

STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES
February 5, 2015

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, February 5, 2015, was called to order at 3:18 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, Ann Best-Rolls, and Richard Chichester

MEMBERS ABSENT Jane Conner, Ken Pitts, and David Rodriguez

STAFF PRESENT Kathy Baker and Denise Knighting

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Brent Cemetery – Bill Emond

Mrs. Bakers stated Mrs. Best-Rolls was on her way and if the Commission wanted to let Mr. Emond start and they could call the meeting to order once Mrs. Best-Rolls arrived.

Mrs. Dodd agreed.

Mr. Emond stated he was representing the Catholic Church Diocese for Brent Cemetery. He introduced Mr. Carroll Frederick who was the Chairman of the Committee and would give most of the explanations in regard to the status of what has been done, what would be done and what they want to accomplish. He stated they have had a lot of contact with the developer and the Diocese. He stated the developer is willing to assist with some repairs on the road, re-survey and clearly mark the property.

Mr. Frederick stated the information he handed out to the Commission members was the history of how they became involved with the Brent Cemetery. He stated it goes back to the organization of the assembly they have in the Knights of Columbus. He stated they were looking for a project for the pillar of patriotism, which was the fourth pillar for the Knights. He stated they also have different awards and presentations they give out during the year and they were looking for something to be meaningful and they could really project the patriotic standpoint. He stated seventeen years ago the Brent Cemetery was suggested to the group and it did need a lot of attention and that was how they got involved. He stated he did not know how much history they had uncovered when they started the researching the project. He stated the lineage can be taken back to the 1500s in England and brought forward and he felt it was quite an accomplishment to have it documented and to have the cemetery in honor of what they represented at the time, which was religious freedom. He stated that was why they got involved with the cemetery.

Mrs. Baker stated now that everyone was present the meeting should be called to order.

Mrs. Dodd called the meeting to order at 3:18, there was a quorum with four members present.

Mrs. Baker stated there was also one member of the public present, Sue Henderson, who was involved with the 350th Celebration.

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Mrs. Dodd asked if she was particularly interested in an item on the agenda.

Mrs. Henderson stated no.

Mr. Frederick continued to explain the information passed out to the Commission and stated he would like to call their attention to some of the activities from March 15, 1999. He explained that was approximately a year after the assembly had been formed. Mr. Steven Gambaro, a former member of the Commission, was instrumental in giving the assembly the history and guidance with tasks which were currently being continued. He touched upon the archeological field work that was performed during that time and when they found the Brent Crucifix. He stated they had a mold made of the original crucifix which could be cast in gold or silver for jewelry. He passed the replica made in gold for the Commission to see and stated the thought was to sell the replica of the cross to acquire money which would be used to maintain the cemetery. He explained in detail the significance of the features on the crucifix. He stated another major item in the early years was a document submitted to Supreme, which is the National Headquarters, and it was selected nationally for the work they were undergoing.

A brief discussion ensued between the Commission, Mr. Frederick and Mr. Emond concerning the artifacts that were found during the archeological survey performed by Thunderbird. After a lengthy discussion, it was suggested Mr. Frederick and Mr. Emond contact Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc., the firm that absorbed Thunderbird, and Martha Williams, because she also was a part of the study.

Mrs. Dodd stated the last she heard Ms. Williams was with the Historic Preservation Department in Fairfax County, and they may be helpful in locating her. She stated they may want to also check with the Department of Historic Preservation, because they sometime get the artifacts.

Mr. Frederick stated if he received the information he would provide it to the Commission.

Mrs. Dodd stated she felt Mrs. Williams could get them started. She asked if the Committee was going to oversee the cemetery in perpetuity.

Mr. Emond stated yes. He stated the Diocese has given them permission to do what they could to try to restore and they will try to offer assistance with money. They have met with the stone mason, who is familiar with historic preservation and has done preservation on many buildings such as the Capitol, George Washington Monument and he does all the restoration for the Arlington Diocese.

Mrs. Dodd told Mr. Emond and Mr. Frederick when they had projects at the cemetery, the Eagle Scouts are always willing to help and they are a good source and sometimes can raise money to help with the project.

Mr. Emond stated currently the Diocese was providing funds for maintenance of grass. He stated the developer of the adjacent property will re-survey the 10 acres and have it marked, replace the culvert and repair the road and give the Diocese \$10,000 towards preservation.

Mrs. Dodd asked if they were solid offers from the developer.

Mr. Emonds stated yes, he personally met with the developer several times. He stated at first the offer was just monetary but through discussion it has increased to assistance.

Mr. Frederick stated it was included in proffer under paragraph 5, historical features. He stated both the Diocese and the Committee feel they should accept the offer.

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Mr. Emond stated he knew the Commission knew of the security problems in the cemetery over the years. Currently there are cameras installed. He stated people are still going back there but there has not been damage. He stated they were trying to have electricity installed to allow for some type of lighting, but they did not know the cost at this time.

Mrs. Kirby stated she has received calls from the library asking about the Witches' Pond, but she continues to inform them it is not haunted or magical, because each year in October it is consecrated.

Mr. Emond stated on Halloween many people have been arrested for trespassing because they would look on websites that said the pond was haunted. He stated the Church has been discussing redesigning and possibly using the other five acres and making an active cemetery in addition to the historical cemetery.

Mrs. Dodd said with activity of someone taking care of the cemetery it seems to deter someone from going in causing damage.

A brief discussion ensued concerning getting electric to the cemetery site.

Mrs. Kirby stated Dominion does provide some resources for historic projects in the State of Virginia, and suggested researching that avenue.

Mr. Emond asked about grants.

Mrs. Dodd suggested he speak to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources concerning grants.

Mr. Emond asked Mrs. Dodd who could give permission to allow someone to be buried in a cemetery, because they had two newer graves, one from 1985 and another from 1995.

Mrs. Dodd stated the landowner.

Mrs. Best-Rolls asked if any research had been done concerning the names on the headstones.

Mrs. Kirby suggested checking the obituaries in the Free Lance-Star for those dates.

Mr. Emond said no research has been done.

Mrs. Dodd stated, in her opinion, Mrs. Williams would be a wealth of knowledge because she participated in the cemetery study and the work at Woodstock.

Mr. Frederick continued the discussion on the seven active issues listed in the packet he passed out, which included a genealogical trace of the Brent Family, and the control, maintenance and sustainment of the Brent Family Cemetery Property that he and Mr. Emond have been working on. He stated another issue was the research records pertaining to the Brent Family Cemetery, because they have been scattered over the past 17 years and must be recovered and stored in a central location for future reference. He stated the gravestones and markers in the Brent Family Cemetery have been decimated over the past 200 years. He asked that any information the Commission may have to help them recover the information from the stones that are not there would be appreciated. He stated administrative office space is required to keep the records since they became involved in the project. He stated the last issue was his report to the assembly concerning the progress that has been made.

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Mrs. Dodd thanked Mr. Frederick and Mr. Emond for coming in and giving the Commission an update. She also stated she was glad to hear some of the issues have been resolved with the developer.

Mr. Frederick stated currently they were happy with the direction they were going.

Mr. Emond said once they get everything fixed, they want to get the history of the Brent's and promote the cemetery in the county and expand it with a yearly field mass.

Mrs. Dodd asked Mr. Emond and Mr. Frederick to keep the Commission informed.

Mr. Frederick suggested they come back every six months and give the Commission an update.

Mrs. Dodd and Mrs. Kirby thought that would be great.

Mrs. Kirby stated there are different historians in the county that have done work on the Brent Family and may be able to help because they have files of information.

Mrs. Baker asked if they had reached out to the Historical Society because their membership was larger.

Mrs. Dodd stated she was the Chairman of the Cemetery Committee also and that Committee was offering their assistance as well.

The Commission members thanked Mr. Emond and Mr. Frederick for making their presentation.

Mrs. Dodd moved on to the Civil War Database Update.

2. Civil War Database Update – Erik Mink, National Park Service

Mr. Mink stated the last update was finished over the holidays and he sent it to Mrs. Baker last week, which finished up the Union 6 Corps Camps in White Oak, and he has moved on to the Union Second Corps Camps which is moving into the Falmouth area. He gave a brief description and discussed the maps of the First and Second and Third Brigade of the First Division. He stated the Artillery and the Fourth Brigade, which was formed in the spring of 1863, did not appear on the maps. He stated the historical maps that accompany the First and Second Brigade show the Division Commanders Headquarters marked at the Washington House and the Third Brigade north of the Elijah Tyson House.

Mr. Chichester stated he lives at the Tyson House.

Mr. Mink stated according to Jerilynn's most recent book the Washington House (Inglewood) was no longer standing.

Mr. Chichester stated it was where Drew Middle School is.

Mr. Mink asked Mr. Chichester for his address since he lived at the Tyson house, and to help him locate it on the topo map which would help him locate it on the historical maps. He stated the Third Brigade map showed all the individual regimental camps marked which was northwest of the Elijah Tyson house. He stated he would now move on to the next division which actually spread north of Falmouth and then west. He stated the Auto Auction did an archeological dig at that location and found a Union Camp, which was part of this Union Second Corps that was focused around Falmouth. He stated he found interesting photos

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and the subjects were the soldiers, but in the background one can see some of the architecture in the landscape.

Mrs. Dodd asked if there was any way to find the exact location.

Mr. Mink stated no, but with past photos he plotted them in the field to the west of Drew Middle. He stated there were not any landmarks or anything specific in the photos. With the information compiled, if something were to be done on that property that might involve investigation, this might lead to a better understanding and investigation, if something was found.

Mrs. Best-Rolls stated she felt it might be General Zook headquarters.

Mr. Mink stated he would continue and move on to another one and work his way through the Army of the Potomac in that winter. He stated if the Commission had any information, question or comments to please contact him.

Mrs. Dodd thanked Mr. Mink and moved on to the next agenda item.

3. George Washington's Boyhood Home ("Ferry Farm") National Historic Landmark Annual Report

Mrs. Baker stated the annual report was sent for information and did not believe there was a lot to talk about.

Mrs. Dodd stated most of it was an archeological report done during 2014 and she did not have any comments or questions.

Mrs. Baker stated the other report about Ferry Farm was something Mrs. Forestier gave the Commission as information. She stated the site plan for the entrance road into Ferry Farm was currently under review for the entrance features and landscaping. Mrs. Forestier had asked them to provide their Twenty Year Master Plan but that report does not include the rebuilding of the homestead. She stated they are just getting to the point of doing the architectural drawings.

Mrs. Dodd asked if anyone had any question or comments on the report. Hearing none she moved on to Abberly at South Campus.

4. Abberly at South Campus – Cemetery Relocation

Mrs. Dodd stated the Cemetery Committee and the Historical Commission have been asked to be a consulting party in this event. She stated the slave cemetery located on Abberly South will be relocated. The Commission and the Cemetery Committee have accepted the roll as consulting parties and she received an email yesterday which said the property owner was ready to do this and wanted to know the suggested places for relocation. She stated her first recommendation was they get moved to the William Stevens family cemetery, located at the house site, and they would have to get permission of the current owner of the cemetery. She stated Stevens was the family that owned the slaves originally. Her second recommendation was the cemetery that was located at Register Chapel Methodist Church located on the hill at Courthouse Road and Route 1. She stated she has not received any information back. She stated the stones that marked the burials were extremely significant. They were fieldstones but a particular fieldstone found in a vein that goes through the property. She stated she was told by a geologist that the vein that runs through Stafford County and through this property was created by the tidal wave created by the big meteor that hit in the Gulf of Mexico. She stated she feels this was extremely important and suggested the stones go with the burials

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when they are moved. She stated the geology in Stafford County was amazing and there was a millstone made by another strain that goes through Stafford that was volcanic.

Mrs. Kirby stated there was gold in the Route 17 area and if you look at the different minerals in the County it was unreal.

Mrs. Dodd stated she would hope the owner would create some signage talking about the stones as well as the people. She asked if anyone had any other comments. Hearing none she moved on to item 5.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. CLG Grant Regarding Slavery-Related Resources – Update

Mrs. Dodd stated the Project Committee recently had a meeting and received an update from Dovetail as to the number of sites they have gathered. She stated there would be a public meeting but did not remember the date.

Mrs. Baker stated February 18, 2015, Wednesday at 6 o'clock in the ABC Conference room.

Mrs. Dodd stated there would be a chance for people to add to the list or make comments. She stated the list was amazing and unfortunately only a certain number could be selected. She stated the hope was that more grant money could be obtained to continue the study of these resources. She asked if there were any questions. Hearing none she stated item 6 was an item that was kept on the agenda.

6. Proposed Ordinance 006-47 – July 18, 2006 – Archaeological Surveys & Investigations

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mrs. Dodd stated she did not have a report of this time, but she did have a lot of calls from people with cemetery questions and she was able to get them to the right place. She asked if anyone else had any.

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mrs. Kirby stated she was concerned about the Greenhow Cemetery and the conflict of where the bodies were buried. She stated it was thought they might be buried on the land of the George Washington Village project. She stated it was her understanding they did not want to do any historic background at all and have not found any cemeteries and asked Mrs. Baker what was known about the cemetery that they refuse to acknowledge.

Mrs. Baker stated she would have to look into it.

Mrs. Dodd stated there were three cemeteries within that property that have been recorded and are on file. She stated it was her understanding that their initial report to the county said there were no historic resources on the property, which was incorrect on a number of levels. She stated the cemetery Mrs. Kirby referenced was in question to if they were actually moved or not. She stated the thought was they still remain at the

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house site, which is across I-95, which would be incorporated in this new project that is before the County. She stated it was her understanding they have not gotten to the point where the Commission could respond.

Mrs. Baker stated the project has already gone to public hearing and it is scheduled to go back to the Planning Commission February 11, 2015. She stated the staff was awaiting receipt of comments that were brought up at the last Planning Commission meeting. The applicant's latest changes should be coming in any day.

Mrs. Dodd asked what time was the meeting.

Mrs. Baker stated 6:30 was the start of the meeting. The public hearing was actually continued so people can still speak if there is a desire to do that.

Mrs. Kirby stated they needed to know if there were any proffers on the cemetery.

Mrs. Baker stated she would check with Mr. Zuraf.

Mrs. Kirby stated it was her understanding that one of the developers involved has made the statement that he was not doing any historic stuff at all.

Mrs. Dodd stated he has to deal with the cemeteries, because there is an Ordinance.

Mrs. Kirby stated he was saying there were none there.

Mrs. Baker asked who he was.

Mrs. Kirby stated Andy Garrett.

Mrs. Baker stated she would talk with Mr. Zuraf and let Mrs. Dodd know.

Mrs. Baker handed out an email from Frank White regarding Black History Month and Rowser Building tours.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 4, 2014

Mrs. Kirby stated on December 4th minutes on page 2, line 70, it should be Metes and Bounds and on page 3, line 124 it should be ground penetrating radar.

Mrs. Dodd asked if there were any other corrections.

Mrs. Kirby made a motion for approval.

Mr. Chichester seconded.

The motion passed 4 to 0 (Mrs. Conner, Mr. Pitts and Mr. Rodriguez were absent).

ADJOURNMENT

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Mrs. Kirby made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Chichester seconded.

The motion passed 4 to 0 (Mrs. Conner, Mr. Pitts and Mr. Rodriguez were absent).

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.