

**Harford County Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Meeting Summary: Wednesday August 5, 2020**

Members Present: Carol Deibel (Chair)  
Dan Coates (Co-Chair)  
Phil McCall  
Iris Barnes (Joined at vote for Minutes Approval)  
Jackie Seneschal  
Eric Polk  
Christina Presberry

Members Absent: None

Staff: Jacob Bensen

Public: None

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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**

July 1, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bensen read comments that had been submitted by Dr. Barnes, requesting the correction of two spelling errors and a change of phrasing, Mr. Bensen agreed to make these corrections; Mr. Coates noted that a statement he had made in a previous meeting was incorrect, and that the potential industrial resource he had described is in Pennsylvania, not Maryland. Ms. Presberry moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. McCall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

Joppa Archeological Dig

Mr. Bensen reported on the status of the UMD Field School archeology dig at Joppa. Mr. Bensen described the site visit in early July that he had taken with Mr. Coates and the public archeology discussion that was had with Mr. Jim Gibbs of the Smithsonian Institution, Professor Adam Fracchia of UMD, and Mr. Jim Rice of the Church of the Resurrection, Copley Parish. Mr. Coates informed the HPC that he had made two additional site visits, and that the finds included a trash pit and the remnants of a modern building or structure.

## **New Business**

### Archeology Standards and Archeology Review

1. Mr. Bensen informed the HPC that he had held an informational interview with Ms. Nell Ziehl and Dr. Charlie Hall of the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). MHT informed Mr. Bensen of the state's requirements for archeological review by local governments. MHT recommended the hiring of an on-call archeologist to assist in the development of archeology review standards and assist HPC with reviews. Charles County, Annapolis, and Frederick City were offered as examples. Ms. Seneschal noted that Charles County has an on-call archeology contract.
2. Mr. Coates questioned whether it was worth pursuing archeology review at this time. Mr. Coates noted that Mr. Jim Gibbs was likely involved in the creation of the standards in Charles County.
3. Ms. Deibel suggested that the first step would be staff discussion with administration as to whether Harford County would support the hiring of an archeologist. Mr. Bensen reminded the HPC that Archeology Review is a goal in HarfordNext. Ms. Deibel suggested further discussion with staff and investigation of Certified Local Government (CLG) grants for funding.
4. Mr. Coates questioned what the benefit of pursuing an on-call archeologist at this time. He noted that development must already meet MHT standards for identified archeological sites in Harford County and explained his experience in assisting Dr. Hall with such reviews in Harford County.
5. Ms. Seneschal asked Mr. Bensen to contact Charles County and ask for details on their program, such as the cost of their on-call archeologist.
6. Ms. Deibel agreed that this idea requires further exploration.

## **Other Business**

### Design Guidelines Project

Mr. Bensen updated the Commission on the current status of the Design Guidelines project. Harford County Procurement has reviewed the draft RFP and suggested an alternative process of reaching out to architecture firms with which Harford County already has a relationship. Ms. Deibel cautioned that MHT has high standards for preservation contractors and recommended that staff reach out to MHT before selecting a contractor. Mr. Bensen agreed to do so and noted that the County plans to select a contractor in early September.

### Potential County Landmarks

1. Mr. Bensen presented the Commission with two potential landmarks that he has identified: Medical Hall (HA-0003) and Scott's Old Fields (HA-1046). Ms. Deibel stated that she agreed with both and recommended prioritizing Scott's Old Fields due to deterioration of the building and a restoration project in planning there. Ms. Deibel recommended that staff contact the owner and inform them of benefits of Landmark status.

2. Ms. Seneschal suggested the Edward M. Allen House (HA-319) due to its association with the Women's Suffrage Movement, noting that the property's owners have recently become aware that the property was a stop on the Prairie Schooner Tour of Maryland women's suffrage supporters. She also noted that Erika with the City of Havre de Grace has spoken with the owners recently and that a plaque for the Schooner Tour is to be installed.
3. Dr. Barnes suggested the Mill Green Mill (HA-0093) for its association with the Supreme Court Case of *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*, noting that it is on the NPS Network to Freedom. Dr. Barnes also suggested locating sites associated with Herman Stump and his association with immigration issues/Chinese Exclusion Act. Dr. Barnes also suggested the Hays-Heighe House (HA-0152) and was reminded that it is already a County Landmark.
4. Ms. Deibel reminded the Commission of the discussion with Mr. Magness of Harford County Parks and Recreation regarding Tudor Hall (HA0-0117) as a landmark.
5. Mr. McCall suggested Sion Hill (HA-525) for its association with the War of 1812 and the founding of the US Navy through the Rodgers family. Mr. McCall noted that it had recently been put up for sale by the current owner, but the listing was removed. He suggested that the financial benefits of Landmark Status may convince the owner to keep the building.
6. Mr. McCall re-visited the topic of Scott's Old Fields, noting that he observed the building while attending to personal matters at Bel Air Memorial Gardens. Staff at the cemetery informed Mr. McCall of minor damage caused during repainting of part of the building; Mr. McCall also observed a partial collapse of the roof of a rear wing. He also noted that the stone outbuilding was potentially a dwelling for enslaved persons.
7. Ms. Deibel reminded the Commission of a state Housing and Community Development grant awarded to the owner of Scott's Old Fields, to be administered through the Historical Society of Harford County (HSHC), but noted that no work had been completed; she also noted that more funding for restoration may be available through federal programs if the property is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
8. Ms. Seneschal and Ms. Deibel noted that there is a discrepancy in existing MHT records regarding St. James AME Church. Dr. Barnes noted that there are two St. James churches, one in Havre de Grace and one on Gravel Hill Road. Mr. Bensen will investigate.
9. Ms. Deibel noted that the Broadway Survey District in Bel Air was established as part of a streetscape improvement project, but did not know the status of the survey. She also informed Mr. Bensen that some HPC records had been transferred to the HSHC and additional data may be available there.

#### National Association of Preservation Commissions Forum 2020

Ms. Deibel noted her enjoyment of the conference and informed the Commission that she will create a synopsis of the event that she will distribute to the Commissioners.

#### **Public Comments**

Mr. Bensen read comments from Mr. Rick Herbig of the Friends of the Aberdeen Railroad Station, informing the Commission of status of the restoration project there. Mr. Herbig's comments noted that an MHT grant had been awarded for repairs to the roof and that the Friends are awaiting final drawings

from their architect and engineer. They anticipate that the project will be ready for MHT review by the end of August.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Seneschal moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 8:17 PM.