

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
3 January 2012

Present: Diggins, Milt; Dixon, Mike; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Folk, Patricia; Simperts, Nancy; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Manejwala, Asma

Call to Order: Chairperson Folk called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Nancy Simperts to approve the October 2011 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Audrey Edwards. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Chairperson Folk presented the calendar year 2012 Historic District Commission (HDC) meeting schedule. The dates were 1/3/12, 4/3/12, 7/3/12, and 10/2/12. The HDC decided to move the 4/3/12 meeting to 4/10/12 and the 7/3/12 meeting to 7/10/12. Chairperson Folk requested that the HDC members send an e-mail to either herself or Betty Patterson in advance of the meetings indicating whether they will be attending to ensure a quorum is obtained.

Chairperson Folk indicated that Mike Dixon had suggested at an earlier meeting that the HDC develop a strategic plan in an effort to improve their efficacy. Mike Dixon indicated that it would be a way to create a roadmap for the next couple of years. Ron Edwards posited that the plan should include a year by year listing of the properties that have received designation. He stated that the exercise would be an excellent opportunity for the HDC to regroup. Nancy Simperts summarized the designations by year and noted that education is a significant component of the process. Chairperson Folk observed that marketing is an equally important component. Milt Diggins said that understanding the HDC and its mission as well as communicating that to the public is crucial to success. The HDC decided that the plan should emphasize marketing, education, and communication.

Chairperson Folk stated that the HDC, at an earlier meeting, had expressed an interest in conducting another workshop. She observed that educating the public about the HDC is important. Audrey Edwards noted that she had received two or three telephone calls since the article ran in the *Cecil Whig*. Director Sennstrom relayed that he had provided the brochure and nomination form to eight individuals who had read the same article and expressed an interest in nominating their properties for historic designation. Milt Diggins questioned how effective a workshop would be. The HDC decided that there would be no purpose in having a workshop. Director Sennstrom indicated that an ad will be run in the *Cecil Whig* providing the dates, location, and times of the 2012 HDC meetings. Chairperson Folk stated that an article in the *Cecil Guardian* would be helpful. Audrey Edwards suggested that future articles should make it explicit that the County's HDC and ordinance do not apply to the municipalities. She also requested that Milt Diggins' article be resent to the members of the HDC. Mike Dixon stated that there should be a focus on the realtors to raise awareness of the potential to nominate older

structures they may be selling. He suggested providing the realtors with the brochure and nomination form so that they could provide them to their clients. Nancy Simperts concurred. Mike Dixon also indicated that an article could be placed in the Cecil Historical Society newsletter. Audrey Edwards noted that the article should provide information on the difference between the Cecil Historic Trust and the Cecil Historical Society. Ron Edwards indicated that the article should attempt to address the concerns of those who may object to designation.

Chairperson Folk suggested that there should be a compendium of research assistance and resources for preservation and rehabilitation that the HDC could provide to people. Audrey Edwards produced a compendium that the State of Delaware had produced as an example. Director Sennstrom indicated that he would run the idea past the Board of County Commissioners to see if there would be any objections or concerns with the County producing a similar document. Nancy Simperts queried as to whether the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) has a list of resources. Ron Edwards answered in the affirmative. Mike Dixon suggested inviting Ms. Beckley of Preservation Maryland and representatives of MHT to a future meeting.

Chairperson Folk asked if the HDC had any interest in moving the location of their meetings to venues outside of the County Administration Building. The HDC indicating that they had no desire to meet outside of the County Administration Building. Chairperson Folk suggested that the HDC encourage those who previously received designation to write letters to the editor about their experiences with the process and the HDC. Nancy Simperts indicated that she would contact several designees to make the request. Chairperson Folk inquired as to where the HDC was on the subject of plaques. Director Sennstrom stated that David Black had done some research on the subject and found that there were several firms that specialize in bronze plaques. However, the cost was quite dear. Paint "N" Place is a local vendor that specializes in urethane plaques. Nancy Simperts stated that she could deliver the template to Paint "N" Place on her way home to obtain a price quote.

Adjournment: Chairperson Folk adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, 10 April 2012

Respectfully submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director
Planning & Zoning

**CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
10 April 2012**

Present: Diggins, Milt; Dixon, Mike; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Folk, Patricia; Simperts, Nancy; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Manejwala, Asma

Call to Order: Chairperson Folk called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of minutes: Ron Edwards made a motion to approve the 1/3/12 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Mike Dixon. All members present voted in favor of motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Audrey Edwards reported that she had been in contact with an applicant for historic designation who she believed would be sending in their nomination form shortly. Nancy Simperts reported that she had been in contact with two individuals who likewise would most likely be submitting nominations in the near future.

Director Sennstrom reported that the Historic District Commission (HDC) was in receipt of three applications to nominate properties for historic designation. The applications concern the Brick House owned by Susan Shannon, the Isaac England House & Gardens owned by James & Julia Crothers, and Bristole owned by William & Ann Stubbs. Chairperson Folk asked Director Sennstrom to present the applications.

BRICK HOUSE

Director Sennstrom noted that Ms. Shannon was present to support her nomination of the Brick House. He continued by providing the HDC with the narrative supplied by Ms. Shannon in regard to the Brick House's historical and architectural significance. The first floor plan of the main block originally consisted of two rooms, one behind the other, each heated by separate fireplaces, with a stair on the west wall of the back room. A shorter two story kitchen wing is attached to the east gable end. Although the common bond brick house has seen structural alterations, it is architecturally significant as an example of the double cell house type in Cecil County. The house had served as a time as the rectory for St. Mary Anne's parish. The deed for the Brick House was recorded in the name of the vestry of St. Mary Anne's Episcopal Church of North East during the tenure of the Reverend Enoch K. Miller, who also served as a chaplain for the Union Army during the Civil War. The original paneled doors are still intact and the window and door frames bear three inch in diameter ornamentations. The fireplaces are the original ones and the wide pine floors are original. The walls and some other parts of the house are three course brick with the walls being sand plastered to the brick. The fieldstone from the old spring house is used as a facing for the living room fireplace. Salmon pink brick compose the house with window ledges of Port Deposit granite. The property has not changed hands in over 60 years.

Discussion ensued on the actual date that the dwelling was erected as there was a questions as to whether 1801 or 1840 was the most accurate. Ron Edwards stated that the photographs of the interior lead one to believe that the dwelling is circa 1840's.

Motion was made by Mike Dixon to recommend that the property receive historic designation by the Board of County Commissioners. Motion was seconded by Milt Diggins. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

BRISTOLE

Director Sennstrom noted that William & Ann Stubbs were present in support of the nomination to have Bristole designated as a historic site. Director Sennstrom noted that there was a 1744 land grant of 500 acres to grow tobacco. The property presently is a grain and herb farm. The farm has two lanes which lead to Blair Shore Road and to Elk Forest Road. The house, situated in the center of the farm, does not face either road but instead faces east toward what was St. Thomas' branch, a creek that is now silted in but was once the "road" to the property in 1744. The dwelling is 18' X 48' 3 bay 2 story with hand adzed timber on the first floor and dovetailed plank construction on the second floor. There are chimneys on each end of the dwelling. The house is covered with beaded cypress boards as is the story and a half one bay log kitchen – telescoped into the southern end. The roof is corrugated metal with a fire door by the south chimney. Box cornices with quarter round back band molding and beaded rake board finish the treatment. Partially enclosed chimneys are constructed of stone with mud and straw mortar to the first floor height. The rest of the chimney is constructed of regular mortared red brick with glazed headers to a height of three feet above the peak. The top five bricks are corbelled out twice and returned twice to complete the double flue chimney. The appearance is of a long one room deep Chesapeake Bay planters house with center hall with a window front and rear in every room. The house has had minimal changes since the kitchen and a second floor were added in the late 18th or early 19th century. A full length porch across the front with a Victorian door out of the dining room seem to have been 19th century add-ons. The were removed and replaced with 4 over 2 windows front and back in the mid 20th century. A porch on the southern end of the kitchen was enclosed and made into a weather boarded laundry room adding another ten feet making the house 74' X 20'.The dwelling has been described in "The American Backwoods Frontier" as a remarkable house, built no later than 1750, that offers a splendid example of an early dogtrot dwelling near the Midland cultural hearth.

Out buildings on the property include a former smoke house, a two story granary with hand hewn beams, a grain shoot, and a corn crib, a two story barn with a horse section, storage capacity for 1,000 bales of hay or straw, a loft with large door to permit unloading of hay, a milking area, and a wagon shed. The milkhouse had a cold water cooler to keep milk until it was transported to the creamery. A family graveyard exists on site with a stone wall enclosure. The largest Sycamore tree in Cecil County dating from 1578 is on site along with a second Sycamore tree estimated to be 250 years old. 8 generations of ownership of the property progress from Thomas Biddle, Thomas Boulden, Sr. and Thomas Boulden Jr. in 1744, Biddle ownership in 1795, Fowler ownership in 1843, Carpenter ownership in 1866, Freeman, Price, Wallace, & Brady in 1870, Brady in 1889, Milburn in 1889, and Stubbs since 1959.

Discussion ensued on the amount of documentation submitted in support of the application. Mr. Stubbs indicated he researched the history of the property and Mrs. Stubbs organized it into the narrative.

Motion was made by Mike Dixon to recommend that Bristole be designated a historic site by the Board of County Commissioners due to its historical and architectural significance. Motion was seconded by Nancy Simperts. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

ISAAC ENGLAND HOUSE & GARDENS

Director Sennstrom presented the application from James & Julia Crothers to designate the Isaac England House & Gardens as a historic site. He noted that the house is a 2 ½ story central hall plan brick house three bays across and one room deep that faces south. The entire structure rests on uncoursed stone foundation and is covered medium sloped slate roof. The south façade is laid in Flemish bond with a single string belt course beneath the second story windows. The fenestration is symmetrical with the first floor windows containing 9/6 sash and the second story containing 6/6. The surrounds on the doors and windows are reeded with plain corner blocks. Louvered shutters are found on both first and second story windows. The central door has six raised panels with inset moldings and a three light transom. A boxed cornice extends across the main façade with a bed molding below. During renovations in the 1940's a late 19th century shed roofed porch was removed from the front of the house and a one bay covered stoop was substituted. The west façade is laid in common bond, with one row of headers for every five rows of stretchers. Isaac England's initials appear in a glazed header pattern on the west façade. The execution of the letters is very irregular due probably to the craftsman's unfamiliarity with the primarily late 18th and early 19th century practice of decorating gable ends with glazed headers. Sash windows are found on both floors in the northern bay. The four pane attic windows flank the interior end chimney. The two story c. 1800-1825 brick wing is connected on a perpendicular axis to the north side of the west wall. It is two bays across by one room deep. The walls are laid in common bond. Door openings are found in the southern bay of each first floor side wall. Windows in the northern bay are 6/6 sash, as are the second floor openings. An interior chimney rises from the north end gable. A 1976 two story frame addition is attached to the north gable end of the wing, which has 6/6 windows with plain trim, a slate roof of medium pitch, and a single story screened porch across the west side. A glassed porch occupies the first floor on the east side. The house is a virtually unaltered example of a form common during the early 19th century in northeastern Maryland and southeastern Pennsylvania. This form is typified by Georgian floor plan, fenestration, and shape, with Federal interior details. The house has a central hall plan, three bay front with central entrance, front façade laid in Flemish bond, and initials in glazed headers on the gable end, all features of Georgian period houses of this area. This particular form, without the initials, remained in frequent use here until the mid 19th century. Inside, the mantels and other trim are Federal in style. The woodwork is well executed and exhibits a variety of examples of Federal period work. The glazed header initials are a late example of a tradition that was fast fading in the early 19th century.

Audrey Edwards inquired as to whether the acreage was included on the nomination form. Director Sennstrom indicated that it was included.

Motion was made by Nancy Simperts to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners designate the Isaac England House & Gardens as a historic site. Motion was seconded by Milt Diggins. All members voted in favor of Motion. Motion carried.

Director Sennstrom noted that all three nominations would be on the Planning Commission's 4/16/12 evening agenda and the Board of County Commissioners' 5/1/12 meeting agenda.

Old Business: Chairperson Folk inquired as to how the HDC was doing with the identification plaques for designated structures. Nancy Simperts indicated that a mock up plaque was being fabricated by Paint "N" Place so that the HDC would have a tangible example of what a potential plaque would look like. Discussion ensued on the most suitable material for the plaque, whether that be vinyl, aluminum, or bronze. Bronze was the preferred material.

Audrey Edwards noted a collaboration between Kent County, Maryland and Chestertown to use Geographic Information System (GIS) resources to inventory historic sites in both the Town and the County. She suggested a similar project for Cecil County and its Towns. Director Sennstrom indicated that the County's GIS Coordinator, David Black, would most likely be able to handle this project in-house. Mr. Black agreed to appear at the July meeting with a demonstration of his interpretation of the project.

Adjournment: Chairperson Folk adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: 10 July 2012, 3:00 p.m., Bainbridge Room, County Administration Building, 200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Elkton, MD.

Respectfully submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director – Planning & Zoning

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
10 July 2012

Present: Diggins, Milt; Dixon, Mike; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Folk, Patricia; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Manejwala, Asma; Simpers, Nancy

Call to Order: Chairperson Folk called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Ron Edwards made a motion to approve the 10 April 2012 meeting minutes. Audrey Edwards seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Director Sennstrom reported that James Crothers had submitted a request to take advantage of the County's Historic Property Tax Credit for renovation and restoration work to the Isaac England House. Article III of Chapter 258 of the Code of Cecil County affords the owners of structures designated as historic sites the ability to request a property tax credit of up to 10% of their properly documented expenses for the restoration and preservation of their structures. Director Sennstrom explained that Mr. Crothers supporting documentation reflected that restoration work in the amount of \$2,128.06 had been done to the Isaac England House. He noted that if the Historic District Commission (HDC) concurred with the documentation submitted, the HDC could recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant the tax credit in the amount of \$212.81. Discussion ensued regarding the tax credit as well as the documentation submitted by Mr. Crothers.

Mike Dixon made a motion to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant a tax credit in the amount of \$212.81. Milt Diggins seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Chairperson Folk indicated that she was interested in exploring a potential partnership between the HDC and the Cecil County Historical Society. She is of the opinion that a partnership would be mutually beneficial to both entities. Mike Dixon lamented that both organizations appear to be reaching the same audience and without outreach to a younger segment of the population, will not be able to generate long term interest in the County's historical heritage. Ron Edwards noted that younger people today are not exposed to history due to changes in the curriculum in the public schools. Therefore, they lack the knowledge necessary to stoke their curiosity on what has previously occurred regarding the County, region, State, and federal history. Mike Dixon noted that the younger segment of society could potentially be reached through venues such as podcasts or facebook, as well as the Society's website. Mike Dixon suggested that the Board of Realtors be contacted so that the HDC could provide an educational presentation to alert buyers of potentially significant historic structures that they may want to contact the HDC to obtain data on the benefits of nominating the property for designation. The HDC asked Director Sennstrom to contact the Board of Realtors to gauge their interest in having a presentation made at a future meeting.

David Black, the County's GIS Coordinator, appeared to present his efforts in response to Audrey Edwards' comments at the April meeting regarding the County's designated properties and informational links connected thereto. Mr. Black took the HDC through the County's GIS capabilities and showed how individuals could link the various data sets to the designated properties to review the applications and supporting documentation, but also access a plethora of additional data on each property. The HDC, being duly impressed with Mr. Black's presentation, requested that Planning & Zoning's portion of the County's website be revised to include processes demonstrated.

Chairperson Folk reported that HDC member Asma Manejwala had submitted her letter of resignation from the Historic District Commission.

Director Sennstrom noted that Nancy Simperts had provided materials relative to plaques to affix to historically designated structures. Ms. Simperts documentation included photographs of potential plaque layout as well as the cost of bronze and aluminum plaques. The HDC perused the documentation and requested that Director Sennstrom contact Ms. Simperts to obtain more specifics regarding the plaques.

Adjournment: Chairperson Folk adjourned the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

Next Meeting: 2 October 2012, 3:00 p.m., Bainbridge Room, 200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Elkton, MD.

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director – Planning & Zoning

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
2 October 2012

Present: Diggins, Milt; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Folk, Patricia; Ricketts, Stephanie; Simperts, Nancy; Black, David; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Dixon, Mike

Guests: Gibson, Ross & Debbie

Call to Order: Chairperson Folk called the meeting to order at 2:57 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Nancy Simperts made a motion to approve the July meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Audrey Edwards. All members present voted in favor of motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Chairperson Folk introduced new HDC member Stephanie Ricketts to the Commission members. Ms. Ricketts provided a brief soliloquy regarding her background.

Chairperson Folk introduced Ross Gibson and asked him to provide elucidation on his recent e-mail for the HDC's edification. Mr. Gibson explained that he is interested in providing information to the owners of historic structures on the proper techniques for restoration. He explained that stormwater is a big problem leading to flooded basements. Correcting roof leaks is also an important component of proper maintenance. Proper mortar is a crucial matter when it comes to repointing. Mr. Gibson feels education is the key to ensuring the survival of the County's historic assets through the execution of proper restoration work. He is willing to share his knowledge of new building products that won't detract from the historical character and will permit the project to be done correctly the first time. Mr. Gibson emphasized that he is not looking for work, he is only looking to share his knowledge. Debbie Gibson indicated that an old house club could be initiated to discuss the latest products, tax credits, and methods of restoration which could act as a support group for historic property owners. The club may ease trepidation among the property owners and could lead to new nominations for historic designation. Discussion ensued on potential benefits of such an organization. Ron Edwards asked if Mr. Gibson needs to obtain building permits for his work. Mr. Gibson explained that he does not if physical alteration is not occurring.

David Black presented an overview of the resources available through the County's GIS to those individuals seeking information on historic sites within Cecil County. Discussion ensued on the information available on the internet as well as potential expansions of data associated with each site. Mr. Black notified the HDC that there is a free app known as arcgis in the appstore for those who desire to explore the County's GIS site.

Nancy Simperts presented background information on the identification plaque for designated sites. The HDC determined that each property owner of a designated site that wished to have a plaque could contact the manufacturer and pay for it themselves. The HDC determined that it would be beneficial to contact the owners of the designated properties to inform them that they can order a plaque at their expense if they choose to do so.

Audrey Edwards reported that she attended two conferences related to historic preservation and thanked the county for paying for her registration fees.

Director Sennstrom indicated that he contacted Debbie Cain, Executive Director of the Board of Realtors, to inquire as to when elements of the HDC would be able to present an informational briefing to the Board. He explained that Ms. Cain said that the Board will not be having any more meetings this calendar year, but that if she is contacted after the first of the new year, she would be willing to discuss a meeting date.

Adjournment: Chairperson Folk adjourned the meeting at 3:41 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, 8 January 2013.

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director – Planning & Zoning