

STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES
February 2, 2017

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, February 2, 2017, was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Anita Dodd in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Chichester, Anita Dodd, Barbara Kirby, Ken Pitts, and David Rodriguez

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jane Conner and Ann Best-Rolls

STAFF PRESENT: Kathy Baker

GUESTS PRESENT: Eric Mink and Irma Clifton

CALL TO ORDER:

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

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mr. Pitts called roll and stated there was a quorum present.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Dodd asked if there were any public presentations.

Mrs. Clifton stated they would be able to open Shelton Cottage for garden week and would report more next month.

NEW BUSINESS

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

Mr. Mink discussed a map that showed some of the Union encampment locations in the summer of 1862. He stated two of the four brigades campsites that were consistent from late April to early August 1862 were plotted on the map. He stated the other two were not plotted and he would not be able to put them on the map, but for consistency and thoroughness he would include them next month. He stated possibly with research their written words would give their location. He stated one of the two brigades that were here in the summer 1862, which were New Yorkers and United States Sharp Shooters, seemed to be in one campsite for most of the summer, except when going on patrols. He stated that campsite was now consumed by the Clearview Heights subdivision across from Saint Clair Brooks Park. He stated the other brigade became known as the Vampire Brigade, after they left the area in the Summer of 1862 and went on to the battlefields, they had five different encampments. He stated they were by the Potomac Creek Bridge and were either on or adjacent to Ferry Farm at one point, but the map showed their camp sites as part of Pratt Park and the National Park Service site in Chatham. He stated there were also photographs included in the report of their encampment in Pratt Park. He stated he would work on the other two brigades for next month and move on to Confederate camps from 1861 and 1862 in Quantico.

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Mrs. Kirby stated they were also looking for information from Kate concerning the camp where the antimony mine was located on Aquia Run. She stated they were asking for a copy of the Phase I study that was performed.

Mrs. Dodd stated Debbie Shelton initially asked about it because they were trying to connect that mine with one in Jamestown.

Mrs. Kirby stated Ms. Shelton had a connection in Jamestown and there was a lot written about the mine.

Ms. Baker stated she would try to obtain the information requested.

Mrs. Kirby stated she found it fascinating watching the camp movements, with some staying in the same area and others moving all over Stafford County.

Mr. Mink stated there was one encampment that noted the location was good but there was inadequate water supply, which may have been why there was a lot of movement with some encampments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2. Falmouth Master Interpretive Plan Implementation

Ms. Baker stated after the last meeting there was talk about adding Belmont, she suggested adding Chatham also.

Mrs. Dodd stated yes, Belmont, Chatham, and Clearview also should be added.

Ms. Baker explained they were talking about the Falmouth Master Interpretive Plan, which was setting up a local app and a web app that you could view and do a self-guided tour. She stated this was Phase I of the interpretive plan before they would start putting up signage. She explained the GIS department created this with photos and a little blurb. She also noted the Barnes House was currently under construction and hopefully by the time this was ready to go live, the house would look completed and they could include a new picture. She stated this was the latest update except for Belmont. She did not have much luck with their website because all their information was lengthy. She stated she would contact Dave Berreth and ask for a small write-up and potentially connect to their webpage. She asked the Commission if that was okay. She explained the ones currently included were either owned by the county or had street views, so they would not impose on the owners. She explained they would also have to talk to the property owners and could add more properties as needed. She asked Mr. Mink if the Park Service would be interested in having Chatham included in the walking tour.

Mr. Mink stated he would mention this when he went back. He stated since it was an interpretive plan, it would fall under John Massey, but he did not think it would be a problem.

Ms. Baker gave Mr. Mink a copy of the draft.

Mr. Mink stated he would have Mr. Massey get in touch with Ms. Baker to discuss the project.

Ms. Baker stated they could also link on the Chatham webpage. She asked the Commission to review the draft and make suggestions and it could be discussed at the next meeting.

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Mrs. Dodd stated she had an addition to new business, and that was to start thinking about the Preservation Awards.

Ms. Baker handed out copies of the letter that went out last year with the attached form. She stated if the Commission wanted to follow the same format, staff could send the letter out in the next week and have responses back by March 25th which would allow the Commission time to discuss in April and the presentation at the second meeting of the Board of Supervisors in May.

Mrs. Kirby stated she thought the same letter could be used.

Mrs. Dodd agreed.

Ms. Baker stated staff would make the necessary changes and send them out. She stated staff would handle the food, like they did last year.

3. I-95 Obelisk

Ms. Baker stated County Administration had a meeting with VDOT. She read an email from Mike Smith, Deputy County Administrator, concerning his conversation with VDOT which stated the current location of the obelisk would not be disturbed by the interchange project. The project that would potentially impact this was the FredEx, the extension of the hot lanes that would go from Garrisonville Road to Route 17. As of now the FredEx project was very early on and VDOT was in the process of developing the request for proposal requirements. The earliest construction would begin would be 2019. VDOT would include language in the request for proposals regarding the removal of the obelisk, which would ensure they would not be damaged or forgotten. VDOT was aware of the desire to have those items delivered to Stafford and they would work with us to obtain them. Therefore they would not be impacted or removed for at least two years and they would be written into the request for proposals that would go out to the contractor. She stated she did forward this email to Rick MacGregor, since he was the one who organized this.

4. Virginia Bridge Report

Mrs. Dodd asked Ms. Baker if she found out about the bridge.

Ms. Baker stated she did not and asked if it was the Falmouth Bridge or Chatham Bridge.

Mrs. Dodd stated both. She stated the river belonged to Stafford.

Ms. Baker stated the Chatham Bridge was maintained by the City.

Mrs. Kirby stated there were a lot of records in the Courthouse in regards to the Chatham Bridge.

Mrs. Dodd stated there were also early records on the Falmouth Bridge with Stafford calling for contractors to rebuild the bridge when it was lost in 1942. She stated she felt they both belonged to Stafford and they both should be eligible for National Register since they were both over 50 years old. She asked Ms. Baker if there was a timeline to answer the request.

Ms. Baker stated she thought it was 60 days and she also thought the bridges were mentioned and were ineligible.

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Mrs. Dodd stated the Historical Society stated they were ineligible, but she felt they were eligible. She stated the letter stated they did not see any bridges in Stafford that were eligible. She stated if those two bridges belonged to Stafford, there were bridges in Stafford that were eligible.

Ms. Baker stated she would do more research concerning ownership, but was not sure that ownership was the correct word because the County did not own anything within VDOT right-of-way.

Mrs. Dodd stated if the bridges were considered to be in Stafford County then the State would have to be notified of the two bridges. There is some record of the County requesting bids on the replacement of the Falmouth Bridge.

Ms. Baker stated the County has not done anything for Chatham Bridge in recent years. The City did all the paving and maintenance work.

Mrs. Dodd stated the question was, were the bridges considered to be in Stafford County or not.

5. Ray Grizzle Center

Ms. Baker stated the Commission had asked to invite the County Attorney to this meeting to discuss doing a title search because there was a clause in the 1924 deed that said it would revert back to the original owners if the use as a school did not continue. She stated in generally looking at subsequent deeds there was new language that did away with that clause. When the property was turned over to the Fredericksburg – Stafford Park Authority in the early 1970's that clause was no longer in the conditions. When she spoke with the County Attorney he indicated they would not do a title search on the property just for that reason. She stated she spoke with Rick MacGregor and passed on the information. Mr. MacGregor indicated he was going to reach out to Supervisors Bob Thomas to see if there was anything the County to do to preserve, upgrade, or restore to reuse that building.

Mrs. Kirby stated she was told one of the problems was asbestos in the building.

Mrs. Dodd stated that was what she was told also and she was sure it was because of the age of the building.

Ms. Baker stated she did not know if Mr. MacGregor was going to follow up with this Commission and suggested someone reach out to him to follow up concerning discussion with Supervisor Thomas.

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

Mrs. Dodd stated they would skip over item 6 and asked Mrs. Clifton if she had any additional comments.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Clifton stated she would like to give an update concerning the State Register Nomination for Shelton's Cottage and she then added the other house on Gordon Street, because she was afraid it might be in danger from the proposal that L.C. Taylor was making. Although it was not colonial, it was a mid-century dwelling and had some value to the Village of Falmouth.

Mrs. Dodd asked which property she was referring to.

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Mrs. Clifton stated it was the cinderblock house going down Gordon Street. She stated she was doing some research on that to see if that might fit into the fabric of Falmouth. She also stated the Taylor proposal for Falmouth would come before the Planning Commission in late February or early March. She asked Ms. Baker to confirm.

Ms. Baker stated currently that was scheduled for March 8th.

Mrs. Clifton stated she would appreciate it if the Commission would keep their eye on what was going on there. The little Village of Falmouth needed all the help it could get. She asked if the Commission had any feelings about the project, she would appreciate letting the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors know. She stated the little church at 102 Cambridge Street that had been abandoned for years was looking very sad. She asked if the County had any regulations to require that the property be cleaned up.

Mrs. Dodd stated there was currently a for sale sign out front now. She stated the owner had put it back together a little from when she looked at it a year ago.

Mrs. Clifton stated the Special Exception for Clearview was going before the Board of Supervisors on this coming Tuesday night. She asked the Commission if they had any strong feelings about that project to please make their wishes known to your Supervisor. She stated in her opinion she felt it was an ideal situation, but there were some problems that would have to be worked out. But if it meant using the property and keeping it up, she was definitely for the project. She stated the National Register for the two properties she was talking about had a long lead time in Virginia. She stated if she would get it in the March submission, it would not come up for consideration until late next fall.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mrs. Dodd stated a report was passed out that she received which was a MOA for the Embrey Mill House or the Knight House on the Embrey Mill property. She stated a lot of archeological investigations had been done around the property, the house had been moth balled and a chain link fence was currently around it. She stated the report was a proposal for the restoration for the house. The house would stay in the development and there was information in the report that shows the end product. She stated the two cemeteries would also be preserved. She stated the engineer sent the report to her, because she had been sort of involved along the way. She stated she spoke with LeAnn Ennis, who was the planner working on this project, and she felt some type of reaction from the Commission was required. She asked the Commission if they wanted to look the report over and get back with her so she could respond.

Mr. Pitts asked if they plan to use the property.

Mrs. Dodd stated the report stated that their initial plan was to use it as an interpretative tool for local farming and homestead information. But she thought it may also be a place for Cub Scouts to meet or something like that or it could serve a dual purpose.

Mr. Pitts asked if the Homeowners Association would be responsible once complete.

Mrs. Dodd stated that was not mentioned in the report, but that was usually what would happen. She stated they planned to have that finished by the end of the year.

Ms. Baker stated it was proposed to be within common open space area, so that was typically what would happen.

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Mr. Chichester stated he did not see a downside.

Mrs. Dodd agreed.

Mrs. Kirby stated she had a concern about it going to a Homeowners Association.

Mrs. Dodd stated that was when it would go out of the developer's hands. She suggested the Commission work with the HOA and maybe find a group to partner with them and help them.

Ms. Baker told Mrs. Dodd to check with Mrs. Ennis and ask her to check the proffers to see if it was specific as to who would take ownership or responsibility.

Mrs. Dodd asked for a motion to show the Commission was happy with this proposal.

Mr. Pitts made the motion.

Mrs. Kirby seconded.

The motion passed 5-0 (Mrs. Conner and Ms. Best-Rolls were absent).

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mrs. Dodd stated the Cemetery Committee was finally recording the Stafford Cemeteries that were on the Quantico Base. She stated they had been trying to get permission over a year, and now every Thursday over the next few months they would be going out with Mr. Stance, the volunteer coordinator for the Base. She stated there were forty some cemeteries in what was Stafford, and they had done approximately twenty-two. She has also asked to see a couple that were in Prince William as well. She stated most of the cemeteries that they were looking at have been moved. She stated sometimes as she looks at them she believes there are still people there.

Mrs. Kirby stated it had been brought up that when they moved they thought everybody in the cemetery was moved, but that was not the case. Because they had to get in touch with the family and in some cases there were no family members or in some cases the family said no.

Mrs. Dodd stated she and Mrs. Kirby had wanted information about the company that moved the individuals and wanted a copy of their records. She stated she now has a copy of those records. She stated the particular company was no longer in existence and their records were gone. But the information she had basically records what cemeteries they worked at and who they removed. She stated she did know if they were white they went to Cedar Run and if they were black they went to Carver. She stated she was pleased they were finally getting this done. She stated those were ones that the Base knew about and somebody had been to them and recorded where they were. She stated she would get copies to the County and to the Cemetery Committee members. She stated she had recently finished the cataloging and written the report for the archeology that was done for the Magistrates office in 2001. She stated the report was currently being edited and once that was complete she would get the report to the Commission and the report and artifacts to the County. She stated they were hoping to find the age of the building; however, she believed when the preservation was done in the 1970s they dug through the original builder's trench to the bottom of the foundation. They then installed a concrete pad next to the foundation. This is causing the original foundation to deteriorate. The concrete is not compatible with the handmade brick and photographs taken show the brick deteriorating. She stated she expected to find evidence of the 1942 flood, which came right

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up to the building, but there was no evidence. It was obviously highly disturbed sometime in the 1970s when the concert was laid. It does appear they went around the entire foundation. But there were artifacts in the layers that dated back to the late 1700s but they do not help with dating the building as they are mixed with modern artifacts.

Mr. Pitts stated he was still trying to get in touch with the owner of Grandville Estates, but has not had any response. He stated he would keep trying.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 1, 2016

Mrs. Dodd asked if anyone had and comments or corrections to the December 1, 2016 minutes. Hearing none she asked for a motion.

Mr. Pitts made a motion to approve.

Dr. Rodriguez seconded.

The motion passed 5-0 (Mrs. Conner and Ms. Best-Rolls were absent).

January 5, 2017

Mrs. Dodd asked if anyone had and comments or corrections to the January 5, 2017 minutes. Hearing none she asked for a motion.

Mr. Chichester made a motion to approve.

Dr. Rodriguez seconded.

The motion passed 5-0 (Mrs. Conner and Ms. Best-Rolls were absent).

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Baker stated she had one more item; the Falmouth Redevelopment Overlay District would be going to public hearing with the Planning Commission on February 22, 2017. She stated notices would be going out to all the property owners to let them know of the public hearing and to give some background. She stated the overlay could apply to up to 83 properties and the owners could opt out if they wanted to. She stated the meeting would start at 6:30 on February 22, 2017. She stated the notice, map, and actual ordinance would be mailed to adjacent property owners as well as subject property owners.

Mrs. Kirby made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Chichester seconded.

The motion passed 5-0 (Mrs. Conner and Ms. Best-Rolls were absent).

With no further items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.