

VIRGINIA BEACH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

November 4, 2020, 5:00 pm

Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street, Meeting Room 1 CD

Approved December 2, 2020

Present:

Officers: Chair, James Wood; First Vice-Chair, Sharon Prescott; Second Vice-Chair Mac Rawls, Secretary, Bobbie Gribble, Immediate Past President Bill Gambrell

Members: Finnley Brakke, Harriet Frenzel, Michael Hucles, Richard Klobuchar, Hannah Levi, Christi Lyons, Timothy Oksman, Katie Paulson

Staff: Mark Reed

Public: Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond (presenter)

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Commission is to advise the City Council and the Departments of Planning and Community Development and Museums on all issues related to the preservation of historic buildings, structures and sites located in the City of Virginia Beach.

MISSION: The mission of the Commission shall be to preserve, protect and maintain the historic identity of Virginia Beach and the former Princess Anne County through a program of advocacy and increased public awareness and involvement.

Welcome/Introductions/Remarks

Jimmy Wood welcomed the Commission members in attendance. He asked Mark Reed to introduce the special guest speaker.

Mr. Reed noted that Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond is the founder and chairman of the Virginia African American Cultural Center. He said he was talking with her last week and she was telling him about the African American heritage trail that she is working on and she said she would like to tell the Historic Preservation Commission about it. Mr. Reed said he responded by inviting Dr. Ross-Hammond to attend tonight's Commission meeting to tell us about her project.

Presentation – Virginia Beach African American Heritage Trail

Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond thanked the Commission for the opportunity to tell them about the African American Heritage Trail that she is working on for Virginia Beach. She said that some time ago she had contacted the Convention and Visitors Bureau to talk about putting together an African American history tour. They discussed something that would be 2 or 3 hours in length and could include lunch. They discussed having docent guides to assist. The Visitors Bureau folks are working on the tour and they will put together a web page and a brochure.

Dr. Ross-Hammond then discussed some of the sites that could be highlighted on the tour:

- In Seatack there was a volunteer fire department. There is a plaque about it at the current fire station on Birdneck Road. It may have been the first black owned fire station in Virginia.

- The Williams house is a house built originally out of wood by former slaves. It later burned and was rebuilt out of cinder block. Behind the house is a cemetery that includes formerly enslaved people.
- Nimmo Church has the “enslaved” members benches upstairs
- The one-room Pleasant Ridge school house south of Pungo was used to educate African American children
- Union Baptist Church was founded in 1862 near what is today Mt Trashmore. They had schooling in there as well since the children could not go to the regular school.
- Princess Anne Training School/Union Kempsville High School was the only high school exclusively for African American students
- There is a cemetery at Newsome Farm
- Near there is an old farmhouse off of Newtown Road
- Ebenezer Baptist Church is the oldest African American congregation and is located across the street from Virginia Wesleyan
- There was once a farmers market near there
- Riddick House is also near there and had lots of land. Walter H. “Crowe” Riddick established the L&J Gardens neighborhood here. Dr. Ross-Hammond said she was glad to hear the Commission is pursuing a National Register nomination for L&J Gardens.
- Seaview Beach was somewhat near the Lesner bridge

Dr. Ross-Hammond asked Mr. Reed to share the most recent newsletter from the Virginia African American Cultural Center (VAACC) with the Commission.

Jimmy Wood thanked Dr. Ross-Hammond for talking with the Commission and said that they would welcome the opportunity to work with the VAACC on the tour.

Approval of October 7, 2020 Minutes

Mr. Wood asked the Commission members to review the minutes of the October 7 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. A motion was made by Richard Klobuchar to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Tim Oksman. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Nominating Committee

Mr. Wood noted that the bylaws require an election of officers at the beginning of the calendar year. It provides for the election of a nominating committee. He said that Bill Gambrell has said he would be willing to chair the Nominating Committee. He asked if there were any members that would like to serve on the committee. Christi Lyons and Harriet Frenzel said they would be willing to serve. Mac Rawls made a motion to approve the Nominating Committee of Bill Gambrell, chair, and Ms. Lyons and Ms. Frenzel as members. Mr. Klobuchar seconded the motion. Mr. Wood asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. Hearing none he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Cape Henry Historic Site Committee

Mac Rawls reported for the Cape Henry Historic Site committee. He noted that the COVID-19 restrictions and the requirement for public meetings has made it difficult for the committee to convene a meeting.

He said there is an active group that is trying to place guns on display at various points. The guns came off ships from WWII and these guns were typical of Coastal Virginia protection. He noted that the Commission has been asked if placing these guns near the parking lot by the Cape Henry Lighthouse would be detrimental. He asked Mr. Reed to provide some additional information.

Mr. Reed addressed the information about the gun which he said is extremely long. He noted it will be about \$100,000 to place the gun. Transportation routes have been identified to get the gun there. To mount the gun, it will require 3 large blocks of concrete to sit on. The Navy has completed archaeology in advance of the required construction of the blocks. They knew that there were temporary buildings on the site during World War II, but nothing was found during the survey that predated those buildings.

Mr. Wood said the Executive Committee felt it would not provide an adverse effect although historically there was not a gun sited in that location. He said they thought it would be another attraction that could help bring exposure to the historic area. The Coastal Defense group said while it came from a ship and it is similar to the type of gun that would have been there at Fort Story.

Student Leaders Committee

Finnley Brakke reported for the Student Leaders Committee. She said at the last meeting they went over all ideas collected from committee members. They played a game to narrow down the list. She said that she and Hannah are in the process of contacting locations to set up some of their You Tube video segments. The next meeting is two weeks from today on November 18.

Project Updates

Mark Reed provided updates on several ongoing projects.

Preservation Program Strategic Plan – He noted that the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) has contracted with a historic resources management firm for the project. He said it is Commonwealth Preservation Group (CPG) and noted we have worked with them before. He said the kick-off meeting will be next week and that CPG will be on the agenda next month to present to the Commission. A steering committee has been put together to work with them. It includes the Commission’s Executive Committee, Bernice Pope, a former Commission chair, Bob Magoon, who has expertise in sea level rise issues, and John Coston from the Planning Commission.

Historic District Design Standards and Review Guidelines – He noted that the Purchasing Office is working on issuing the RFP in the next few days.

National Register Nomination Seatack and L&J Gardens – He said he is waiting on the City to get the draft RFP completed so the National Park Service can review it. The firms can choose to bid on one or the other or give a price for both nomination projects.

Resort Motels MPD/Jefferson Manor Motel NRHP Nomination – He said that this project is progressing very well. He expects to receive the 20 VCRIS survey forms to review next week. The draft multiple property document and the Jefferson Manor Motel Apartments nomination

form should be submitted to him for review prior to Thanksgiving. He said we still look to be on track for the March 2021 State Review Board meeting.

FY22 Projected Budget

Mark Reed discussed the historic preservation program proposed budget for FY22. He noted that the city offices prepare a budget in the fall every year. This year's budget will be submitted on December 1st. Mr. Reed said he has prepared a program budget draft to submit to his department director based on the 5% reduction that the department has been given for its submittal.

Mr. Reed briefly reviewed the draft budget, which was in the meeting packet (see Appendix 1). He noted that training is a CLG requirement so is included. He said the budget will allow us to do some Historic Markers, advertise the Commission's Public Meeting, and provide grants for Historic Research. In addition, it will allow us to pursue historical research and produce written reports on the history of the southern part of Virginia Beach, plus contract for Professional Services for PIFs and National Register Nominations, as well as for Scientific Investigations, such as archeological surveys.

He said that ultimately the total of \$84,700 is in a single line item so there will be some discretion about the expenditures. He said that we are hopeful the 5% reduction could get addressed elsewhere in the department's budget and not impact the preservation program.

Mr. Reed asked if there were any questions. Jimmy Wood asked if there were any additional recommendations. There were none.

Historic Properties Glimpse

Mark Reed provided information on upcoming projects in the City's Historic and Cultural districts and projects that might impact other historic resources. He said there are no agenda items for the Historical Review Board so there will not be a November meeting.

Mr. Reed addressed the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum's proposal to construct a gazebo at the deWitt Cottage. He said a Certificate of Appropriateness application had been submitted. He noted that there is photographic evidence of there being a gazebo structure on the property historically. A historic photograph shows there was a gazebo type structure, probably in the 1920s. Planning staff has asked for more information about the materials for the proposed new gazebo.

Mr. Reed said he recommends doing an archaeological survey in advance of the construction project. He said the Commission's Executive Committee concurred that an archaeological survey should be done. Funding would come from the historic preservation program budget. Planning Director Bobby Tajan has approved the expenditure of funds for the project. Mr. Reed noted that our CLG agreement recommends that we implement archaeological protections in our historic districts, so this is the appropriate approach.

Mr. Reed discussed the proposed Starbucks construction adjacent to the Hickman House that he brought up at the last meeting. He said his inquiry initiated a review in the Planning Department of what had been approved by City Council. This project had gone through the development services center. In the packet are drawings from the items that went to City Council. The internal review resulted in a determination that the proposed attachment of the Starbucks to the Hickman House was in substantial conformance with what City Council had approved. He said

Planning recommended removal of the brackets on the cornice and the lentils over the windows of the new building to reduce mimicking of the historic building.

Jimmy Wood said the Executive Committee felt the Hickman House had been saved. They will open up the first floor between the two buildings. The chimneys will be preserved. Mr. Wood said the attorney for the landowner has told us they are not interested in hearing from us about what our suggestions are with the building. They have already moved and saved the building. We would like to not have a reputation that we are obstructive every time there is a change to historic buildings. We want people to take steps to preserve buildings and that was done here.

Old Business

Mark Reed noted that the Native American Heritage Month Proclamation will take place on November 10. He said the proclamation will be part of the City Council formal session at 6:00 p.m. and he said he thinks it will be read during the meeting. Lee Lockamy will be here to accept it. Mr. Reed said he thinks it will be downstairs in one of the Convention Center's ballrooms.

New Business

The was no new business

Adjournment

The next general meeting will be on Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. at the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Appendix 1

FY22 City of Virginia Beach Budget -- **DRAFT** Planning and Community Development Historic Preservation Program

This submitted budget request represents a 5% reduction from FY21 appropriations.

Non-Personnel Operating Budget – 100.204.1110.605520

Total – \$84,700

	Requested Appropriation
Training for Historic Preservation Commission and Historical Review Board (CLG requirement)	\$ 1,500
Historic Markers and Signage for Historic Districts	\$ 6,000
Public meetings	\$ 2,000
Research Grant Program	\$ 10,000
Historic Preservation Month Promotions and Activities	\$ 5,000
Miscellaneous small purchases, such as plaques	\$ 200
Professional Services	
• PIFs/Nominations for National Register of Historic Places	\$ 20,000
○ Chesapeake Beach	
○ Woodhurst	
• Historical Research and Reports – southern VB	\$ 30,000
• Scientific investigations – archaeology, dendrochronology, paint color analysis, etc.	\$ 10,000
Total	\$ 84,700
Service Level 2	
Professional Services – PIFs/Nominations for National Register of Historic Places	\$ 4,458
Service Level 3	
Interpretive signs/plaques near Princess Anne Courthouse – design and manufacture	\$ 10,000

11/02/2020