

**Harford County Historic Preservation Commission  
Meeting Summary: Wednesday September 7, 2022  
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Carol Deibel (Chair) - Virtual  
Dan Coates (Co-Chair)  
Phil McCall  
Christina Presberry  
Eric Polk  
Dr. Iris Barnes - Virtual

Members Absent: Jackie Seneschal

Staff: Jacob Bensen  
Stephanie Soder

Presenters: R. Matthew Miller, PE, Harford County Department of Public Works  
Dr. James J. Gibb, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center

Public: Laura Bianca-Pruett

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**Call to Order**

The regular monthly meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was called to order at 7:07 PM.

**Welcome and Introductions – 7:08 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 – 7:09 PM**

Ms. Soder announced that after a review of Robert’s Rules of Order, the staff was reorganizing the meeting minutes to focus on discussion points and action points. She welcomed the Commissioners’ comments on the current and future meeting minutes to make sure that important points were still being adequately noted.

Ms. Deibel then opened the floor to anyone with comments on the August 2022 minutes. Mr. Coates requested that the staff change “wrought” to “cast” iron when discussing the Cherry Hill Bridge placard.

He also requested that the minutes reflect that he offered to set up the Harford 250 Booth at the Resurrection Fall Fair, and that he had taken the cemetery preservation training that Ms. Soder had announced would be taking place.

There were no further questions or comments.

Ms. Deibel requested a motion. Mr. Polk made a motion to approve the August 2022 minutes with the amendments requested by Mr. Coates. Mr. McCall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **New Business – 7:13 PM**

#### COA-2022-04: Cherry Hill Road Bridge (HA-1251) Repairs

Mr. Bensen presented the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application for the Cherry Hill Road Bridge. The applicant, Harford County Department of Public Works, was being represented by Mr. R. Matthew Miller. A storm caused a tree to fall, damaging the north portal and placard on the bridge. A COA is required for replacement of damaged elements with alternative materials and the in-kind replacement of the damaged placard. After the Pre-COA discussion last month, the applicant has arranged for the broken placard to be duplicated in cast iron using the intact placard on the opposite side of the bridge. The broken placard will be donated to Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Rocks State Park for interpretation.

The staff recommended approval for this undertaking. The undertaking meets Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation #6 and Harford County Historic Preservation Design Guidelines (Chapter 8, Section B) by repairing historic materials and when repair is not possible, replacing the damaged elements with modern materials that will match the existing in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.

There were no questions or comments from the Commissioners or applicant. Ms. Deibel requested a motion. Ms. Presberry made a motion to approve the COA based on the staff recommendations, as presented in the staff report. Mr. McCall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### COA-2022-05: Old Joppa Historic District (HA-1315) Archeological Investigations

Ms. Soder presented the COA application for the Old Joppa Historic District. The applicant, Dr. James J. Gibb, was present. Dr. Gibb proposes up to ten 5- by 5-foot test excavations that will be strategically placed within the boundaries of the posts and chain perimeter of the historic church site at the Old Joppa Historic District. All artifacts will be bagged by provenience in archival quality materials and be catalogued. The church would like to convey a deed of gift for the artifacts to be sent to the Historical Society of Harford County. A final report and updated site forms will be submitted by Spring 2023. The report will comply with the *Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Investigations in Maryland*.

The staff recommended approval of this undertaking, with the following conditions:

1. If grave shafts are suspected or confirmed, thick plastic or geotextile (preferred) should be placed over and a tag/number assigned to each one prior to reburial with screened soils.
2. A second repository option must be identified in the case that the Historical Society cannot accept the artifacts. The artifacts from the 2022 archeological work must be accepted by the same repository as the artifacts from the 2020-2021 work.
3. The report must include information from the 2020 and 2021 University of Maryland work as it pertains to this project, as Historic Preservation staff has not received any analysis from those projects.

The undertaking meets SOI Standards for Rehabilitation #8 and the *Harford County Historic Preservation Design Guidelines* (Chapter 8, Section D). All work will be completed or monitored by a professional archeologist and any resources recovered will be protected and preserved.

Mr. Coates asked if the applicant should use the metric system to measure, as the previous investigations used that method. Mr. Gibb stated that he could, but that he had originally chosen Imperial system due to the public outreach aspect of the survey. Mr. Coates also noted that a datum point is located at the corner of the church from when work was done in the 2020.

There were no further questions or comments from the Commissioners or applicant. Ms. Deibel requested a motion. Mr. Coates made a motion to approve the COA with conditions based on the staff recommendations, as presented in the staff report. Mr. Polk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Old Business – 7:27 PM**

#### African American Heritage Grant Program

Ms. Deibel introduced the discussion on the funding recommendations for the African American Heritage grant. Ms. Deibel requested that anyone wishing to recuse themselves from this discussion either exit the room or turn off their cameras and microphones for the duration of the discussion. Ms. Deibel and Dr. Iris Barnes recused themselves from the discussion. Mr. Coates, Ms. Presberry, Mr. McCall, and Mr. Polk remained for the discussion.

Ms. Soder and Mr. Bensen introduced and summarized the staff recommendations. Mr. Coates, as Co-Chair, asked if there were any questions regarding the staff recommendations. There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Coates asked for clarification on how the motions would proceed, which Mr. Bensen explained. Mr. Coates then asked for a motion. Mr. McCall moved to approve the staff recommendations for funding. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion.

Mr. Coates shared his thoughts and concerns on the applications. He asked Ms. Soder and Mr. Bensen why they had recommended approval for St. James' well replacement but not the Hosanna Community House's septic system/bathroom expansion. Ms. Soder stated that the Hosanna Community House had elected to complete that project along with the bathroom expansion, which was not eligible since it was new construction. Mr. Coates also stated concerns that the McComas Village cemetery preservation strategy may need to be altered if only partial funding was committed. Ms. Soder stated that the cemetery had landscape issues and that it may be prudent to fix those issues before addressing the gravestones so that the land was stabilized. Mr. McCall concurred and observed that the report notes erosion and run-off issues. Mr. Coates also cited concerns over a "For Sale" sign on or near the property border of 411 Edmund Street (applicant Ms. Janice Grant). Mr. Polk checked a Multiple Listing Service for Real Estate and noted that the parcel next to the 411 Edmund Street property is for sale, also currently owned by the Grant family.

Mr. Polk shared concerns about the Commission voting to approve an application that included a direct financial benefit to an active Commissioner. He specifically cited the Woodview application, where Dr. Barnes would receive a consultant fee. Mr. Coates and Ms. Presberry agreed. Mr. McCall noted that there is a difference between this application and the other applications where she is listed as an employee but does not receive a direct financial benefit, listing her salary as "in-kind" money. Mr. Coates noted that the overall cost for the Woodview project is low and that it is already a Landmark, however, the public benefit element is limited to recording research and one public open house. Mr. Bensen reminded the Commissioners that they can make a motion to amend the staff recommendations or reject them altogether.

Mr. Coates asked if there was a motion. Mr. Polk moved to approve the staff recommendations for funding, with an amendment that any direct financial benefit to Commissioners be removed. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion.

Mr. Bensen asked what the Commissioners believed should happen with the funds that were originally allocated for the Woodview consultant fee. Ms. Soder noted that the roof line item for Mrs. Janice Grant's property also included siding, so the full cost of the roof is unknown. Mr. Coates recommended that the money be reallocated to that application to ensure that the roof cost was fully covered. Mr. McCall noted that a large amount of McComas Village Capital project was left unfunded and recommended that it be reallocated to cover extra costs associated with the Church or Cemetery. Mr. Coates, Ms. Presberry, and Mr. Polk concurred.

Mr. Coates asked if there was a motion. Mr. McCall made a motion to approve the staff recommendations for funding, with an amendment that any direct financial benefit to Commissioners be removed and reallocated to the McComas Village Capital project, specifically for the church and cemetery. Mr. Polk seconded the motion. Mr. Coates called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**Recess – 8:32 PM**

**Ongoing Business – 8:34 PM**

Project updates to be continued in October 2022.

**Administrative Business – 8:34 PM**

There was no administrative business to discuss at this meeting.

**Public Comment – 8:35 PM**

There were no public comments.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Deibel called for a motion. Mr. Polk moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. McCall. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 8:35 PM.