

**VIRGINIA BEACH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Planning and Community Development Conference Room, 2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500

November 3, 2021, 5:00 pm

Approved, December 1, 2021

Present:

Officers: Chair, James Wood; First Vice-Chair, Sharon Prescott; Second Vice-Chair, Mac Rawls; Secretary, Bobbie Gribble

Members: Campbell Clay, Sharon Felton, Bill Gambrell, Natalie Hubbard, Richard Klobuchar, Becky Livas, Christi Lyons, Katie Paulson

Staff: Mark Reed, Elizabeth Nowak

Presenters: Kristin Kirchen (via virtual connection), Debra McClane

Public: Cheryl Klobuchar

Purpose The purpose of the Commission is to advise the City Council and the Department of 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

Jimmy Wood called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone in attendance and especially noted Mrs. Rick Klobuchar and our presenters Debra McClane and Kristin Kirchen, the latter joining via a web link.

Mr. Wood asked Mark Reed to introduce the meeting presentations. Mr. Reed introduced Kristin Kirchen, who is presenting on the Cutty Sark Motel Preliminary Information Form (PIF). He noted that Ms. Kirchen had been involved in developing the Oceanfront Motels Multiple Property Document (MPD) and the Jefferson Manor Motel Apartments National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination.

Ms. Kirchen said she and Debra McClane did an MPD for oceanfront hotels and motels that has been approved by the National Park Service. There were 14 properties that were deemed eligible for the NRHP in the MPD

Ms. Kirchen said she has completed her work on the PIF for the Cutty Sark Motel and Efficiencies. The PIF is a description of the property, background and how it relates to the criteria for NRHP. The MPD Virginia Beach Oceanfront Resort Motels and Hotels (1955 - 1970) was listed in the National Register in May 2021. It is intended to simplify the listing of good examples of the property type. The accompanying survey identified 20 surviving examples. The MPD was accompanied by a nomination for the Jefferson Manor Motel Apartments.

Ms. Kirchen said the MPD presented the historic context associated with the property type and defined registration requirements for listing properties under the MPD. The Cutty Sark was designed in 1963 by Virginia Beach architect William Burton Alderman for Mr. William Winner and was originally named the Crest Kitchenette. It was featured in the Virginia Record magazine in 1964 along with the Jefferson Manor. A second owner renamed it the Cutty Sark. Mrs. Jimmie Koch and her husband bought the Cutty Sark in 1977. They operated it themselves with the assistance of one maid. It was seasonal and they closed it in the fall and traveled.

Ms. Kirchen said the building still has its original facade with the differentiated units. It has exterior stairs and corridors. She said it has all original character defining detail including original prestressed concrete beams, cantilevered balcony, and intact flat roof.

She said the interior has remarkable integrity. The floor plan is the same as designed with 13 guest rooms and an owner's apartment off of the lobby. All of the units have the original kitchenettes that function from the 1960s.

Ms. Kirchen said that her recommendations are that the Cutty Sark is eligible under the MPD under Criteria A and C for Commerce and Architecture with a Period of Significance of 1963 – 1970. She said the next steps are the DHR staff Evaluation Team review on November 18 and the DHR State Review Board Meeting on December 9. Then, beyond this project, there will need to be preparation of a full National Register of Historic Places nomination form to be considered by DHR and NPS.

Mac Rawls asked Mr. Reed if the City of Virginia Beach was providing a tax reduction on the building when buildings are listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register. Mr. Reed said yes. He noted that, once a property is listed, he informs the Real Estate Assessor's Office and they put it into their system.

Bill Gambrell asked when we can ask for the property to receive a tax reduction on the value of the land. Mr. Reed said that recommendation is in the strategic plan. He said the Commission will need to figure out what that looks like and work toward making it happen. There was some discussion about coordinating with the City Council's legislative agenda

Mr. Rawls said this is part of our history to save the buildings, it is a great teaching opportunity. He suggested we should get as much publicity as possible when we present it to City Council.

Mr. Reed introduced Debra McClane as the next presenter. He said she has two PIFs to present, the Blue Marlin Motel and the Chesapeake Beach Historic District.

Debra McClane said the Blue Marlin Inn and Suites is located at 2411 Pacific Avenue (between 24th and 25th Street). She said the MPD came out of the 2018 update of the Architectural Survey of the northern half of Virginia Beach. In that project they were tasked with looking at properties that had come 50 years of age. One of the recommendations was the resort motels would be a useful multiple property nomination. An MPD allows you to talk about properties that share the same context or property type.

Ms. McClane said that the qualifying characteristics for motels under the MPD include:

- Constructed between 1955-1970
- Located in oceanfront area in original location
- Retain original architectural elements and materials, such as
  - Building footprint
  - Open concrete balconies (motels) or interior corridors (hotels)
  - Swimming pool
  - On-site parking
  - Separate office
  - Fixed windows or window units
  - Other distinctive architectural elements

Ms. McClane said this was originally the Blue Marlin Lodge, now called the Blue Marlin Inn and Suites. The building was completed in 1965. It has a folded gabled roof and is very linear in design. She said it represents what used to be pretty common, known as a Florida style hotel.

Ms. McClane said Dr. John R. Anderson and his wife built the motel. They purchased this property in 1962 and originally Dr. Anderson had his dental office on the premises. They decided to build and operate the motel to finance their children's education. Mrs. Anderson selected the colors in the rooms and assisted with other design details.

Ms. McClane said there have been some changes to the building, such as widened doors to meet ADA requirements. The swimming pool in in the same location it was originally. There were 13 units to start with and they had kitchenettes. The kitchenettes have not been retained. The most distinctive architectural feature is the folded roof over the rear set of rooms.

The property includes a separate four-story building with parking and rooms to the south that was added to the parcel in 1984. This building is a noncontributing resource.

Ms. McClane said the next steps are to submit the PIF to DHR for evaluation and then placement on the State Review Board's agenda. If approved, then a National Register nomination will need to be developed.

Debra McClane then provided a presentation on the Chesapeake Beach Historic District PIF project. She said the neighborhood is located in the Bayside District at the southern end of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. In the 2018 Architectural Survey Update for the northern half of Virginia Beach they did individual resource survey, neighborhood survey, and National Register eligibility evaluation. Chesapeake Beach was one of nine neighborhoods recommended eligible for listing as a historic district in the National Register.

Ms. McClane said that Chesapeake Beach has its origins as an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century beach community. It is a tight knit community with some third-generation residents.

Ms. McClane noted that the PIF is the first step in a two-step process for listing in the National Register. Her project involved revisiting the area and establishing defensible boundaries. It also involved developing a brief statement of significance. The period of significance is 1919 – 1970.

Ms. McClane said there are four lakes in the neighborhood. Chesapeake Beach was one of the earliest platted subdivisions and is representative of the broad pattern of settlement in the city. It started as vacation rentals and then became a more permanent community. It differs from the character of the oceanfront resort as the cottages are modest in size and design. The neighborhood was bisected by the construction of the bridge tunnel in the 1960s, but both sides are considered part of the neighborhood. She said there are about 142 properties in the area she identified that were historic and considered contributing resources.

Ms. McClane said the next steps include a meeting with the Chesapeake Beach Civic League on November 15 and submittal of the PIF to DHR for evaluation and hopefully placement on the State Review Board agenda for December 9. If approved, there will need to be completed a comprehensive survey, a National Register nomination form, and additional public meetings.

Mr. Wood thanked Ms. McClane for her presentations and for her work on these projects.

Mr. Wood asked the members to review the minutes of the October 6 meeting. A motion was made by Sharon Felton to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Becky Livas. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Campbell Clay and Natalie Hubbard reported for the Student Leaders Committee. Ms. Hubbard said they held their second meeting in October. She said that each committee member chose their site for the Clio entries last meeting and noted that includes 9 sites. Mr. Clay said that the introductory paragraph for the Clio entries is due next week at their meeting.

Mr. Reed provided several project updates.

Historic District Design Standards and Review Guidelines – Mr. Reed said this project is pretty much complete. He noted it needs to be completed by November 30 for the grant. A briefing is scheduled for the Planning Commission on November 10. They will then go back to the Planning Commission for action in January 2022 to adopt by reference to the Comprehensive Plan and include references to the Design Guidelines in the ordinance. He said that City Council briefing and action will then follow.

Historic Preservation Program Strategic Plan – Mr. Reed said a draft was submitted to us on October 8. Staff, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Steering Committee members provided comments by October 21. He said DHR is pleased with the plan, but staff and others were not as satisfied on our end. He said staff requested some changes to the document, primarily related to the Objectives and Actions. He noted that there was general consensus that these need to appear earlier in the document than page 45. The Objectives and Actions also need to better represent the Historic Preservation Commission's priorities and goals, underrepresented communities, and the public input. He noted that it is preferred that the Objectives and Actions

be assigned a priority scale rather than dates for completion. He said he will be working with DHR and the consultant to resolve the issues and get us to a final document for approval.

National Register Nominations – Mr. Reed said the nomination projects are progressing well. For L & J Gardens the neighborhood survey has been completed. Staff is reviewing the VCRIS forms. Interviews with former and current residents have been completed and the nomination draft is underway. He said the project is on track for the June 2022 State Review Board agenda. Mr. Reed also noted the passing of Jackie Bowe earlier this week. He said Mr. Bowe was a wealth of knowledge about the neighborhood and generously shared it with the project team.

For Seatack, Mr. Reed said the neighborhood survey is underway, as is the research. He said the project is on track for the September 2022 State Review Board agenda.

For the Woodhurst neighborhood, Mr. Reed noted that a Purchase Requisition had been submitted. The project has an estimated cost of \$17,500. It was recently learned from Purchasing that the threshold has been increased to \$30,000 to negotiate directly with a SWaM firm, so Mr. Reed has cancelled the requisition. He said we now can work with a SWaM firm and potentially get the project under contract in early December.

PIF Projects – Mr. Reed said we are on target for the December State Review Board meeting for the Cutty Sark Motel, Blue Marlin Motel, and the Chesapeake Beach Historic District PIFs. For the Newsome Farm Cemetery PIF, it is in a draft stage. The Pleasant Ridge School still has a kickoff meeting pending.

Mark Reed and Elizabeth Nowak provided a brief overview of projects coming before the Historical Review Board in November. Elizabeth Nowak provided information on proposed renovations for Building 1 and Building 11 at the Municipal Center. The Building 1 renovations include construction of a loading dock area and a security/privacy brick wall and mechanical gate.

Mr. Rawls said the brick wall looks bad and takes away from the aesthetic of the building. Mr. Wood agreed and said it all looked very tacky.

For the Building 11 renovations, Ms. Nowak said the proposal included removing berms on the north and south side of the building to add windows at the basement level. They are also proposing to replace the windows and doors.

Mr. Reed described the proposed Francis Land House porch steps replacement. He said they plan the removal of existing brick steps to the 1920s porch, which have deteriorated, and construction of new wooden steps made of cypress. The project will require repair/replacement of lap board siding to match existing on the adjacent addition and repair/replacement of brick and mortar in the wall behind the existing steps.

Mr. Reed said that Nimmo Church has appealed the denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Historical Review Board for the proposed Welcome Center. He noted that a letter will be written from the Chair of the VBHPC asking the City Council to honor the decision of the Review Board.

Under Old Business, Mr. Reed noted that at the last meeting he said the Native American Heritage Month Proclamation would be scheduled for the November 2 City Council meeting. He said there was no meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> due to the elections. He noted the proclamation reading is scheduled for the November 9 City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. and Lee Lockamy has approved the language of the proclamation.

Mr. Reed noted that the Cape Henry Lighthouse is again open to civilians as of Wednesday, October 27. There was no additional old business.

Under New Business, Mr. Reed said the Executive Committee wanted to check with the Commission as a whole on a couple of proposed projects. Mr. Reed noted that in the current budget there is \$30,000 identified for history research for the southern half of the city. He said that Jimmy Wood had discussed this with Councilperson Barbara Henley, and she wasn't very receptive to bringing in an outside historian to perform research. He said Mr. Wood will follow up with Mrs. Henley, but he wanted to be prepared with an alternative project for the southern section of the city. Mr. Reed proposed that we should pursue an MPD for the gun clubs in that area and ask the Pocahontas hunt club property owners to participate as the accompanying individual property nomination. There was general consensus that this was a good option to pursue with the current year's funding.

Mr. Reed said that there is also funding identified for scientific investigations, such as archaeology and dendrochronology. He said the Commission had not pursued any dendrochronology projects and that there are several opportunities to seek accurate dating on older buildings in the city. Mr. Reed recommended that we should take the opportunity to do this timber dating analysis for the Carraway House while we have a property owner that is likely willing to allow us to perform that type of work. There was general consensus that this was a good option to pursue with the current year's funding.

Mr. Wood noted that the next meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be on Wednesday, December 1 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.