

Harford County Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Summary: Wednesday August 3, 2022
Hybrid Meeting

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

Members Absent: Dr. Iris Barnes

Staff: Jacob Bensen
Joel Gallihue
Stephanie Soder

Presenters: R. Matthew Miller, PE, Harford County Department of Public Works

Public: Laura Bianca-Pruett
Jean Johnson

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was called to order at 7:02 PM.

Welcome and Introductions – 7:02 PM

Ms. Deibel welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested that Commissioners introduce themselves for the benefit of the public and presenters.

Approval of Minutes – 7:04 PM

Ms. Deibel opened the floor to anyone with comments on the July 2022 minutes. There were no questions or comment.

Ms. Deibel requested a motion. Mr. Polk made a motion to approve the July 2022 minutes. Mr. Coates seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business – 7:05 PM

Pre-COA Discussion: Cherry Hill Road Bridge (HA-1251) Repairs

Mr. Bensen introduced Mr. Miller, a Civil Engineer with the Harford County Department of Public Works. Mr. Miller presented to the HPC members that there was damage to the north portal braces and sign on the Cherry Hill Bridge and that a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) was required for in-kind repairs with alternative materials.

Mr. Coates recommended that the replacement sign be recast in iron to match the original. He also recommended that the damaged wrought iron be donated to wrought iron shops for recycling and reuse. Mr. McCall asked if the rivets would be redone the same way. Mr. Miller clarified that due to safety and cost concerns, the rivets would be replaced with nuts and bolts. Mr. Coates asked why the Historical Society of Harford County had declined to accept the broken sign for their collection. Mr. Bensen noted that the Baltimore Museum of Industry had also declined the sign, but that Maryland State Parks and the 4-H Camp near the bridge were contacted to see if they wanted to take the sign. Mr. McCall asked if there was space next to the bridge for interpretation with the broken sign. There were no further questions.

Buffer Review: PPLAN-000316-2022 (1825 Baldwin Mill Road)

Mr. Bensen presented the preliminary plans for a residential building planned for within 500-feet of the Old Brick Baptist Church (HA-66). According to the Zoning code, the HPC must make a buffer recommendation when Harford County Historic Landmarks are within 500-feet of a proposed use. Mr. Coates noted that there are other buffers around the church that are not very effective and that there is a busy road right next to it. Ms. Seneschal recommended that a buffer be placed along the driveway of the new residence. Mr. McCall noted that a buffer along the driveway may obscure the view of drivers coming out of the road adjacent to the property. Mr. Polk expressed similar concerns. Ms. Deibel clarified that the HPC is to recommend the size of the buffer and where it could be placed. Mr. Coates recommended that the buffer be recommended in front of the house on either side of the driveway, not as a line along the driveway but perpendicular to it.

Ms. Deibel requested a motion. Ms. Seneschal made a motion to recommend a buffer of appropriate landscaping of approximately 60 feet to the west and east of the proposed driveway, following the north line of the proposed new parcel. A width was not specified, but for safety the sight lines for vehicles entering and exiting Baldwin Mill Road must be maintained. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ongoing Business – 7:49 PM

African American Heritage Grant Program

Ms. Soder announced that the Harford County African American Heritage Grant application period had closed the previous week and that 11 applications totaling \$1.9 million in funding was requested. The applications would be discussed for funding at the next meeting.

Ms. Seneschal requested clarification on the recusal process. Ms. Soder stated that based on the conflict-of-interest training that the Commission had completed, Commissioners that were involved with any of the applicant organizations would be asked to leave the room for the discussion and vote for those specific applications but could vote and discuss for the other applications. Ms. Deibel and Ms. Seneschal expressed concerns about the public optics of not having recusals for the entire discussion and review.

There were no further questions or comments.

StoryMaps Discussion with Mr. Joel Gallihue, Chief of Long-Range Planning

Mr. Bensen introduced Mr. Joel Gallihue, the Chief of Long-Range Planning. Mr. Gallihue introduced the discussion on StoryMaps, described their use as a planning tool, and the Harford County Master Plan HarfordNext, which advocates for establishing an archeology component to the development review process and expanding outreach.

Ms. Seneschal requested clarification of the purpose or goals of the Archeology StoryMap. She then recommended that the archeological sites be listed chronologically to better tell a story within the map. Mr. Coates expressed concerns that the prehistoric sites chosen do not include their context beyond Harford County when there are good examples of prehistoric sites in the county that would not need that context added. Ms. Soder stated that all sites were chosen because they either had protective designations or their locations were already known to the public to minimize risk of looting or destruction. Ms. Deibel and Ms. Seneschal expressed concerns against taking the prehistoric sites off the list. Mr. McCall recommended the inclusion of a purpose statement at the beginning of the StoryMap to note the regional importance of these sites, as well as local importance. Mr. Gallihue recommended a bibliography at the end of the StoryMap to include links to more resources.

Ms. Deibel reminded the Commission that the allotted meeting time was approaching the end. Ms. Seneschal recommended that staff continue working on the StoryMap and that changes or additions could be made later since it is a living document. There were no further questions or comments.

Archeological Update

Mr. Coates asked if the Historic Preservation staff had received the Certificate of Appropriateness draft for the Old Joppa archeological work. Ms. Soder confirmed that staff did receive it but had not started consultation with the applicant yet.

Ms. Soder announced that the Preservation Maryland and the Campaign for Historic Trades was holding a Cemetery Preservation Workshop in Havre de Grace on August 19th from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Historic preservation staff would be there and encouraged HPC members to attend and pass along the information to interested parties. Mr. Coates stated that he had completed this training before and found it very helpful.

There were no further questions or comments.

Harford Heritage Committee Update

Ms. Seneschal provided updates to the Harford 250 celebration. The informational booth for Harford 250 made its debut at the Harford County Farm Fair. Mr. Coates offered to set up and run the booth at the Resurrection Fall Fair on October 22. A public outreach effort is being made for the theme of the public art piece. Dates are in the process of being finalized for the second and final events.

There were no further questions or comments.

Harford County Historic Preservation Survey App Update

Ms. Soder described the updated statistics of properties surveyed and completed. She stated that she expects to be able to meet the 20% threshold by the end of the year as part of the survey plan.

Ms. Deibel asked if there were any surprises so far in the survey effort. Ms. Soder stated that it seems many buildings were moved in the 1980s, which seemed surprising. There were no further questions or comments.

Administrative Business – 8:52 PM

There was no administrative business to discuss at this meeting.

Public Comment – 8:52 PM

There were no public comments.

Adjourn

Ms. Deibel called for a motion. Ms. Seneschal moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Polk. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 8:54 PM.