

STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES
June 5, 2014

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, June 5, 2014, was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Chairman Anita Dodd in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anita Dodd, Barbara Kirby, Jane Conner and Ken Pitts

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ann Best-Rolls, Richard Chichester and David Rodriguez

STAFF PRESENT: Kathy Baker and Terry Baxley-Morton

PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Dodd asked Mr. Trimmer if he was giving the Commission an update on the Civil War park.

Glen Trimmer stated yes, a paper had been handed out that stated 7 benches were installed. They are 4x4 post construction with pressure treated lumber. He stated the other thing was a request for help, because after all these months of being told the inventory of Civil War sites being done by the National Park Service was paid for when it was contracted, he has tried to get a date and a copy that shows it was paid and in 4 and a half months he cannot get that information. He is asking the Commission for help and if 1 person was working on this project every single day and not producing anything, he felt the Commission should view it as an opportunity. He stated they could use that money to preserve historical sites like in the park, where the ditches have not been cleaned in 1 year and they are backing up and are clogged and the water is channeling towards the road and the roads are going to be undermined. He stated he understands the budget is tough, but the county has every right to terminate a contract if it has not been fulfilled in all these years.

Mrs. Kirby stated she understood what he was saying and she agreed with him.

Mr. Trimmer asked if he should take it up in front of the Board of Supervisors. He stated it was crazy to not be able to find \$43,000.

Mrs. Kirby stated she did not know that every Supervisor knew this.

Mr. Trimmer stated it was a chance to reclaim the money and use it for something. He stated the first step was to prove it was gone, you have been told it was gone, but nobody can find any evidence that it was.

Mrs. Dodd stated unfortunately those that were involved in this agreement are no longer here. The corporate memory of how this happened is very vague because those individuals are not here.

Mr. Trimmer stated Cathy Vollbrecht was mentioned in the paper and Eric Mink was mentioned in the paper. He stated a computer search has got to be able to find it in a quick amount of time. He stated he felt like \$43,000 was missing. The draft product did not show any of the sites in the park and when they didn't address the document... which by the way the document issue has been studied by the Historical Commission in Richmond. This is about the history of Stafford County. He asked the Commission to help him if they could.

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Mrs. Kirby stated she would make more telephone calls.

Mr. Trimmer also mentioned the Civil War fort site that is owned by Dr. Mountz. He believes the name should be changed to reflect the history of the site.

Mrs. Conner stated she felt they should thank him for doing what he has done, but she was afraid if it is pushed anymore, the owner would destroy what he has done for the restoration of the fort site. She said to leave it alone and work on the Civil War Park and getting the ditches clean.

Mrs. Kirby asked why he would destroy it.

Mr. Trimmer stated he said he would destroy the redoubt, he said if he did not get to keep the wrong history under the wrong name he would destroy this thing. The problem is if you give into someone on something like that you will never recover and the history is not worth anything.

Mrs. Conner stated to leave it alone, because they had bigger fish to fry.

Mrs. Dodd stated she thought everyone knows it was the wrong name and it has been recorded in several places that it is the wrong name.

Mr. Trimmer stated the real lesson that should have been learned here is we gave you this information in 2005 and D.P spent 4 hours with him giving him every single detail. Then we asked the Civil War Steering Committee to go to Dr. Mountz and tell him new information was discovered, your fort is not what it is so he would get it right for the historical record, and he did not do anything. When you wait 7 years and let people continue to spread something they know is false all across the county, it is your fault. This should never happen again. The truth is always the truth and it needs to be told. He stated he was starting the ditches Monday and never thought he would be out there clearing ditches for the park.

Mrs. Dodd stated there was a management agreement for the park that should have taken care of that.

Mr. Pitts asked if a survey had been done yet.

Mr. Trimmer stated no, the County said they would set the land aside as a separate property. He stated it was not about the management plan, it was about scarce resources. He stated \$10,000 worth of roads could be lost in a short time during a rain storm, that \$200 worth of unskilled labor could clear the ditches.

Mrs. Kirby suggested contacting Sheriff Jett and having some men from the Rappahannock Regional Jail do the work.

Mrs. Dodd asked if there was someone else that wanted to speak.

Dave Carpenter stated this was his first meeting and he was just listening. He grew up in White Oak and saw Sherwood Farm on the agenda and was curious about that project.

Mrs. Dodd stated that was the next item on the agenda, but she did not attend the meeting. She asked Mrs. Kirby and Mrs. Conner if they had comments.

NEW BUSINESS

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1. Sherwood Farm - Meeting Report from May 28th

Mrs. Conner stated Johnny Mitchell was contacted by a member of the Historical Society to see if he could raise enough money to save the land because they were planning to have over 2,000 homes and along the highway there were going to be businesses. She stated Mr. Mitchell did not want that and he knew a gentleman that has saved other properties from development. She stated Kathy was there, along with Jeff Harvey from Planning, Anthony Romanello, the County Administrator. Supervisor Bob Thomas, Richard Chichester, from the Historical Commission, Ann Best-Rolls, Sue Henderson, who was in charge of the 350th, Barbara and I were at the meeting. She stated a reporter from the Free Lance-Star was also there, but no one realized she was a reporter.

Mrs. Kirby stated she did call the Free Lance-Star because they had made a statement that the Historical Commission supported this. She stated Mr. Mitchell's proposal was not presented to the Historical Commission for review so the Commission has not supported it. She stated she was concerned because nothing was said about the house. She stated she thought Ann's concern was she wanted at least 400 acres saved and was not concerned about the house. She stated her response was people don't go to Mount Vernon to see the rolling hills, nor do they go to Monticello to see the rolling hills, they go to see the house. They want to know about the history of the area and it is hard to tell someone something when there is nothing there. She stated it was a public meeting and the public should know what is going on. She could understand if you were in negotiations about a piece of property, but this was just an idea and the people need to know what is going on in the County.

Mr. Pitts stated it was in the June 1st Free Lance-Star.

Mrs. Dodd stated we have been involved with visits out there with the current owner, but as far as this particular situation, we have not been involved in it at all as a Commission. She stated Commission members may be involved, but not the Commission.

Mrs. Kirby stated Mr. Mitchell was going to look into it and see if he could have the gentlemen work on it.

Mrs. Baker stated as far as she knew this was all originating from Mr. Mitchell, the county is not any part of this at this point. She stated he requested the meeting to present this information and it's all in his ballpark right now. She stated he was going to talk to people about investing into it and potentially trying to purchase the property, but that need to have a willing seller in order to do that, so he needs to talk with the property owner. From this point on that is what Mr. Mitchell will be doing, talking to the seller and possible investors to see if there is any kind of a deal that may potentially work out.

Mrs. Kirby stated in the meantime, some of the land has already been sold.

Mrs. Dodd asked if they were waiting to hear back from Mr. Mitchell.

Mrs. Baker stated Mr. Mitchell invited people to the meeting, and because there were more than 3 members from the Historical Commission that were personally invited by him to attend this meeting. Because of that the meeting had to be advertised, that was why she informed the Commission the meeting was being held because of that. It was an advertised meeting so anyone was welcome to attend. Mrs. Conner stated she believed she was asked because when they originally met with the gentleman from Walton, Kevin Crown, Richard invited them because he knew that Mr. Crown liked the Civil War

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and Al was there because he could tell him about the balloon launchings and being used as a hospital. She stated after that meeting she asked if the entire Commission could view the property.

Ms. Baxley-Morton stated the article did say that Walton official had explained to Historical Commission members that their plans include the eventual restoration of Sherwood's historic home and to preserve about 50 acres around it that include out buildings and an old cemetery.

2. Historic Preservation Awards - Follow up – Changes

Mrs. Dodd stated she wanted to thank Terry for all the trouble she had to go through. She stated there were a couple of reasons why it was difficult to get contact information for people being given the award. When it was first put together the nomination form had to be filled and included that kind of information to be supplied. Several years ago it was decided that form was not needed, which caused a loss of vital information. This year some of the recipients were not as well-known and getting in touch with them was a little more difficult. Another item was, initially the procedure was the nominations came to the Commission and they were voted on to accept them or not and then the entity that nominated them was notified that their nomination was accepted, then they were responsible for informing the recipient. That sort of fell through the cracks and the bottom line is we need to have a request for recipient information put back in the letter asking for nominations so we can contact the individuals if necessary. We also need to decide if we want the nominating entity to notify the recipient or would the Commission accept that responsibility. She stated her preference was the nominating entity should make the notifications because they made the nomination and may know the people. If we decide to go with that procedure, that also needs to be included in the letter.

Ms. Baxley-Morton passed out copies of a proposed draft letter to the Commission members.

Mrs. Kirby stated an example was Dr. Schwartz. He is in Carolina and his wife travels back and forth so you don't know if she is here or there.

Ms. Baxley-Morton stated they did not know they were getting an award.

Mrs. Conner stated she approves of the rewording.

Mrs. Baker stated she would suggest, rather than having each entity notify the recipient she felt the Commission should do it, because we would have confirmation that it has been done.

Mrs. Conner suggested in the future the Commission members sit together and stand to be recognized before the awards are presented.

Ms. Baxley-Morton stated it was difficult finding the correct title for some recipients.

Mrs. Dodd stated by getting the contact information from the nominating entity, the recipients can be contacted and a discussion can be held concerning correct titles.

Mrs. Conner made a motion to accept the proposed draft letter.

Mr. Pitts seconded.

The motion passed 4-0 (Ann Best-Rolls, Richard Chichester and David Rodriguez were absent).

Mrs. Dodd stated in the past each year's nominees were added to a plaque that was in the entrance way

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and that has not been done for the past few years. She asked if anyone knew where the plaque was located and asked staff if they could locate it and get it updated.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

MINUTES

Mrs. Dodd stated there were no minutes to approve and asked Mrs. Baker if she had an update concerning the Civil War Database.

CONTINUATIONS

3. Civil War Database - National Park Service - Monthly Update.

Mrs. Baker had no update.

Mrs. Kirby asked why there was not update and asked when it would be ready.

Mrs. Dodd asked the Commission if they had suggestions of how to move forward with the Park Service portion.

Mr. Trimmer stated before the Commission spoke to Erik they should decide how they were going to handle Dr. Mountz's fort. He asked if the Commission really wanted a National Park Service approved document that you know is wrong.

Mrs. Dodd stated that could be discussed when Erik was present.

Mr. Trimmer stated the Commission needed to know what they wanted to do before he comes.

Mrs. Dodd asked the Commission members if they wanted to see if Erik could come to a meeting to talk with the Commission. She stated she needed a motion.

Mrs. Kirby made a motion.

Mr. Pitts seconded.

Mrs. Conner stated she did not want the redoubt destroyed. She stated it should be correctly identified but it was not worth losing and she felt he would destroy it.

Mr. Trimmer stated Al chaired the meeting because they did not want to have a direct confrontation with Dr. Mountz. He stated they suggested the meeting and he knew this was a bad situation, but he longer it goes it will get worse and worse. He stated nobody tried any of their suggestions.

Mr. Pitts stated he felt they were not talking about the same thing. He stated he wanted to talk to Erik sometime before the report was published.

Mrs. Conner stated she voted for having Erik present if that was what was discussed, but if they were

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talking about the naming of one specific thing.

Mrs. Dodd stated once the report was in its final draft stages, the Commission would have a chance to review it and at that time the other subject could be addressed. She restated the motion saying the Commission would invite Erik to a meeting to discuss the status of the Civil War survey.

The motion passed 4-1 (Ann Best-Rolls, Richard Chichester and David Rodriguez were absent).

4. Proposed Ordinance O06-47 - July 18, 2006 - Archaeological Surveys & Investigations - Discussion.

Mrs. Dodd stated the proposed Ordinance was on the agenda because it was important and needs to stay on the agenda although there was no discussion at this time. She explained for the visitors that Ordinance was dealing with Historic Preservation in Stafford County and the draft Ordinance was basically for developers that have cultural resources on their land. This would provide a system of how to study and treat those cultural resources. She stated it was currently in Committee at the Board level and had been for 8 years. It was determined to leave it on the agenda because some Commission members felt it was important and needs to happen in Stafford County and periodically it was brought to the attention of the Board.

Mr. Carpenter asked if Spotsylvania County had something similar.

Mrs. Dodd stated they did. She stated the County currently had guidelines, which the Commission could recommend and ask for the same things that are in the Ordinance, but the developer is not required to follow through with them. She stated they have had a fair amount of success with the majority of developers. She stated most counties have some sort of preservation ordinance and this was an attempt to try to get one in Stafford.

Mrs. Kirby stated she saw where DHR had given the County a grant for a survey of slavery sites, and asked if there was any information.

Mrs. Dodd stated this was originally generated by Tanya, the Chairman of the ARB and she contacted me as a personal resource and Doug Sanford, with the University of Mary Washington to do a survey of slave dwellings in Stafford. She stated because there were so few dwellings she suggested the scope be broadened to include cemeteries, places where they worked, like Hunter's Iron Works or the quarry, and to create a fuller survey of slave life in Stafford County. She stated Tanya put the grant together and it has been accepted so from June of this year to June of next year the survey will continue. The majority of the work would be done by a cultural resource management firm and would be put out for bids. She stated the Cemetery Committee would be helping with the information they have and the recordation of slave cemeteries in the county. She stated the University has done a slave quarters survey so they will be providing information.

Mr. Pitts asked the amount of the grant.

Mrs. Dodd stated a little over \$14,000.

Mrs. Baker stated the agreement needed to be signed and returned. She stated she would need to sit down with Tanya, the University and Anita to start the process.

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Mrs. Dodd asked if a vote was needed.

Mrs. Baker stated no. But because Mrs. Dodd and the University were committing resources to this as a match, before an agreement was signed...

Mrs. Dodd stated it was actually the Cemetery Committee not the Commission and they were fine with it.

Ms. Baxley-Morton stated on Tuesday the Board passed an Ordinance for the ARB to have 7 members.

5. Additional Presentations by the Public - as Determined by Chairperson.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mrs. Dodd stated she did not have any additional report.

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mrs. Kirby stated she just wanted to say thank you to Terry for all her work.

Mrs. Conner thanked Mrs. Baker also for making the arrangements even though she was not available for the presentation. She also thanked Ms. Baxley-Morton.

Mrs. Dodd stated she appreciated the County's help.

Mrs. Baker stated she wanted to let the Commission know they would be losing Terry as the clerk.

Ms. Baxley-Morton stated because Wanda, the other administrative specialist in Public Works was moving to Florida. Because it would be a lateral move, they are not going to fill her position. They decided to move that position to the Community Development Services Center and she would be taking over most of Wanda's responsibilities.

Mrs. Dodd asked if that meant the Secretary would have to actually keep minutes.

Mrs. Baker stated that was something that needs to be discussed. She stated there was admin staff that could transcribe from a tape but had limited admin staff to attend the meetings. Currently there were 8 Boards and Commissions and they are tapped out attending the night meetings and doing the minutes, so it will be limited as to what they could do.

The Commission members thanked Ms. Baxley-Morton for all of her assistance and hard work.

Mrs. Dodd stated she needed to be clear, would someone still be responsible for doing the agenda or do I need to do that.

Mrs. Baker stated it would be her for now because the department was also losing John Harbin, who does the ARB because he was going back to grad school. She stated she would coordinate the agendas with Mrs. Dodd and would format and send them out.

Mr. Pitts stated he visited the Oakenwold property and showed the Commission some pictures he took of the property and pointed out items concerning the additions.

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A brief discussion ensued concerning the additions and the removal of certain areas.

Mr. Pitts stated the old kitchen was in good shape until a tree fell on it.

Mr. Trimmer asked if there were any initials or dates inside.

Mr. Pitts stated he could not get inside.

Mrs. Dodd stated when she was there she was able to get inside the outbuildings, not the house and she saw nothing. But most of the outbuildings outdated the Civil War.

Mrs. Kirby thanked Mr. Pitts for taking the pictures and asked if anyone else went out she would like to go with them.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Kirby made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Pitts seconded.

The motion passed 4-1 (Ann Best-Rolls, Richard Chichester and David Rodriguez were absent).

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p. m.