

**Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission**  
General Meeting Minutes – November 2, 2016  
Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Towns Bank Building, 2101 Parks Avenue, Suite 500  
Approved December 7, 2016

**Present:** Bernice Pope, Chair; Mac Rawls, Vice Chair; Sharon Felton, Treasurer; Katie Paulson, Secretary; Michel Ashe; Dr. Glenn Carwell; Diane Horsley; James Jordan; Patrick McAtamney; Sharon Prescott; James Wood

**Student Members:** Lucas Anderton

**Staff:** Mark Reed; Carolyn Smith

**Guests:** Amanda Justus; Phillip Kellam

Chair Bernice Pope called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Ms. Pope then introduced Carolyn Smith, who is serving as interim planning administrator, and Mr. Reed's supervisor. The Commission introduced themselves.

Mr. Reed provided background information on one of the newest additions to the Virginia Beach Historical Register. Ms. Amanda Justus was at the meeting to receive her plaque and certificate for her home at 813 Simpkins Lane, which is a c1850s farmhouse located off of Great Neck Road.

The Commission reviewed the October minutes. Mr. Wood had a correction: his name was spelled with an "s" at the end of page 2. The minutes, with correction noted, were approved unanimously.

Mr. Rawls gave an update on the Cape Henry Committee. They are still trying to get a representative from the Coast Guard appointed. The letter from Mayor Sessoms was misinterpreted by the recipient, who understood the request to be for access to the New Cape Henry Lighthouse. He noted that the committee has postponed meeting until they can get access to the lighthouse. Ms. Prescott suggested the Committee find out who is spearheading the effort to transfer the lighthouse in accordance with the National Lighthouse Preservation Act.

Mr. Rawls also noted that the possibility of the relocation of the Admiral DeGrasse statue from the small National Park on Fort Story to another location had resurfaced. This item was discussed recently at a City Council retreat. It was suggested that the Commission contact Council member Ben Davenport and Barbara Henley who brought it up for discussion at the retreat. Ms. Pope noted that she has been trying to figure out who owns the statues; Mr. Reed will contact the city attorney to find out.

Ms. Prescott provided an update on the City-Owned Buildings and Sites Committee. Mr. Reed updated the spreadsheet provided by Public Works and will send a copy to the Commission. The Committee has not met since October, but is planning to meet in early November.

Dr. Carwell provided a recap for the Princess Anne Courthouse Committee, which toured the renovation with Tom Nicholas. The HVAC was replaced, as well as the ceilings and floors, and the building is ready for new tenants. The historic structures report draft has been received and city staff is currently reviewing the document. The Commission discussed the columns at the front of the building, which were removed prior to the HSR. They were added in the 1960s and are not original to the building. Their replacement will cost \$175,000. The Commission previously requested that Public Works wait until the HSR was complete to reinstall the columns. The Courthouse evolved, as the city did, and there are four distinctive “eras” of designs of the courthouse:

- 1823-1906: T-shaped, side gable roof with arcade with entry inside;
- 1906-1918: Building squared, hipped roof and lunette window added;
- 1918-1966: Added second story porch;
- 1966-2016: Portico and columns.

Ms. Paulson inquired about the period of significance for the potential Municipal Center Historic District as a way to determine which design is most appropriate; Mr. Reed said he would check how far into the 1960s the date stretched. Dr. Carwell made a motion to recommend the city reinstate the porch configuration at the façade (east elevation) to the era that is most appropriate for the period of significance; the Commission agreed unanimously.

Mr. Reed updated the Commission on a number of projects. The Oceana Historic District is being completed by Debra McLane, who finished surveying in September. She is currently working to complete VCRIS entries and the nomination form. Public Works contact Mr. Reed about an intersection improvement at Virginia Beach Boulevard and First Colonial Road, as Section 106 review was required due to DHR’s findings that the Oceana Historic District is eligible for the National Register. Public Works will need to revisit their plan and provide alternatives, as to not disturb the historic resources within the current project area.

The Princess Anne Courthouse historic structures report draft is complete at 306 pages long. Mr. Reed is proofing the draft and providing notes to them next week. The report will go to City Council once it is finalized.

The grant application for the Old Cape Henry Lighthouse was submitted to VDOT for \$326,000. The city provided \$90,000 as a match. VDOT notified Mr. Reed that there needs to be a plan in place for if they do not receive the grant; Mr. Reed will involve Preservation Virginia in that planning process.

The Courthouse Village Historic District solicitation for quotes is set to go out next week for bids. The due date for submissions is December 10; Mr. Reed anticipates that someone will be under contract for the work by January.

Mr. Reed also update the Commission on some old business items. The mayor proclaimed that November is Native American Heritage Month in Virginia Beach. Mr. Lockamy accepted on behalf of the Nansemond Tribe. Mr. Reed reminded the Commission that there is a talk at the Central Library with Dr. Helen Rountree.

Mr. Wood brought up Willis Wayside for discussion, having confirmed that the building is slated for demolition by Aldi. The Commission recommended an intensive level survey, which Aldi would be willing to fund. The building is not set to be demolished until summer of 2017. The Commission recognized Aldi for their willingness to help and will offer to write the scope of work. Mr. Rawls suggested that the Commission meet with Aldi to ask if they would consider any preservation of the historic structure, noting the worst case would be that they say no. Ms. Pope offered to call their attorney.

Mr. Reed notified the Commission that the Horacio Cornick House on Godfrey Farm Road was demolished over the weekend. He had previously inquired within the permits division about its status; the division chief said she thought they had placed a hold on the permit, but it was issued on October 20th. Ms. Pope offered to discuss the issue with Mr. Gambrell and revisit the system for flagging demolition permits for historic properties within the city.

When the floor was opened for new business, Mr. Kellam complimented Mr. Reed, who had contacted him about historic information. Mr. Kellam noted that he is lucky to have access to family and city artifacts and is interested in what the Commission is doing and willing to provide information to the Commission as he is able.

Ms. Pope notified the Commission that she spoke with Frank Fentress about the big tree program, which was started in the 1980s to document heritage trees. She noted that it might be a category to add to the Historical Register form.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 pm.