

VIRGINIA BEACH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

December 5, 2018, 5:00 pm

Towne Bank Building, 2101 Parks Avenue, Suite 500

Approved January 9, 2019

Present:

Officers: Chair, William Gambrell; First Vice-Chair, James Wood;
Second Vice-Chair, Sharon Prescott; Secretary, Bobbie Gribble;
Immediate Past Chair, Bernice Pope

Members: Glenn Carwell, Sharon Felton, Harriet Frenzel, James Jordan,
Katie Paulson, Brianna Perez, Mac Rawls

Council Liason: Rosemary Wilson

Staff: Mark Reed, Carolyn Smith, Bill Landfair

Welcome/Introduction

Bill Gambrell welcomed all of the Commission Members, Councilperson Rosemary Wilson and City Staff. He apologized that he would need to leave early due to another commitment.

Approval of November 7th Minutes

Mr. Gambrell asked the Commission Members to review the minutes from the November 7 meeting. Bernice Pope made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Sharon Prescott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

Nominating Committee Report

Ms. Pope reported for the Nominating Committee. She noted that they had conducted their business via e-mail. Ms. Pope presented the committee's slate of officers for 2019.

Chair – Bill Gambrell

1st Vice-Chair – Jimmy Wood

2nd Vice-Chair – Sharon Prescott

Secretary – Bobbie Gribble

This will be voted on in the January 2019 meeting.

Committees - Purposes and Goals

At the last meeting, Mark Reed passed out the list of committees with purposes. He has added priorities and goals that were adopted earlier this year. He pulled out the priorities and goals that went with the specific committees. It is hoped that this will help committees focus and, in some cases, become more active. He asked the Committee Chairs to please look at the purpose and the goals for their committee and see if they agree or if there is something that should be changed or needs to be a little different.

Committee Reports

Cape Henry Historic Site - Mac Rawls

Mac Rawls provided a written report (see Appendix 1 below) and a verbal report. Mr. Rawls said the committee held a meeting on November 27. He noted that there are 7 members from the Commission on this committee. He said there is also a member from the National Park Service, Superintendent Kym Hall; a member from the Order of Cape Henry 1607; a citizen member, Chris Pieczynski, who has written some of our historical marker signage; and Mercedes Holland, who represents the military.

Mr. Rawls said the construction at the Cape Henry Lighthouse is still on target for completion in March 2019. He said that planning for the re-opening is in progress. He also noted that the Order of Cape Henry 1607 is planning for their annual First Landing commemoration ceremonies for April 27, 2019.

Mr. Rawls said there is ongoing concern for the 1902 Cape Henry Railway Station. He said the committee is looking to do an inspection tour. At this time the primary concern is it might become a victim of benign neglect. A request has been made to the base to have approval for the committee to meet at the Railway Station. The base is somewhat reluctant because when a Commission committee meeting is held it is open to the public.

Mr. Rawls noted that the shuttle buses are operating regularly. He said the City is providing the buses and Preservation Virginia is providing the drivers. Mr. Rawls said that we need to get the VBHPC name out there. This would have not happened without this Commission being the driving force.

He also noted that there is a large coastal artillery piece (16 inch gun) that is available if we can take advantage of it and get it on site. It came off of a ship. The cost is in transporting it and creating a place to place it. It is close to \$100,000 cost to do so. A committee at the Joint Expeditionary Base has just started looking into this possibility.

The next committee meeting is to be held in March 2019.

Historic Preservation Month - Sharon Prescott

Ms. Prescott reported for the Historic Preservation Month Committee. She noted that a primary activity will be "Pints for Preservation." All monies generated will go to Preservation Virginia, for the preservation of the Lighthouse. This activity will include:

1. A special brew being created for the month.
2. Two Breweries have committed so far (it is hoped we will have four breweries)
Deadline Brewing Project
Farmhouse Brewing Company
3. Special Coasters will be provided to each brewery. Jimmy Jordan is working on this and helping to develop text and design options.

Other activities will include:

1. Mayoral Proclamation at the May 7 City Council meeting

2. Scavenger Hunt – The Student Leaders Committee is working on this Brianna Perez said she and Victoria McQuay met this past Sunday to brain storm about Scavenger Hunt ideas. She noted that their initial plan is to have it revolve around the 13 Historic Markers. She said there will be geo boxes around the markers with clues for the next marker. A prize will be awarded around the Pungo Festival. She said they had talked about a float being entered and the winners can ride on the float.

Mr. Rawls asked if they had thought about giving a year-long membership to the Aquarium or the VB Historic Houses or the Coast Guard Museum.

Princess Anne County Confederate Statue Roundtable - Jimmy Wood, Sharon Felton
Jimmy Wood gave an overview of the committee and what the current status is of the recommendation that is to come from the committee to the Commission. He noted that the membership and composition of the Roundtable is made up of a diverse group of people from academia, faith communities, human rights organizations, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and the African American community. There are 11 members plus Jimmy Wood and Shelton Felton from the Commission.

Mr. Wood noted that we have had 3 mayors since the committee was formed in January. Mayor Sessoms wanted there to be additional public input before the issue came to City Council. Mayor Jones was in office by the time the Roundtable had developed its draft recommendations. Mr. Wood said he and Councilperson Wilson met with Mayor Jones and he asked them to pull together some basic financial details and to present the information to the new Mayor. They have met with staff from Parks and Recreation and Cultural Affairs and have some additional information. At this point they need to set up a meeting with Rosemary Wilson and Mayor Bobby Dyer. Once that meeting with Mayor Dyer has taken place, Mr. Wood and Ms. Felton will come to the Commission with next steps.

Mr. Wood then went over the basics of the recommendations.

He said there are Immediate Goals for what can be accomplished in 6 months or less. These can help to bring awareness of the Civil War in Virginia Beach and try to provide all points of view.

1. Recognition of the fact that African Americans were sold on the grounds of the Princess Anne Courthouse – have a plaque that is in the vicinity of the building
2. Interpretive signage that discusses African Americans from Princess Anne County that served in the Civil War – we have a Medal of Honor awardee
3. An interpretive sign about the monument, when it was erected, by whom and why

The Short Term Goals (12 months to three years) -

1. A statue commemorating the colored troops that served in the Union from Princess Anne County. Or, another idea is to have an interpretive sculpture. This statue or sculpture would be on equal footing and size with the existing monument
2. Turning the area behind the monument into a park – Reconciliation Park is a name idea. The park would provide understanding about citizens, past & present. It could create an outdoor classroom setting.

3. Mayor Jones had wanted to get numbers for the proposals. Parks and Recreation has calculated approximately \$325,000 for the park, landscaping, statue, benches and interpretive signs

The Mid Term Goals (3 to 5 years)

1. Basically will be to follow through and implement the park
2. Parks and Recreation has suggested using students from landscape architecture schools and develop the design through a contest

The Long Term Goals (5+ years)

1. Explore the need and feasibility for a general history museum for Virginia Beach

Mr. Rawls made the point that we are dealing with a volatile subject and the recommendations should think in terms of the next 100 years. Our whole history does not revolve around the Civil War. He would like to see a history park that encompasses all of our history.

Sharon Felton said the committee is looking at the whole history of this region.

Mr. Gambrell asked if anyone knew what the latest information is on what is happening at Shockoe Bottom in Richmond. No one had any updated information. Mr. Reed said he would look into it.

Student Leaders - Brianna Perez, Victoria McQuay

Brianna Perez said the committee will be meeting the 2nd Monday of every month. They are looking at ways to get more student involvement. The other students that were candidates for positions on the Commission have been invited to participate.

Ms. Perez noted that they are looking at entering new Clio entries. They plan to produce short video blogs around the Clio entries they create.

Ms. Perez said that they are looking at the use of Instagram to get the creative and youthful outlook on the commission.

Please give her any ideas you might have for the Scavenger Hunt.

Project Updates - Mark Reed

FY18 Research Grants - Status of Draft Reports/Products

Mr. Reed noted that the Commission awarded 9 grants this year. On November 30th all grantees were required to submit a draft product or report on their grant. This is to ensure all grants are on track and staff will review and provide feedback on all draft submittals. The grantees must respond to all comments. Mr. Reed has received 3 draft reports and 6 awardees have asked for a month extension.

FY17 Research Grants - Historical Marker Dedications

Mr. Reed said that the date for the dedication of the Meeting of Three Commanders marker is still undecided. The NATO commander has indicated he is available the last two weeks of January. We are waiting to hear from Mayor Dyer about his availability during that time frame. Hopefully the date will be determined by the January Commission meeting.

Mr. Reed noted that there was an excellent turnout for the Skirmish at Kemps Landing historical marker ceremony on November 10. He said that Jimmy Wood did an excellent job representing the Commission. There were about 80 people in attendance.

Cavalier Shores National Register Nomination

Mr. Reed said that letters of support for the nomination had been coordinated and were sent to DHR from Mayor Bobby Dyer, City Manager Dave Hansen, Debbie Bright – chair of the Historical Review Board, and Bill Gambrell, chair of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Reed noted that the State Review Board will meet to discuss the Cavalier Shores nomination on December 13. He said that he and Bernice Pope will attend. The presentation will be made by DHR staff. If approved for the Virginia Landmarks Register it will be forwarded to the National Park Service (NPS). It typically takes 60 - 90 Days for the NPS to respond.

Carraway House Archaeology

Mr. Reed said that the James River Institute for Archaeology (JRIA) has received the contract for this work. JRIA will lay the Site Grid this week and the Ground Penetrating Radar analysis has been scheduled for Friday. This process will help to establish boundaries for the cemetery. Shovel tests are expected to begin next week, weather permitting.

Mr. Wood asked if Commission members can visit the site to observe. Mr. Reed said that they could and he would coordinate with JRIA to set up acceptable dates for Commission members to be on site.

Historic Properties Glimpse - Mark Reed

December Historical Review Board

Mr. Reed noted that there is one item coming up on the December agenda for the Historical Review Board. He said it is a request for demolition of a porch on Building 17. He noted that the extent of the water damage makes it unrepairable. It is now a safety hazard. The porch is not original to the building. Mr. Reed said that in order to meet code a rebuild of the porch would not match existing form and style. He said Building Maintenance does not want to replace the porch. Instead they propose to repair the wall, etc. after the porch is removed. He showed a slide with photographs of the porch and Building 17. Mr. Reed said that staff is supporting the application.

Old Business

Mr. Reed gave Glenn Carwell his tote bag as a token of appreciation for serving on the Commission.

New Business

17th Street Gateway Association

Bernice Pope said the Commission would like to meet with the recently organized 17th Street Gateway Association. There is a lot happening in and near the ViBe District. The Commission would like to get together with the property owners. She said we could possibly form a new committee within the Commission to get more awareness to the property owners of the historic nature of their property and the incentives to preserve.

Mr. Rawls said he would like to see the Commission take a more active part in investigating or assessing properties that are valuable to us for their historical presence. He would like us to be in front of rather than reacting to these sites. He said maybe that should be added to the Threatened Sites committee. He asked that this subject be taken back to the Executive Committee and given more thought.

1497 Shoveller Avenue - Moving of Graves

Mr. Reed said that he had been contacted by an attorney representing the owner of 1497 Shoveller Avenue. There are graves on the site and the owner wants to move them so they can build a home. Per direction from the Courts they contacted Mr. Reed for the purpose of consulting with the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Reed said that there are 5 marked graves for the Mosley family. He noted that it is a historically African American community – Great Neck. According to the attorney, there are no provisions in the deed or transfer of property for the graves. The attorney said he has contacted family and they have no objections to moving the graves. The attorney has contacted DHR but there has not been an official response from them. The options appear to be to move the graves elsewhere on the site or to a cemetery in Suffolk.

Mr. Reed said the property was originally purchased by Mary Elizabeth Mosley in 1912, so there is a good likelihood that there are more than 5 graves on the property.

Ms. Felton asked if all of the family members had been contacted. Mr. Reed said that he wasn't sure and could only reference the list that the attorney had provided. Ms. Felton asked for a copy of the list. Mr. Reed said he would send out all of the materials received from the attorney. Ms. Felton said she wanted a little time to follow up with family members to ensure everyone has been contacted.

Mr. Wood asked who is the attorney. Mr. Reed looked it up in his phone and said it is Teddy Midkiff. Mr. Wood said he was not familiar with him.

Mr. Reed said he would send an e-mail to the attorney to acknowledge the contact with the Commission. He said he would inform him that some Commission members know the family and will be checking to ensure all members have been contacted. He will also inform the attorney that the Commission prefers that the graves be moved elsewhere on the property rather than to a cemetery outside of Virginia Beach. He will also indicate that the Commission

recommends that the property owner follow any suggestions from DHR regarding archaeology or other methods for determining the boundaries of the cemetery and the location of any unmarked graves.

The Commission members present indicated their support of that response.

FY 2019/20 Operating Budget Submission

Mr. Reed provided information on the Planning Department's operation budget submittal for FY 2019/20. He noted that when he met with the Executive Committee last week it appeared that the historic preservation program budget would receive some reduction since the department was given a 1% reduction. He said that since then he has been informed that the Service Level 1 budget for historic preservation was submitted as fully funded in the amount of \$89,158, which is the budget amount for the current year.

Mr. Reed said that he has also requested funding to expand existing programs at Service Level 3. The amount requested totals \$45,000 and was broken down as:

Expand the Research Grant Program \$10,000

Expand the National Register Historic Districts Program - \$20,000

Establish/Expand the Archaeological Assessment Program - \$15,000

Francis Land House - Open House December 8, 4:00 - 6:00

Bernice Pope noted that there will be an open house on Saturday at the Francis Land House to discuss their future plans and changes. She said that it has been proposed by the Aquarium/Historic Houses department that this house be made into a WWII museum. The problem is they say they need to turn a profit. They don't have money to keep the houses up.

Ms. Pope said perhaps we should have a committee that looks into this. It is time to revisit this topic now that they are looking at the WWII museum. She said this is a perfect opportunity to bring up the historic homes again.

She said one of the problems is that there is no one in that department that understands the history of these houses. Our citizens have put a lot of work and effort into maintaining these historic houses. She said it might be time to have these houses in a different department, such as Parks and Recreation.

Land of Promise Farms

Mark Reed said that Diane Horsley has submitted her resignation from the Commission. Her family commitments make it impossible for her to attend or make a satisfactory contribution. Mr. Reed played a brief video that Mrs. Horsley sent for the Commission.

Adjournment

The next general meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be on, Wednesday, January 2, 2018, at 5:00 pm, in the Towne Bank Building, Suite 500.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

**Cape Henry Historic Site Committee Report
Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission
on
December 5, 2018**

CHHS Committee Members:

Mac Rawls, Chair – VB Hist. Pres. Com.
Jennifer Collins, Secretary – Pres. Va.
Ceci Budimier, Order of Cape Henry
Mike Ashe, VB Hist. Pres. Com.
Glenn Carwell, VB Hist. Pres. Com.
Harriet Frenzel, VB Hist. Pres. Com.
Kym Hall, Nat. Park Service
Mercedes Holland, Little Creek/Ft. Story JEB
Jennifer Hurst-Wender, Pres. Va.
Jimmy Jordan, VB Hist. Pres. Com.
Chris Pieczynski, Citizen Member
Bernice Pope, VB Hist. Pres. Com.
Mark Reed, VB Planning Dept.

The committee met on 11.27.18 and conducted the following business:

- Welcomed new member Kym Hall, Nat. Park Service Supt. for Jamestown, Yorktown, and Cape Henry.
- Received updates from Reed and Collins – construction progressing on schedule and on budget. project will be completed by March 2019, planning for re-opening in progress, shuttle buses in operation and walking tours being conducted in interim prior to construction completion.
- Order of Cape Henry Planning ceremonies for 4.27.19 to be held at St. Theresa’s Chapel to commemorate the 412th anniversary of the First Landing.
- There was much general discussion as to what the CHHS partners are doing and considerable sharing of ideas such as use of Clio as an interpretive tool.

New Business:

- Possibility for relocating large coastal artillery piece to CHSS
- Concern for possible deterioration of 1902 railway depot due to benign neglect
- Possible inspection tour of depot by committee
- Committee meeting schedule established for 3 regular meetings per year.

Submitted by:
Mac Rawls