

STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES

April 7, 2016

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, April 7, 2016, was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Chairman Richard Chichester in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anita Dodd, Richard Chichester, Barbara Kirby, Ken Pitts, David Rodriguez and Ann Best-Rolls (3:48)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jane Conner

STAFF PRESENT: Kathy Baker, Amber Forestier, Jacqueline Nova, Emily Garrett, Elizabeth Davis and Denise Knighting

GUESTS PRESENT: Eric Mink and Glen Trimmer

Mr. Chichester called the meeting to order.

Mr. Pitts called the roll, with four members present it was determined there was a quorum.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

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

Mr. Mink stated he sent out an update on the 2nd Division of the Cavalry Corps and that he would be working on the 3rd Division for the following month which should finish off Cavalry Corps. Mr. Mink stated that regarding the 1861 Confederate Camps located in Stafford he had reached out to Kate Roberts, the Quantico Marine Base archeologist, via email explaining to her what he was working on and that Commission had requested to look into the camps of 1861 and whether she was able to provide some of her reports and maps. Mr. Mink felt that Ms. Roberts did not know what he was asking as her response was to send a letter on government letterhead requesting consultation status. Mr. Mink followed up by attempting to call her several times unsuccessfully. He stated he would try to send her another email trying to better explain what exactly it was he was asking for. He further stated that Ms. Roberts did inform him that she had information that could be shared.

Mrs. Dodd suspected that Ms. Roberts might not be authorized to give out information to just anybody and that might have been why she required the letter.

Mr. Mink stated he had mentioned Al Conner's book at the previous meeting, and it was now available.

Mrs. Kirby stated that on Amazon the book was temporarily out of stock.

Mr. Mink added that according to social media printed copies were available.

2. Civil War Park Update – Glenn Trimmer

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Mr. Trimmer had prepared a presentation for the Commission stating that a lot had been going on at the Civil War Park. Mr. Trimmer stated that he would be concentrating on the new things since the last time he had been at the meeting. Mr. Trimmer started showing slides of an Eagle Scout project, a Civil War hut reconstruction, which was done in the Park Area. Mr. Trimmer stated that the visitation in the Civil War Park was really going up, although it wasn't going up as fast as he'd like. He felt that the visitation could be vastly increased if a sign was put up on the interstate. He also stated that he spends several hours a week at the park talking to visitors and asking if it was their first visit, and that was generally the case. Mr. Trimmer pointed out that there had not been a newspaper article on the Civil War Park since the Grand Opening. He further stated that visitors mostly find out about the Park by the signage at the Courthouse. Mr. Trimmer stated there was a new encampment trail going around the hut sites. He added a new trail was cut into another segment of the camp. He explained there were two rifle pits which might be interesting for people who like all things civil war. He stated they were classic, 16 feet long rifle pits, which had not been found previously. He added that the path had been completely cleared and the trees had been cut down and there were also huts in that area as well as rocks from chimney remains. Mr. Trimmer stated he would like to put signs there. He added that he went the less expensive route by going to Staples and having the signs made. He pointed out that out of the 60 signs that had been up around the park for the last three years only one had to be replaced. According to Mr. Trimmer the head of Richmond Battlefield Parks visited the Civil War Park as well and was impressed with the signs, especially since a lot of people wouldn't know what they were looking at. Mr. Trimmer stated there were three new artillery pieces in the Park bringing the total to five guns. He stated that HH Hunt contributed 50,000 dollars, Stafford Historical Society contributed 3,700 dollars of left over funds and Stafford County Economic Development contributed 1,800 dollars to pay for the cannons. Mr. Trimmer stated there were three new gun platforms as well, two of which were built two years ago by Boy Scouts. He added that the nails used in the platforms were made by a nail company in Massachusetts which was started in 1848. Mr. Trimmer stated the company was still using a nail making machine which was purchased in 1864, and the nails matched the ones found by Dovetail. Mr. Trimmer felt the platforms would last about 10 years. He also stated all the guns were made by different makers offering a variety for visitors to look at. Mr. Trimmer pointed out that 85% of the Park was in the woods and that color coded trails had recently been put in (blue for encampment areas, red for artillery, and orange for the 11th Corps Road). He stated he was hoping to finish the project up within the next couple of weeks. Mr. Trimmer stated he was working on getting signs for the Civil War Park on I-95 North and South, which he just received the estimate for. He added that the process had been quite difficult and costly (about \$23,000). He stated the application was very detailed. According to Mr. Trimmer there was currently some back and forth regarding the lettering on the sign and what could be referenced on the sign. He stated he was told that only the exit number could be on the sign, and not a Route number. Mr. Trimmer stated he was currently looking for funds to build a pavilion in the picnic area to offer some shelter from the sun and was hoping for the Commission's support. Mr. Trimmer stated that Stafford County would receive 150,000 dollars through the Civil War Trust Grant to put a conservation easement on the entire park. He added only two things that were missing in the submittal package. Mr. Trimmer stated he worked with the Board of Supervisors in completing the package. Mr. Trimmer also informed the Commission that there would be a national public radio interview coming up which would hopefully attract more visitors. Mr. Trimmer stated the trails were still being mulched. According to Mr. Trimmer he worked out a deal with the nearby subdivision which provided 26 twelve ton dump truck loads of mulch to the park over the last two years. He stated he had just met with a gentleman from the Sons of Union Veterans who wanted to get involved with the park by coming out three times a year to clean signs and benches.

Mrs. Dodd stated she was pretty sure that she had seen signs on I-95 that did show route numbers and suggested getting a photograph of one.

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Mr. Trimmer addressed Mrs. Dodd's concern regarding relic hunting and confirmed that there had been two incidents and the Sheriff had been called. He added there was also an incident with littering which was not pursued by the Sheriff's Office. He pointed out that law enforcement in the park was definitely one of his concerns.

Mrs. Kirby felt it was a good idea to talk to the Board of Supervisors regarding the pavilion suggested by Mr. Trimmer.

3. Historic Preservation Awards

Ms. Baker stated the nominations were due a couple of weeks ago and asked the Commission if they had any additional nominations they wanted to add. Ms. Baker reiterated that the Planning Commission as well as the Historical Society had some recommendations which the Commission needed to discuss. She stated the Planning Commission suggested Sherwood Forest, Falmouth Intersection Improvements, and Sanford Slave Quarters. She further stated that the Historical Society suggested nominating the individuals who were part of the 350th Committee. Ms. Baker pointed out that an award was given to the group previously, but not to individuals.

Mrs. Dodd and Mrs. Kirby agreed that Sherwood Forest (Mr. Kevin Crown) should be nominated but not the Falmouth intersection. Regarding the Slave Quarters, Mrs. Dodd felt that the project should be finished first before it went up for nomination.

Mrs. Dodd stated she would like to see the developer of Courthouse Manor nominated for doing the Phase I and II.

After a discussion, the Commission decided to remove the 350th group, the Slave Quarters, as well as the Falmouth Intersection and nominate Sherwood Forest, Barbara Decatur, and the Courthouse Manor developer for the preservation awards.

Ms. Baker stated she would get the information on the Courthouse Manor developer.

Mr. Pitts suggested also adding HH Hunt for doing a Phase I and II as well as moving cemetery remains.

The Commission agreed.

Ms. Best-Rolls explained the larger plaques used last year were no longer available and presented an alternative to the Commission.

The Commission was okay with the alternative.

Ms. Baker stated that she would find out the names and asked who would do the wording.

Mr. Chichester asked who would do the wording for which nomination.

Mrs. Dodd stated she would do Sherwood Forest as well as Courthouse Manor and HH Hunt.

Mrs. Kirby stated she would do the wording for Barbara Decatur.

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Dr. Rodriguez stated Al Conner had received a historic preservation award and was asked if there was a lifetime achievement award.

The Commission members stated no.

Ms. Baker suggested that since he had previously received an award, the Commission could ask the Board of Supervisors to recognize him.

Mr. Pitts made a motion to ask the Board of Supervisors to honor Al Conner.

Mrs. Dodd seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6-0 (Mrs. Conner was absent).

Ms. Baker stated she would come up with a draft and provided to the Commission for approval.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. Falmouth Master Interpretive Plan Implementation

Ms. Baker stated this was a follow up from last month's meeting which took into consideration the recommendations made by the Commission.

Ms. Nova stated the font size had been increased.

Ms. Davis stated she did revise the text and everything was narrowed down to 1-2 sentences. She pointed out there was an arrow above the pictures to increase the image. She also stated that a link was added to more details, which lead to the specific page of the master interpretive plan corresponding to that site. She stated that some sites had additional links like Anderson's Trading Post.

Mrs. Kirby stated it was no longer known under that name.

Ms. Davis stated that was what it was named on the plan, but it could easily be changed.

Ms. Baker asked the Committee to go through and give recommendations on the specific names and texts and refine it. GIS was only supplying the format using the information they had to work with.

Ms. Davis stated the Falmouth Cemetery also had an additional link to the national register of historic places. She further stated that more extras had been added in the header leading to various related websites, as well as a link labelled interactive story map tour which would take you to the GIS page to look at other maps as well. She further pointed out that the order of the images was following a possible walking route, but each image could also be clicked on individually or changed around.

Mr. Chichester asked how the Commission would like to proceed with this.

Mrs. Dodd asked for print outs of the different pages for the Commission to look at. She asked if there was an option to add historic photos as additional information somewhere.

Ms. Nova confirmed.

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5. Bloomington Signage/Flyers

Ms. Baker stated she hadn't been able to make any progress on this item. She stated she did meet with Cathy Vollbrecht who was fine with the signage/flyers. Ms. Baker added that Ms. Garrett had started putting together some images to put on the signs, but they were still working on the text. Ms. Baker explained that due to the Economic Development Department being short staffed at the moment, they were unable to assist with the brochure so far. Ms. Baker was confident that she would be able to come back with more in hand at the next meeting.

6. Proposed Ordinance O06-47 – July 18, 2006 – Archaeological Surveys & Investigations

No discussion on this item.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Chichester stated he had a meeting with the Historical Society and the discussed the fountain at Brooks Park which was knocked down and needed to be restored. Mr. Chichester asked if Parks and Rec could be encouraged to do that.

Ms. Baker stated the Architectural Review Board (ARB) had an application from Parks and Rec to demolish the fountain, but the ARB wanted the fountain to remain. According to the ARB it appeared that this fountain had been there since the late 60s, early 70s according to photo documentation. Ms. Baker stated that Parks and Rec was willing to have the fountain restored, but that there was an issue with the Butler Road widening possibly requiring for the fountain to be moved. Ms. Baker added that the application had been withdrawn for now, but left it up to the Commission to make a recommendation.

Mr. Chichester inquired who had determined that the road would be moved over that far over?

Ms. Baker explained that it was on VDOT's long term plan.

Ms. Best-Rolls inquired about the history of the fountain.

Ms. Baker stated that Jerilynn had been working on gathering information, but that there was not a lot of information available.

Mrs. Dodd stated that she would like to take a look at the fountain and determine if it could be given some type of protection in its current condition to prevent further damage until such time when it would be moved.

Ms. Baker added that the fountain had been dismantled and was no longer functional.

Mrs. Dodd strongly suggested having a look at the fountain before making any decisions.

Ms. Baker stated that she had photographs of the fountain and could provide them to the Commission.

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

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Mrs. Dodd inquired about the Curator in Residence Program again and wanted to get some more information on it. To her knowledge Fairfax County had implemented this program. She added the State has authorized counties to create a curator in residence piece in the ordinance. Mrs. Dodd stated that she would like to see what the state said it was and she would also like to see what Fairfax County had adopted for their county. Mrs. Dodd reiterated that she was supposed to write two letters which she had not done yet. She explained that she received additional information on Pratt Park and was not certain if she should still write a letter to the Department of Utilities.

Ms. Baker stated that depended on where the Commission's concerns were.

Mrs. Dodd reiterated the Commission was asked to make the recommendation that an archeologist be present when the trench was being dug for the waterline and that a report be generated after that. She also reminded the Commission that she was personally asked to do so but did not feel that she was qualified.

Ms. Baker pointed out the project was still 2 years away.

Ms. Best-Rolls requested to postpone the discussion till next month so the Commission would have a chance to review all the information again.

The Commission agreed and Ms. Baker stated she would resend all the information to the Commission.

Mrs. Dodd reiterated there had also been some question regarding the Truslow Road letter. She asked Mr. Pitts if he had been out to the site.

Mr. Pitts stated he had not.

Mrs. Dodd reiterated the site plan was supposed to get adjusted to move away from the Civil War Trenches and that she still needed to find out if that had officially been done. She felt that if that was the case there would be no need to write a letter. Mrs. Dodd stated the Crow's Nest visit had been cancelled because of VDOT and the lack of accessibility to the property. Mrs. Dodd stated she had talked to Mike Lott and there were two house sites out there and that one of which was way out on the point and the second one was further inland. Mrs. Dodd stated the Tranquility house site was on a side trail off the main trail to the point but was not very conducive as a trail at this point in time. Mrs. Dodd suggested that if signage was going to be put up it should be put at the Crow's Nest site. According to Mrs. Dodd, Mr. Lott stated he would certainly accommodate anybody who wants to go out there. She also stated that he gave her a book which contained a photograph of Tranquility. Mrs. Dodd also presented a photograph of what the signage would look like for Crow's Nest.

Mr. Pitts stated Mrs. Forestier sent out information concerning Grandville Estates. He stated there was a rumor that there was another cemetery on the site.

Mrs. Dodd stated there was one cemetery site.

Mr. Pitts stated he was sure there were some Civil War campsites close to the quarry road and they have not done a Phase I. He stated he would do additional research.

Mrs. Dodd stated they did not show the quarry and Mrs. Forestier contacted them about it. She stated she felt a letter should be sent concerning the property, but she was not sure if it was appropriate to send it now or not because a site plan has not been submitted.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 3, 2016

Mrs. Dodd stated she had a correction on page 3, line 135, she thought he should be changed to she and DHR should be changed to County Utilities. She stated the next line remove a, and change required to recommended.

Mr. Pitts stated he had a correction on page 3, lots 107 and 108, he stated he was not sure joint meeting was correct.

Ms. Baker stated it may have meant next meeting.

Mr. Pitts agreed.

Mrs. Kirby made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected.

Mr. Pitts seconded.

The motion passed 6 - 0 (Mrs. Conner was absent).

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chichester stated the meeting was adjourned.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:42 p.m.