

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2014

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

Absent: None

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

New Business: Chairperson Folk inquired as to whether any applications for nomination had been received. Director Sennstrom replied in the negative.

Chairperson Folk noted that David Black had completed the links between the County's website and Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission, Public Libraries, and the Historical Society. Nancy Simperts noted that a link should be effectuated with the Farm Bureau as well. The Historic District Commission (HDC) discussed the establishment of links with the Herald newspaper, the Cecil Whig, as well as placing brochures in the Town Halls, the Principio Mansion, and Elk Forge Bed & Breakfast.

Chairperson Folk reported that Erika Sturgill will be doing an article in an upcoming edition of the Cecil Whig regarding the HDC. The Chairperson indicated that she initiated contact with Ms. Sturgill in an effort to educate and inform the public about the HDC and the benefits derived from designation such as the prohibition of demolition of structures.

Chairperson Folk and Mike Dixon discussed the March 1, 2014 Cecil County Historical Society meeting regarding "Old House Research". Mr. Dixon indicated that Chairperson Folk should limit her comments to no more than 10 minutes with set up at 1:30 p.m. for a meeting commencement at 2:00 p.m. Audrey Edwards agreed to be Ms. Folk's alternate in the event the Chairperson was unable to attend. Discussion ensued regarding the Historical Society's speaker programs.

The HDC reviewed the revised brochures and provided input on further design improvements. Chairperson Folk asked if any testimonials had been received. None had been received. Chairperson Folk had talked to several designees as to testimonials and was waiting for responses.

Adjournment: Chairperson Folk adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 1, 2014, 3:00 p.m., County Administration Building

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director – Planning & Zoning

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 1, 2014

Present: Diggins, Milt; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Folk, Patricia; Simperts, Nancy; Black, David R.; and Sennstrom, Eric.

Absent: Dawson, Michael W.; and Dixon, Mike

Call to Order: Ms. Folk called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

New Business:

Ms. Simperts made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2014 meeting of the HDC. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Mr. Black noted that the HDC has received an application from Ms. Patricia D. Folk and Dr. Edgar E. Folk, III to nominate the Keiffer Brick House as a historic structure. Mr. Black provided copies of the nomination form and accompanying application packet to the members for their perusal. He summarized the application and read pertinent highlights pertaining to the property's historic nature.

Ms. Edwards asked if the property had a CE number (a Maryland Historic Trust designation).

Mr. Black answered in the affirmative. The CE number is CE-133.

Mr. Diggins was intrigued by some of the previous owners listed in the property's chain of title. He commented specifically on W. Pinkney Ewing and Captain Nicholas Manley.

Ms. Folk noted that she would be recusing herself from voting.

Ms. Edwards made a motion to recommend approval of the application to nominate for historic designation. Ms. Simperts seconded the motion to recommend approval. All members present, with the exception of Ms. Folk, who had recused herself, voted in favor of the motion to approve. Motion carried.

Mr. Diggins discussed a presentation he recently made at the Cecil County Historical Society. The presentation was well attended, and he handed out HDC brochures to interested individuals.

Ms. Folk commented that she and Mr. Sennstrom recently met with Erika Sturgill. Ms. Sturgill has agreed to do an article about the HDC for a future Friday edition of the Cecil Whig.

Ms. Folk asked County staff to brief the HDC members regarding the County's use of Facebook and Twitter. Mr. Black summarized the ways in which the County's IT Department and Department of Emergency Services use said platforms. Planning & Zoning staff does not directly use either Facebook or Twitter, but they could pass along items to be tweeted or added to the County's Facebook page.

Ms. Folk asked if today's successful nomination could be tweeted. Mr. Black answered in the affirmative. He and Mr. Sennstrom will coordinate with the County's IT Department to do so.

Ms. Folk showed the HDC members the proposed cover design that County staff has created for the testimonial compilation. Done in the style of Geraldine McKeown, it features renderings of all 28 currently designated historic districts.

Ms. Edwards asked that a note be placed on the final cover design that indicates that municipally designated sites are not shown.

Mr. Sennstrom briefed the HDC members about discussions he and Ms. Folk have had regarding simplifying the application for nomination. The current application is considered burdensome and difficult to complete. Planning & Zoning staff could offer to provide assistance to individuals interested in applying. Mr. Sennstrom noted that staff can prepare a revised, more simplified application and send it to HDC members via e-mail for their review.

Ms. Folk asked Mr. Sennstrom to provide an overview of the County's regulations regarding the upkeep of abandoned structures. Mr. Sennstrom obliged, indicating that for locally designated historic districts, the HDC has the ability to prevent demolition by neglect. For all other properties, the County's livability code only applies to rental units. The Permits & Inspections staff can enforce said code. If a house is unoccupied or if it is an owner occupied unit, the livability code does not apply. The Health Department does have trash accumulation and rodent harborage regulations that are enforced by the attorney general's office.

Ms. Simperts noted that the attorney general's office takes a very long time to resolve such issues. A rental property on Spears Hill Road has had rodent issues for over 17 years. The absentee landowner has not made any attempts to resolve the problem.

Ms. Folk asked Mr. Sennstrom to invite Mr. Pat Conway, Director of the Permits & Inspections Office, to the HDC's July meeting.

Mr. Edwards asked staff to also research Delaware's regulations regarding the demolition of historic structures.

Mr. Diggins discussed his attempts to obtain additional testimonials from the owners of the already designated historic districts. He has left messages for the owners of the Haviland House and Onion Bed. Ms. Edwards noted that she succeeded in obtaining a testimonial from the St. Patrick's Chapel Historical Society. She has also left a message for the owners of the Rehert Center. Ms. Simperts noted that she obtained testimonials from individuals at Big Elk Chapel and Cherry Hill United Methodist Church. She will call Earl Simmers to obtain a testimonial for the Gilpin Falls covered bridge.

Ms. Folk asked Mr. Black to e-mail the HDC members a list of remaining sites needing testimonials.

Ms. Folk asked if the HDC members could obtain training to perform inspections of Maryland Historic Trust easements. Mr. Sennstrom noted that, about ten years ago, an MHT staff person provided

training for the HDC. The HDC is not required to inspect of Maryland Historic Trust easements, but MHT has very little staff and has reached out for volunteers to help them fulfill their responsibilities.

Ms. Simperts observed that the terms for Ms. Folk and Mr. Dixon expired in March. Mr. Sennstrom noted that the County Executive has been notified but has yet to take action on any nomination.

Ms. Edwards asked if the Delano House, located on the Calvert Regional Park property at 211 Brick Meeting House Round, could be nominated for historic district designation. Mr. Sennstrom stated that, as a County owned property, the County Executive would make that decision. He will inquire with the County Executive to determine her opinion.

Ms. Folk asked if Mr. Ted Grablis, who owns the property at 3025 Old Elk Neck Rd, ever submitted an application for nomination. Mr. Sennstrom answered in the negative. Staff sent Mr. Grablis an application, but no response has been received.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, July 1, 2014 at the County Administration Building.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Black, GIS Coordinator – Planning & Zoning

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
July 1, 2014

Present: Dawson, Mike; Diggins, Milt; Dixon, Mike; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Simperts, Nancy; Black, David; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: Folk, Patricia

Call to Order: Acting Chairman Mike Dixon called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Mike Dixon introduced Pat Conway and stated that the Historic District Commission (HDC) would deviate from its agenda to permit Mr. Conway to go first as he has another commitment. Patrick T. Conway, Director of Permits & Inspections, appeared to present an overview of the County's condemnation authority. Mr. Conway summarized the contents of Chapters 157 and 240 of the Code of Cecil County as well as Section R115 of the Building Code. The County performs inspections and enforcement for all Towns with the exception of Elkton and Rising Sun.

OLD BUSINESS

Motion was made by Nancy Simperts to approve the April 2014 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Ron Edwards. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Director Sennstrom provided a summary of the activity surrounding the nomination of the Keiffer brick House. He reported that after favorable recommendations from the HDC and the Planning Commission, the County Council designated the structure as the County's 29th historic site. He also reported that pursuant to the HDC's directive, the issue of nominating the Delanoe house has been presented to the County's administration. Director Sennstrom reported that Mr. Black has revised the application form to simplify the document. Mr. Black explained the changes. Motion was made by Nancy Simperts to approve the changes to the application form. Motion was seconded by Mike Dawson. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Director Sennstrom reported that the Chairperson Folk and he met with the *Cecil Whig* to provide information for an article on the HDC and its duties and activities. The article should appear in the publication in the intermediate future. David Black provided a summary of information that has been provided to the Executive's office to be posted on the County's Facebook page.

Milt Diggins provided an overview of his recent activities regarding a federal program to recognize sites connected to the underground railroad. He has performed significant research on both the Susquehanna Point location as well as the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal. Noted escaped slaves such as Frederick Douglass, Henry Brown, and Ellen & William Craft, amongst others utilized these locations in their pursuit of freedom.

Mike Dixon suggested establishing a link on the County's website between the designated sites and their supporting documentation.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was discussed.

Adjournment: Mike Dixon adjourned the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 7, 2014, Bainbridge Room, 200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Elkton, MD.

Respectfully submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director – Planning & Zoning

CECIL COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
October 7, 2014

Present: Dawson, Mike; Diggins, Milt; Dixon, Mike; Edwards, Ron & Audrey; Folk, Patricia; Simpser, Nancy; Black, David; Sennstrom, Eric

Absent: None

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

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Mike Dixon to approve the July meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Nancy Simpser. All members present voted in favor the motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Director Sennstrom notified the Historic District Commission (HDC) that two nominations for historic designation have been received. The first is for the property known as Hebron's Gift, the second is for property known as Cross Keys Tavern.

Director Sennstrom informed the HDC that County Executive Tari Moore nominated Hebron's Gift as the County owns the property. He summarized the historical attributes of the property and informed the HDC that this matter will be before the Planning Commission at their October 20th meeting for a recommendation to County Council and at County Council for introduction on December 2nd. Discussion ensued on the application and on its location and surroundings on the property. Motion was made by Mike Dixon to recommend designation as a historic structure with the proviso that the existing chain link fence be removed unless a fence is required. If so, a less obtrusive fence should be erected. The motion was seconded by Milt Diggins. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Director Sennstrom informed the HDC that Penny & Timothy Woolley have nominated their dwelling known as Cross Keys Tavern for designation as a historic structure. Director Sennstrom informed the HDC that this matter will be before the Planning Commission at their November 17th meeting for a recommendation to the County Council and at the County Council for introduction on December 2nd. Discussion ensued on the application and its historical significance. Motion was made by Nancy Simpser to recommend designation as a historic structure. Motion was seconded by Mike Dawson. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

The HDC discussed potential applications to nominate for historic designation. Several members indicated that they had had fruitful dialogue with potential nominees and were optimistic that multiple nominations would soon be forthcoming.

David Black presented a map he recently created at the request of Chairperson Folk regarding the locally designated historic sites and structures. Discussion ensued on desired revisions to improve the map's

efficacy. Mr. Black indicated he would make the requested changes and distribute the revised map to the HDC members.

Old Business: Chairperson Folk reported that she has obtained three (3) new testimonials. She also noted that there were no needed revisions to the letter to Pat Conway in the Department of Permits & Inspections. The HDC requested that Director Sennstrom create a fact sheet indicating what Historic Designation is and what it isn't.

Chairperson Folk indicated that the HDC may be able to create a link with Mt. Harmon's website in 2015. She also indicated that she will make inquiries with Elk Landing regarding a link with their website. Mike Dixon expressed an interest in linking to the Bainbridge Museum website. Milt Diggins also suggested linking with websites of each of the Towns' historic commissions.

Discussion ensued on when an article regarding the HDC may appear in the Cecil Whig and whether or not the Herald may be interested in publishing an article. The Guardian has expressed interest in publishing an article regarding the HDC and its activities after the pending election has concluded.

Adjournment: Chairperson Folk adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.

Next meeting: January 6, 2015

Respectfully submitted:

Eric S. Sennstrom, Director – Planning & Zoning