

STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES
July 7, 2016

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, July 7, 2016, was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairman Richard Chichester in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Chichester, Anita Dodd, Barbara Kirby, Ken Pitts, and Jane Conner (3:03)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ann Best-Rolls and David Rodriguez

STAFF PRESENT: Kathy Baker, Mike Smith, Bryon Counsell, and Sylvia Dyson

GUESTS PRESENT: Irma Clifton

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Chichester called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Pitts to call the roll.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mr. Pitts called roll and stated there were four members present and a quorum was established.

Mrs. Conner arrived at 3:03 raising the number of members present to five.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Chichester opened the floor for Ms. Clifton's presentation.

Ms. Clifton stated that she attended the meeting to request the Historical Commission's support to clean up, paint, and furnish Shelton Cottage.

She explained that she was working with Billy Shelton, as well as Reggie Perkins from Parks and Recreation in trying to get jail laborers to clean up the building. She added that she had offered to purchase paint, if the laborers painted the walls with the goal to have it ready to open before "Yankee's in Falmouth" on the 11th and 12th of September. Ms. Clifton further offered to furnish the building with period pieces of which she had quite a few of. According to Ms. Clifton the goal was to make people more aware of Falmouth. She did not want to have the building open at all times but for special occasions only, such as garden week, Yankee's in Falmouth, etc.

Ms. Clifton stated that she was in the process of trying to set up a meeting with the Director of Parks and Recreation as well as Ms. Baker to see how they could move forward on this issue.

Ms. Baker reiterated that the interim Director of Parks and Rec was leaving soon. She stated that she spoke with Brion Southall from Parks and Rec regarding the cleaning up of Shelton Cottage and was informed that Parks and Recreation was certainly amenable to cleaning it up and painting it before the September event. Ms. Baker added that she would however have to follow up with Stafford County's building official regarding occupancy and safety issues, etc.

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Ms. Clifton stated that the stairway was not passable and there was no handicapped access to the building. She added that she was uncertain whether there was a requirement for handicapped accessibility. Ms. Baker stated that that was one of the reasons she would have to speak to the building official and the risk manager. Ms. Baker felt that the second floor would however probably off limits for visitors. Mrs. Dodd agreed that the general public should not be allowed on the second floor.

Ms. Clifton agreed although she felt that the second floor was worth seeing and she had enough items to furnish the second floor as well.

Ms. Dodd pointed out that there would have to be some type of security to protect the items that were being put inside Shelton Cottage. Ms. Baker agreed and added that there was no climate control which would put the items at risk as well. Ms. Clifton stated that she was aware of that and has already put some item in the building to see how they would be affected by heat and humidity. Mrs. Dodd stated that it would take years to see the effects.

Mrs. Dodd inquired what exactly Ms. Clifton expected the Historical Commission to help with. Ms. Clifton explained that she would like for the Commission to get in touch with the Board of Supervisors to support the idea. Mrs. Dodd felt that the previously mentioned issues would have to be addressed first before the Historical Commission could support the request. Ms. Clifton explained that that was what she was trying to currently work out with the help of Parks and Rec as well as Ms. Baker. Ms. Clifton expressed her concern that the building would go to waste otherwise.

Ms. Baker explained that some work had been done, such as replacing the rotten sill beam on the back as well as some weather proofing by replacing some of the boards and repainting. She stated that the work was officially completed. Mr. Chichester inquired whether there was more work to be done. Ms. Baker explained that there was more to be done with regard to fully restoring the interior and adding climate control which would probably take years to get done. She added that for now the intent was to clean it up and paint it and that Parks and Recreation was willing to do it.

Ms. Clifton stated that Mr. Perkins offered to have a truck available and help move the items over to Shelton Cottage. She added that she would like to have docents present to talk about the history of the place and to show visitors around. Ms. Clifton explained that she had also received early pictures of Shelton Cottage from Mr. Shelton as well as other pictures of Falmouth which she would like to display. She also stated she would speak with Marcia Chavez who was currently doing a study of paintings of Old Falmouth to see if she would be interested in showing some of the paintings during the event.

Mrs. Dodd felt it would not be an issue to have Shelton Cottage open for the September event but regarding future openings the previously mentioned issues would have to be resolved first.

Ms. Clifton brought up the Grizzle building which was also just sitting and was falling apart due to neglect. She explained that this building was one of the oldest Elementary Schools in Stafford. She felt that the building should be utilized somehow, especially since it had great parking which was rare in Falmouth. She added that on the 15th of July the Department of Interior Park Service would have a program at that location about Falmouth. Ms. Clifton asked the Historical Commission to keep this building in the back of their minds and consider doing something with it.

Mrs. Dodd agreed that the Grizzle building was probably one of the only properties in Falmouth that had parking. She felt the building could be rented out for events or it could be used as a small scale museum. Mrs. Dodd stated she had visited the building about 5 years ago and she didn't see anything wrong with the building. She added that she was informed that it needed a new roof although she did not see any evidence

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of the roof leaking. To her knowledge the only reason why it hadn't been torn down yet was that there were asbestos inside which was expensive to remove. She agreed that the building was an asset which could serve many purposes, especially since it offered parking.

Ms. Clifton agreed that it was expensive to remove the asbestos since she had to deal with this issue when the prison property got renovated. Mrs. Dodd stated it would require a little commitment to the County to take on such work.

Ms. Baker noted that the roof had partially collapsed, and the building was not accessible for safety reasons.

Ms. Clifton stated that there were grants available that could assist with utilizing the building.

Mr. Chichester explained that the Historical Commission did agree with Ms. Clifton, but that it would be up to the Board of Supervisors to take action. Mrs. Kirby recommended Ms. Clifton keep pushing at it and collecting others to go along with her, because otherwise she felt the building would fall apart.

Ms. Clifton stated that she had spoken to the President of the Stafford County Historic Society, Rick MacGregor, regarding both issues to see if he would be able to get the support of his organization.

NEW BUSINESS

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

Mr. Mink stated he took another look at what was missing before wrapping it all up. He explained that he was looking at adding three items, the Engineer Brigade Camp, Belle Plain, and Aquia Landing Redoubts numbers 1, 2 and 3. He further stated that he spoke to Quantico's archeologist who informed him that they were in possession of a report for a Civil War site in Stafford (site number 44ST0302), but a copy would have to be requested by Stafford County. He explained that he was working on a letter requesting for the report to be released which would have to be signed by County staff.

Mr. Mink stated that he had received a lot of comments from individuals who were looking over his report and he would make changes accordingly. He was hoping to have the final format by the end of this calendar year.

Mrs. Dodd asked if the report would be available in digital form to be used by Stafford County for planning purposes. Mr. Mink explained that it would be up to the County since he did not have the ability. He was certain however that it could somehow be inputted into the GIS system. Mrs. Dodd was curious if that could be done by an intern. Mr. Mink stated that due to his very limited GIS knowledge he was uncertain, but he suspected it probably could.

Mr. Pitts also felt it should be easy enough. Ms. Baker added that USGS was included in Stafford County's data base. Mrs. Dodd asked Ms. Baker if she felt that was something that would be done. Ms. Baker replied that that was the intent.

2. Pratt Park Utilities Plan – Mike Smith, Director of Utilities

Mr. Smith from the Department of Utilities stated that his department were working on a water main project going through the edge of Pratt Park. He added that he had received a letter from Mrs. Dodd regarding this site (site 44ST1147). He stated that prior to receiving the letter they had already been working with Greg LaBudde from the Department of Historic Resources. Mr. Smith explained that although there was no

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regulatory action required on the site, Utilities did agree with the Historical Commission that certain measures would have to be taken.

Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Bryon Counsell, Utilities' CIP manager. Mr. Counsell explained that he had met with the Historic Preservation Office, Mr. Greg LaBudde, who made some recommendations on what he would like to see done. Mr. Counsell pointed out that the letter from the Historical Commission outlined the same scope. He further stated that Utilities reached out to Dovetail who submitted a proposal which contained a general scarification of the top soil along the pathway through the park to identify areas that might need more investigation. Mr. Counsell deemed the proposal reasonable. He further mentioned that the project was planned for 2018 which would allow for enough time to do the study, and that the Department of Utilities was aiming for the end of summer/end of fall 2016. He added that an archeologist would be present. Mr. Counsell ensured that all discovered artifacts, if there were any, would be preserved and there would be a report submitted.

Mrs. Dodd asked if any thought was given to compromising potential features. Mr. Counsell stated that a preliminary Phase I and II had been done which reduced the potential of any features other than burial sites. He understood that there was still a possibility that something would be discovered. Mr. Counsell reiterated that there would be sufficient time to adjust if something was found.

Mr. Chichester inquired about the exact location of the main. Mr. Counsell explained that the main would run along the access road around the northern soccer field. He added that it came up from River Road and would traverse the park on the northern limits just inside the tree line and the trail and would head to the south-east ending up over by Earl's Hardware.

3. Jumping Branch Farm

Mrs. Dodd stated that she went to the Technical Review Committee meeting and the engineers for the project were present. She explained that the area was actually Liberty Hall. Mrs. Dodd explained that she informed the engineers that there was a house site as well as a cemetery on the site and let them know what might be asked of the developer. She stated that following the meeting she was contacted by the developer regarding the cemetery and that he was only aware of one burial. Mrs. Dodd stated she explained to the developer that it was a large cemetery. Mr. Chichester stated that he had ancestors on that cemetery.

Mrs. Dodd further stated that she had suggested to the developer to have the cemetery cleaned up with the help of boy scouts, which the developer was not very fond of since he was building 400,000 dollar homes and he felt it should be professionally cleaned. She further stated that she informed the developer that someone had poured concrete over the entire cemetery in an effort to keep weeds down, which unfortunately created a bigger problem. According to Mrs. Dodd the developer was unaware. Mrs. Dodd stated that tree roots were growing through the concrete and creating a big mess. She added that she did not get a definite answer from the developer which was why she recommended writing a formal letter to the developer explaining what the concerns were and expressing the Historical Commission's concern about how this issue would be handled.

Mrs. Dodd stated that she had also recommended changing the name to Liberty Hall which she did not get any response to. She explained that the development was currently named Jumping Branch and she suspected that the name was chosen because of the small creek called Jumping Branch that came down into the property. She added that Jumping Branch Road was actually a road off of Route 1.

Mrs. Dodd felt that a Phase I needed to be done at the house as well as a historic structures report. She added that the cemetery as well as the name issue needed to be addressed.

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Mrs. Kirby made a motion for Mrs. Dodd to write a letter, which was seconded by Mrs. Conner.

The motion passed 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. Falmouth Master Interpretive Plan Implementation

Since the Historical Commission never received hard copies as requested at the previous meeting, they were unable to give any feedback at this time.

Ms. Baker apologized and stated that she was unaware that the hard copies were never sent out.

The item got deferred to the next meeting.

5. Bloomington Signage/Flyers

Ms. Baker stated she had not followed up yet. She added that she had received a new map as well as comments which had been incorporated. Ms. Baker stated she would also have to speak with Parks and Recreation regarding paying for signage to go up. Mrs. Conner offered providing Ms. Baker with more photographs.

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

There was no discussion on this item.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

There were no additional presentations.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman had no report at this time.

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mrs. Kirby introduced a new book she found called *Slave Labor in the Capital* by Bob Arnebeck, which she highly recommended.

Mrs. Dodd stated that she recently spoke with Bill Emond who is the caretaker of the Brent cemetery about what the plans were for Brent cemetery. She added that Mr. Emond had located some missing markers which had been stored at Aquia Church and was asking advice on how to move them to a different storage. Mrs. Dodd felt that if they were stable, they could simply be wrapped in blankets and moved in the back of a truck. Mrs. Dodd stated that Mr. Emond would send her all the information on the stones.

Mrs. Dodd further stated that it came up in conversation that the developer who was building next to the Brent cemetery had offered to donate about 50 acres which the developer couldn't use to the cemetery. Mrs. Dodd further found out that the Diocese which owned the property was now interested in making it an active cemetery again. She added that someone had been out to the cemetery with a GPR unit looking for burials,

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which was unsuccessful. Mrs. Dodd admitted that it was not an easy task to locate burials. She stated that she told Mr. Emond about the cadaver dogs and he was very interested.

Ms. Baker stated that one of the dogs was still inactive due to a broken leg and the other one had been sent to North Carolina. She added that she had just received an email the previous week that there may be other dogs available in the interim. She was confident that the dog with the broken leg would be available in the fall.

Mrs. Dodd inquired whether the small name plates which were supposed to go on the plaque for historic preservation awards had been purchased. Ms. Baker stated that she would have to follow up with Ms. Knighting. Mrs. Dodd added that they would also have to purchase another plaque since they were running out of empty spaces on the first plaque.

Mrs. Dodd brought up the Civil War Cemetery at Granville Subdivision and was wondering if it was the same cemetery that she was familiar with. She inquired if a site plan had been submitted for the subdivision yet. Ms. Baker believed that a cluster concept plan had been submitted but she would have to check on that. Mrs. Dodd stated that she spoke to the property owner whose backyard butts up to the cemetery because he was concerned about what the developer was going to do with it. She reiterated that Mrs. Forestier had gone out to the site because of environmental issues, which was when she discovered a quarry site. A cultural assessment had been done according to Mrs. Dodd, but there was no mention of the quarry. She explained that it was a small Aquia sand stone quarry and she was certain that the stones in the Wallace Payne cemetery came from that quarry. Mr. Pitts believed that there was a second cemetery out there.

Mrs. Dodd felt that a letter should be sent to this developer also. Ms. Baker stated she would provide the contact information.

Mr. Pitts stated that he was contacted by a Mr. Brent Reidenbach who was a volunteer at the Weems-Botts museum in Dumfries and was trying to become an expert on the Hood's Texas Brigade in the Civil War. According to Mr. Reidenbach, the brigade camped for a few days at Brook Station which is why he contacted Mr. Pitts. Mr. Pitts stated he referred him to Chatham.

Mrs. Dodd inquired if the individual providing the Historical Commission with the County's 300th anniversary celebration issue had been sent a thank you note. Ms. Baker stated that she had sent her an email, but the Historical Commission could certainly send an actual note. She further agreed to send a hard copy of the paper to the Commission.

The Commission decided that Mr. Pitts would send the note.

Mrs. Dodd mentioned the new Moncure school site report and felt that there was no further action required at this point. She further stated that there was some deposit of quartz found on site which was likely used by Native Americans. She felt that there should be some sort of sign explaining what was found there. Ms. Conner stated that she knew the principal of the school and offered to contact him about this. Mrs. Dodd stated she would offer a copy of the report to the school and the help of the Historical Commission with putting together language for a sign.

Ms. Baker stated that she was contacted by the Austin Ridge HOA regarding graffiti on the Towson House and were looking for advice on how to remove it. Mrs. Dodd stated she would look up some information but wanted to make sure that it would not be power washed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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Mrs. Dodd had some minor changes to the minutes.

Mrs. Kirby made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Pitts seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.