a surveyor can begin. The grant will be a wonderful opportunity for St. Mary's to document its historic roads and scenic vistas, as well as develop more tools for protecting them.

Report on Lexington Manor

Ms. Wilson reported that she attended a meeting with Robin Finnacom, Phil Rollins, Debra Pence, Carolyn Laray and Kathy Bailey to discuss the status of preservation work in Lexington Manor. Progress so far:

- 1) Photographic documentation and inventory of the entire site is complete.
- 2) Plans are underway to secure the two flattops set aside for preservation.
- 3) Bids will be going out to find a surveyor/oral historian who can interview past and present residents to compile an oral history of the community.

Mr. Himmelheber reminded the HPC that he lived there as a boy and knows a number of former residents who should be interviewed. Ms. Wilson said that a list should be compiled and sent to Ms. Finnacom.

Items from the Floor

Ms. Wilson briefly updated the HPC about several items:

- 1) Kirk Ranzetta, former historic sites surveyor for St. Mary's, sent a list of historic sites—highlighting those he has chosen to remove from Goin' Down the County: An Architectural Journey through St. Mary's County because budget constraints prohibit the publication of all 890. He is seeking input from the HPC on his choices.

Mr. Gibbs suggested that Kirk send the proposed deleted sites from his database electronically. Ms. Wilson said she would ask him to do so.

- 2) The application for Last Chance Scenic Places was mailed to Scenic Maryland June 15th. Originally, the application was supposed to be a three county effort including Calvert and Charles Counties, but the planners there withdrew at the

eleventh hour citing lack of time to assemble information and to obtain permission from supervisors, so in the end the application was submitted for St. Mary's County only.

- 3) MHT's architectural historians Marcia Miller and Tom Reinhart will meet with the Unified Committee for African American Contributions and the HPC and staff on July 25 at the St. Ingioes African American School to assess the condition of the building. They will also visit the Drayden School to advise on ways the UCAC and the Museum Division can enhance the interpretation of that site.
- 4) The Department of Public Works and Transportation will be handling the ordering and placement of Preserve America Community signs. Signs will be placed on the major roads entering the county and at the new Visitor Center in Charlotte Hall.
- 5) The State Highway Administration has not yet informed St. Mary's and Charles Counties about the status of their grant application because the federal government has not yet disbursed the funds to the states.
- 6) Taylor Gregg, a former photographer for the National Geographic, contacted Ms. Wilson to find out if the HPC had any interest in producing a photographic book of St. Mary's County Tobacco Barns in cooperation with him and his students.
- 7) Mr. Himmelheber asked Ms. Wilson if she had received two letters about cell Towers that had been forwarded by the Historical Society. Ms. Wilson replied that she had. She noted that Land Use and Growth Management employs a contractor who reviews all tower applications; however, since these towers are already in place, she was not sure why the letters were written at all. One was actually misdirected and should have gone to Calvert County. Ms. Wilson took the letters to Ms. Yvonne Chaillet, who works with the Board of Appeals. She will make contact with the company to determine why the letters were sent. Ms. Wilson and Ms. Chaillet suspect that changes in the Federal 106 review regulations may be the reason.
- 8) Mr. Himmelheber informed the HPC that in a recent trip to the Maryland Hall of Records he had located a ledger that contained a list of all the early roads in St. Mary's County. There were no maps unfortunately, but the destination of the roads was noted—usually to a mill. Ms. Wilson noted that Mr. Himmelheber's discovery will be useful to the surveyor who will be creating a historic context for roads as part of the roads survey.
- 9) Ms. Wilson updated the HPC demolition of the Beavan's House and Store in Callaway. Mr. Knott, whose company demolished the store with out a permit, has decided to take the county to court rather than pay the fine. More public education is needed to inform the public and building contractors that demolition permits must be obtained before removal of primary structures.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Signed by: _____