

**Harford County Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Meeting Summary: Wednesday March 3, 2021**

Members Present: Carol Deibel (Chair)  
Dan Coates (Co-Chair)  
Jackie Seneschal  
Eric Polk  
Christina Presberry  
Phil McCall

Members Absent: Iris Barnes

Staff: Jacob Bensen  
Joel Gallihue  
Brittany Long

Public: Elizabeth Janney  
Laura Bianca-Pruett

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**Call to Order**

The regular monthly meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 7:05 PM.

**Welcome**

Ms. Deibel welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Review and Approval**

February 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes

There were no suggestions for corrections or amendments. Ms. Presberry moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Polk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

2021 Historic Preservation Awards

Mr. Bensen began the discussion by presenting the nomination for the Preservation Project Award first. The nominated project was the Archeological Survey of Colonial Joppa, a collaborative effort in preparation of heritage displays, presentations, and other activities associated with the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Harford County and the American Revolution. The project began in July 2020 and was completed in October 2020, consisting of a site survey, topographical mapping of site and establishing permanent survey control points, flotation-separation analysis of selected soil samples, the use of a flux-gate gradiometer and ground penetrating radar to identify buried cultural features, and the cataloging of both newly identified and previously identified artifacts. The project team consisted eight principal

participants, representing the Church of the Resurrection, Copley Parish, the University of Maryland, the Archeological Society of the Northern Chesapeake, Stephens Environmental, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, and the Maryland Historical Trust. Of special note was the role played by Mr. James Rice, the Warden of Copley Parish, who served as collections custodian and liaison, oversaw care of the public display of artifacts, and is the organizer of the annual Copley Parish Heritage Festival.

Ms. Deibel praised the project for its interesting work, noting that the HPC had been following its progress throughout 2020. Ms. Seneschal noted that Joppatowne, the modern community surrounding the Joppa Historic District is itself now 50 years old and should be considered for future study. Mr. McCall moved to present the Preservation Project Award to the Archeological Survey of Colonial Joppa due to its worthy scholarship and research. Ms. Seneschal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bensen then presented the nomination for Preservationist Honor Award. Mr. Richard Sherrill was nominated for this award for his leadership in heritage organizations, including the Harford County Historic Preservation Commission, Historical Society of Harford County, and Bel Air American History Club. Mr. Sherrill was also nominated for his 25-year career as a history educator with the Harford County Public Schools. Mr. Sherrill was previously named a Harford County Living Treasure in 2010. His area of expertise was noted as being the history of the Lower Susquehanna River – Deer Creek Valley area, about which he has written a journal article for the *Harford Historical Bulletin* and designed informational signs for the Lower Susquehanna Greenway Trail.

Ms. Seneschal agreed that Mr. Sherrill's nomination was well deserved. Ms. Seneschal moved to present the Preservationist Honor Award to Mr. Sherrill for the reasons noted in the nomination. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bensen then opened the discussion of the Preservation Stewardship Award by reminding the HPC of the purpose and evaluation criteria of the award. He also noted that the most recent Preservation Stewardship Award was presented to The Liriodendron Foundation, Inc. in 2019.

Ms. Seneschal suggested the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation for their stewardship of Tudor Hall, Mount Soma Barn, and a variety of properties that they report to the HPC on annually. Mr. Gallihue asked that the potential conflict of interest with Ms. Seneschal's nomination be discussed. Ms. Seneschal explained that she is related to the individual at Parks and Recreation who oversees capital projects. Mr. Gallihue asked if Ms. Seneschal had any contracts with Parks and Recreation. She confirmed that she did not. She also stated that she would abstain from the vote on her nomination to avoid any appearance of bias. Ms. Deibel asked for additional comments, but received none. She then addressed Mr. McCall directly, but he could not be contacted. The discussion was paused until Mr. McCall rejoined the meeting.

Mr. Bensen then led a discussion of the logistics of the meeting. It was agreed that an in-person meeting would likely not be possible for 2021. Ms. Seneschal asked about the possibility of combining the awards ceremony with another County event, either outside or as a part of a County Council meeting. Mr. McCall

rejoined the meeting at this time. There was general agreement with Ms. Seneschal's suggestion. Mr. Bensen agreed to investigate and report back to the HPC.

Mr. McCall requested that the Stewardship Award nomination be revisited. Mr. McCall noted that the Department of Parks & Recreation is also working on the stabilization of the farmstead at Emily Bayless Graham Park. Ms. Deibel agreed. Mr. McCall moved to present the Preservation Stewardship Award to the Department of Parks and Recreation for their stewardship of multiple County-owned historic properties. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion. The motion passed with five votes in favor. Ms. Seneschal abstained from voting.

#### Archeology Update

Mr. Coates reported that Old Joppa work is completed. He is also still in discussion with Mr. Mark Gallihue, regarding the Old Baltimore site. He also reported that, thanks to their experience working at Old Joppa, MHT will be sending a team to Marshy Point in Baltimore County to perform non-invasive testing.

#### **New Business**

##### FFY 2021 HPC Required Training

Mr. Bensen started the discussion with a reminder that all HPC members must complete one MHT-approved training for FFY 2021 by September 30, 2021 as part of the County's CLG designation. The HPC discussed how to best accomplish this requirement and decided to investigate a group training course from the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (MAHDC). Discussion then continued on which topic to pursue and it was decided that the HPC would request a foundational course. Mr. Bensen agreed to investigate scheduling a training session with MAHDC.

#### **Other Business**

##### Harford County Historic Properties/Landmarks

Mr. Bensen informed the HPC that Director Jarkowski had submitted a briefing memo on the situation to the Administration on February 19<sup>th</sup> and that staff was awaiting guidance. He also informed them that, due to the need to address a submitted COA Application, permission was given to contact the owner of the Old Aberdeen High School (HA-1780) regarding its Landmark status. Mr. Bensen reported that the owner declined to re-designate the property at this time, but is open to returning to the issue at a later date.

#### **Administrative Business**

##### Design Guidelines CLG Grant Status Update

Mr. Bensen informed the Commission that the sub-committee and staff met with the consultant on February 25<sup>th</sup> and that the draft Guidelines had been revised per the sub-committee and staff's comments. The full text draft and proposed layout were then discussed by the HPC. HPC member comments were collected and Mr. Bensen will submit to the consultant. A revised draft is expected on March 10<sup>th</sup>, with an anticipated public release date of March 17<sup>th</sup>. The public meeting is scheduled to occur during the April 7<sup>th</sup> HPC meeting.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Polk informed the HPC of the discovery of intact historic fabric beneath the false stone on the façade of the John Bailey House (HA-923), a County Landmark. The diamond-shaped shingles and two missing window openings were found to be intact and in good condition. A photograph of the work on the façade was shown. The HPC had previously approved re-producing these features, but they will now be restored.

There were no additional comments from the attendees.

**Adjourn**

Mr. Polk moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Seneschal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 8:25 PM.