

**STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**November 3, 2016**

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, October 6, 2016, was called to order at 3:06 p.m. by Chairman Richard Chichester in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Chichester, Anita Dodd, Barbara Kirby, Jane Conner, and Ken Pitts

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Rodriguez and Ann Best-Rolls

STAFF PRESENT: Kathy Baker, Jason Towery, Bryon Counsell, Brion Southall, Elizabeth Davis, and Denise Knighting

GUESTS PRESENT: Eric Mink, Rick McGregor, Jerrilynn Eby, and Irma Clifton

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Chichester called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Pitts to call the roll.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mr. Pitts called the roll and there was a quorum with five members present.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Chichester asked if there were any public presentations.

Mr. McGregor stated he wanted to mention the property monuments that are in the median of I-95 and are threatened by the construction of express lanes. He stated the studies done note that the markers are insignificant, but VDOT is now aware of the significance. He stated he would like to see them moved to a safe place in the county. He stated he was bringing it to the Historical Commission with hopes of finding a location and having it ready so the monument can be placed there when they are moved.

Ms. Kirby asked if it was known who the land owners were.

Mr. McGregor stated yes, there are initials on them. He stated they were property monuments of three land owners, Alexander Gattis, Thomas Townsen and Robert Stuart. He stated Thomas Townsen was a major supplier for stone to Washington D.C. He stated one monument was hand cut and engraved and a second one was matching, but not engraved. He stated they have been through all the studies and have been deemed insignificant according to criteria but VDOT is agreeable to allowing the County to do something with them.

Mrs. Dodd stated she felt having them at the Courthouse was perfect because of safety reasons and since they are boundary markers they have a connection with the archives in the Courthouse. She suggested speaking to the County for approval and also suggested signage to identify the monuments.

Mr. McGregor stated there are two monuments; one is in place and one is lying on the ground.

Mrs. Dodd agreed with Mr. McGregor concerning having a place ready to have them placed and asked the time frame.

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Mr. McGregor stated there was some time because the monuments would not be affected by the Rt. 630 interchange, but he did not know how much time.

Ms. Baker stated she would talk to the County.

Mr. Chichester stated the Commission agreed to allow Ms. Baker to take it to the appropriate people in the County with the recommendation to place them on the Courthouse grounds if possible.

Ms. Baker asked if the Commission could prepare a brief memo stating that.

Mr. Chichester asked for a motion.

Mrs. Kirby made the motion.

Mrs. Conner seconded.

The motion passed 5 – 0 (Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Best-Rolls were absent).

Mrs. Dodd stated she did not mind doing the memo, but asked Mr. McGregor for some information.

Mr. McGregor agreed and stated the Historical Society should also write a memo.

Mrs. Dodd suggested a 15 foot x 15 foot area.

Mr. Chichester thanked Mr. McGregor and Ms. Eby for passing on the information and moved on the new business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Civil War Database Update – Eric Mink, National Park Service

Mr. Mink stated he did not have an update because of the workload. He stated he was very close to the end and plans on having a chapter on Bell Plains next month.

Mrs. Dodd asked Mr. Mink if he had received any additional information from Quantico.

Mr. Mink stated Quantico has reports in regard to Confederate camps from the winter of 1961-62. They have two reports on two sites and he will get those. He also recently found a very detailed map identifying Union camps from the summer of 1862 and he will add that information.

Mr. Chichester thanked Mr. Mink and moved on to item 2.

2. Pratt Park Utility Project – Jason Towery, Department of Utilities

Mr. Towery stated he was with the Department of Utilities and stated they were installing a large water line in the near future in the southern part of the county. He stated as part of the project they had archeological studies done in the Pratt Park area and stated Mr. Counsell would address the subject.

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Mr. Counsell stated he was handing a report from Dovetail Cultural Resource Group that investigated the waterline alignment in Pratt Park and also handing out the blog that Kerri Gonzalez of Dovetail does, depicting some of the items found in recent digs. He stated on the second page there was an article on pickle jars. He stated the link on the blog shows the pickle jars which were put back together and are in 3-dimensional format for viewing. He stated the waterline was not expected to start construction until early 2019, the final report is due in December and the artifacts will come with the report. He stated Dovetail assumed the artifacts would go directly to DHR. He asked the Commission for their opinion of what to do with the artifacts. He stated they found what is categorized as run of the mill items except for the pickle jars.

Mr. Towery stated this was just informational at this point and they would be happy to turn the artifacts over for review, once received.

Mr. Counsell stated he understood everything could not be stored here, but at least they could be reviewed before being sent to Richmond.

Mrs. Dodd stated she would like to see the types of artifacts and then make a decision. She stated pickle jars were significant enough for Stafford to exhibit somewhere, because there was a pickle factory in Falmouth.

Mrs. Conner stated she felt the Historical Society would also like to look at the artifacts.

Mr. Counsell stated when the artifacts were ready to be picked up he would coordinate with Ms. Baker. Once the review was complete they would then send them to Richmond.

Ms. Baker asked the Commission if they could skip item 3 and move to item 4, as Mr. Southall was at another meeting and was running late.

3. Bloomington at Patawomek Park – Brion Southall, Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities

*Discussed after item 7.*

4. Falmouth Overlay District Ordinance

Ms. Baker passed out a map of the Falmouth Overlay District and explained the district has officially been created and would allow certain things such as relaxed setbacks or different zoning ordinance requirements can be relaxed so that there are no issues with a building being non-conforming because most buildings were created before zoning ordinances. She stated the properties in the Overlay District still have to be rezoned for property owners to take advantage and the property would retain the underlying zoning but add the historic overlay. She stated the properties in purple on the map were the properties included in the district and explained the Board of Supervisors wants to initiate the rezoning so the property owners do not have to come in and individually request the rezoning and pay the fees. At the November 22, 2016 Board meeting the Board of Supervisors will initiate the rezoning and every property owner will be notified and any property owner can opt out of the overall rezoning. A letter will be sent out explaining everything and give the owners an opportunity to opt out. She stated if the property is rezoned to the overlay district, it was not affecting anything that could currently be done on the property. Once the Board of Supervisors authorizes a package will be put together for rezoning which would spell out everything. At that time she would bring it back to the Commission for input as well as the ARB.

Mrs. Dodd stated she recently got information about two parcels that fall within the new district area and the owner was asking for a conditional use permit. She stated one of the parcels included Dunbar Kitchen and

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abutting properties along with other properties on Gordon Street. She stated there was a meeting held in the morning that she was not aware of concerning these properties and conditional use permits.

Mrs. Baker stated she was not aware.

Mrs. Dodd asked how the district overlay affects those applications.

Ms. Baker stated a rezoning was being requested for the properties mentioned. She stated the properties were located on Carter Street and Gordon Street. She stated the request is to rezone from residential to commercial. They want to turn Dunbar kitchen into an office and would rehab it as it stands. The other two parcels have modern structures, the applicant wants to tear those structures down and add another office building on the property. Additionally they are proposing to use the other two smaller strips on Gordon Street, with one structure being removed and replaced with a new structure and parking spaces on the other. The proposal is to rezone to commercial, but the overlay will relax some of the standards such as setbacks, but it will also limit some of the uses allowed.

Mrs. Dodd asked if the Commission would have an opportunity to comment.

Ms. Baker stated yes, for that you can comment at any time because it did go to the development review meeting and that is open for comments and it will also go before the Architectural Review Board because of what is being proposed and two public hearings, so there is opportunity for input. She stated if the Commission had comments she would suggest submitting them as staff will compile the comments and send them to the applicant and ask them to address the comments before the project is scheduled for public hearing.

Mrs. Kirby stated in the past years there have been many plans in the Falmouth area showing Falmouth as historic and all the things that were there. She stated she felt the Board of Supervisors was more concerned about bringing jobs and tax money than the historic sites in Falmouth. She asked how to save the historic sites if the rules are more relaxed.

Ms. Baker stated the rules they are relaxing are things like the setbacks so now if someone wants to add an addition and it does not meet current setbacks, which most of the properties do not, then they can't do any addition. She stated in order to adapt the building to be used in a practical matter it may require some type of addition or construction to the building. It does not mean it will compromise the historic integrity and the Architectural Review Board review will still be required. She stated some of the properties are not in the Historic Overlay District and are not subject to the Architectural Review Board review, but under the new overlay district they are. It is actually adding oversight on any new construction or new buildings. Another thing that will be relaxed is parking, a gravel parking lot would be allowed instead of a paved lot with curb and gutter. If the buildings can't be used they are going to sit there, deteriorate and sit vacant. The idea behind the ordinance is to invite people to come in, renovate and use the structures.

Mrs. Dodd stated the Commission has been given an opportunity to voice their opinion on how the properties should be developed. She stated she felt the new district was a step in the right direction and the Commission and the Architectural Review Board will have opportunities to voice their opinions and that is better than what was in place before. If the buildings are not allowed to be improved and used they will fall down. She stated the Commission can say something about what may happen on the properties, such as if the buildings will be torn down, it needs to be assessed, recorded and a phase I conducted if any ground surface activity is to be done.

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Mr. Pitts stated with the overlay in place they will have the tools to do that now.

Mrs. Dodd agreed.

Mrs. Kirby stated the area north of Dunbar Kitchen showed parking and asked if that was allowed.

Ms. Baker stated there were restrictions on the property but she has not reviewed the application because she is waiting for comments so she can compile then and look at the application. She stated the properties in white, that Mrs. Kirby was talking about, were still VOT right of way. A portion of that is proposed to be conveyed to the County. The County has requested the area that was the auto dealership but VDOT has not made that determination yet. She stated there was also an agreement made for the Falmouth intersection, one item was documenting the buildings, which was done. Another part of the agreement was the property could only be used for historic uses. Parking is a use if it is there to support tourism within the historic district. VDOT has to approve any of the uses going in there because they are a party to the agreement. The county's initial thought was to provide public parking so people could access the area as well as landscaping features and a potential public information center. It has to support the historic district of Falmouth and that is built into the agreement. For an office building to put in parking, would not be allowed as it stands now.

A brief discussion ensued concerning the agreement with VDOT and the procedures that need to be followed for the use of the open area at the Falmouth intersection. Ms. Baker stated she could send a copy of the agreement to the Commission if they would like a copy.

Mr. Chichester asked Mrs. Clifton if she wanted to make a comment.

Mrs. Clifton stated Mr. Odem's house did meet the threshold to be part of the contributing feature because it is over 50 years old.

Ms. Baker asked what property Mrs. Clifton was referring to.

Mrs. Clifton stated the cinder block property on Gordon Street. She stated it was a mid-century structure and that building is scheduled for demolition.

Ms. Baker stated the building was not scheduled for demolition, the applicant is proposing demolition. We are going back to the applicant and saying this is what we do and don't want you to do. So the recommendation from staff, Historical Commission and Planning Commission may be that they do not tear that house down but reuse it. This is the time for input like that. You are the experts and you need to tell us what you want to see there and that will go back to the applicant.

Mrs. Clifton stated she was concerned about the Dunbar Kitchen because she did not see any application or approval from the Architectural Review Board and a door has been replaced that is inappropriate and she feels that was done without any approval. She stated if that could be done other things could be done without approval.

Ms. Baker stated this is the first that she has heard of any exterior renovations being done on the building. She stated if you know that is being done, you should contact the zoning department so they can inspect and issue a violation. She stated it did not go the Architectural Review Board so if they have done something it is without the ARBs approval and staff needs to know that because we don't always know when something is being done. She stated she would pass this on the Zoning Department.

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Mrs. Clifton stated the application was submitted to the county a year ago and this overlay district is exactly what he presented to the County and now that the overlay district is enacted he is requesting to get the ball rolling.

Ms. Baker stated a conceptual idea was presented and it was officially submitted a month ago.

Mrs. Clifton stated the overlay will enable that to happen.

Mr. Pitts stated they were off the subject.

Mrs. Dodd made a motion that the Commission needs to figure out what kinds of things they are concerned about and what kinds of things they want to ask to happen to the buildings and properties. They need to do it now, write them down and get them to Ms. Baker now so it is out there.

Mr. Pitts stated he would second for discussion. He was afraid if that was done, it would be taken as the letter of the law. He stated he would rather take it one application at a time.

Mrs. Dodd stated assuming the letter would address these two parcels...

Mr. Pitts apologized and stated he thought Mrs. Dodd meant the entire thing.

Mrs. Dodd stated a disclaimer could be included which stated these are the items the Commission feels at this point in time, and may have other suggestions in the future.

The motion passed 5 – 0 (Dr. Rodrigues and Ms. Best-Rolls were absent).

Mrs. Dodd stated the Commission needs to discuss their suggestions.

Ms. Baker stated she could mail hard copies of the application to the Commission members. She stated staff will be working with the applicant over the next few months to develop a proposal that will go forward to public hearing.

Mr. Pitts asked if it could be on the agenda next month for discussion.

Ms. Baker stated yes. She suggested everyone could email their individual concerns to the applicant will be informed the Historical Commission will be discussing the matter at their next meeting and information will be coming.

Mrs. Clifton stated Charlie Payne was meeting with a group of Falmouth residents concerning this project. She stated the Falmouth residents have concerns about the project and there may be information from the meeting she could forward to Kathy also.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. Heritage Trees

Mrs. Dodd stated she received an email from Dr. Rodriguez concerning his findings on the trees in Pratt Park and Willowmere. She stated Dr. Rodriguez had Mr. Mussey, who is a horticultural agent from the Cooperative Extension Office examine the trees. Both trees are white oaks and both trees are actually two

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trees that have grown together. Generally trees that have grown together are in a declining state and they do not appear to be eligible.

Ms. Baker stated the tree in Pratt Park was a walnut tree.

Mrs. Dodd corrected her statement and said yes, it was a black walnut and in the same state.

Mrs. Conner said she met with Jerrilynn Eby concerning the tree at the elementary school and they determined the owners when it was a small plant. She stated she gave all the information to Charma Carr and Ms. Carr has been doing lots of research at the Courthouse.

Mr. Chichester asked about the walnut tree at Pratt Park.

Mrs. Dodd read the email she received from Dr. Rodriguez, which stated the tree at Willowmere is actually two trees which have fused. They are white oak trees and generally these trees are in a declining state. The tree at Pratt Park is in the same state and is a black walnut. Trees like these are usually stressed for various reasons because of their location and it is impossible to accurately state their age. She stated she was a little confused and stated she would email him to see if he could elaborate a bit more for clarification.

Ms. Baker stated the tree at Stafford Elementary was owned by the Stafford County School Board and any maintenance of the tree would be up to the School Board.

6. Shelton's Cottage

Ms. Baker handed out the report prepared by Dovetail concerning the work done on the cottage. She stated there was talk at the last meeting about coming up with a management plan for the cottage and she asked if the Commission had recommendations or was the recommendation that a consultant draw up a management plan. She stated there was a request for a Preservation Planner/Cultural Resource Specialist in the budget but it will be April or May before the budget is passed and that position is confirmed. She asked the Commission if they wanted to wait to see if the position was passed and have that person handle the management plan. She asked the Commission for direction.

Mrs. Dodd stated the report was basically concerning the small renovation items that were done and does give a good history of what has happened up to this point. She stated it does address future things that will need to occur if the cottage is open to the public. She stated her initial thought was to wait and see if the position is approved, yes it would be good to have someone in house to put the plan together. She stated she did not think a management plan would need to be in place before the currently scheduled events were held. She asked if Dovetail could do the plan.

Ms. Baker stated yes, but funds would need to be available. She stated Mr. Southall just walked in and could perhaps answer questions about funding and potentially doing additional studies. She asked Mr. Southall if there was anything included for the next several years which may provide funds to Shelton's Cottage.

Mr. Southall stated Shelton's Cottage is always part of the infrastructure projects. He stated there was some interior work or restoration they would like to do. The final part of stabilization has been completed as well as the roof and the corner that was repaired of the cottage. He stated the evaluation Mrs. Dodd and Ms. Wheatcraft did when Parks and Recreation took over the cottage was incorporated into the infrastructure budget. He stated that was pretty much complete and they need to move to the next step.

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Mrs. Dodd stated the next step would be to create a management plan which is needed in order to go forward with the preservation and restoration of the building. She stated how that would come about was the next thing to figure out. She asked Mr. Southall if any money was put in the budget for the next year for Shelton's Cottage.

Mr. Southall stated they were in the process of creating that now and the funds would be available in July.

Mrs. Dodd asked if money would be put in for other cultural resources on park property, such as Bloomington.

Mr. Southall stated currently they have a 14 million dollar maintenance budget for all the parks. But he did not know what would be approved, but at the end of the infrastructure process it would be decided what projects had safety issues and protection of resources and assets.

Mrs. Dodd asked if there was a line item in the budget for cultural resources within park property.

Mr. Southall stated they were done individually in the infrastructure CIP, not in the operating budget.

Mrs. Dodd stated she would reiterate her suggestion to create a management plan for Shelton's Cottage and ultimately for each cultural resource, because they are all different.

Ms. Baker stated it may be helpful to Parks and Recreations to have the projects prioritized.

Mrs. Dodd suggested asking Dovetail for a cost of a management plan.

Mrs. Clifton stated the Dovetail Report is saying Shelton's Cottage is eligible for individual listing on the National Register. She stated in her opinion the County is reluctant to make new nominations to the National Register because they did not do it with the counting house either. She asked if they wanted an individual or volunteers to do it.

Ms. Baker stated there is no one on County staff that can prepare National Register nominations and she welcomes any volunteers to come in and prepare them.

Mrs. Clifton asked if it was in the agreement for the new owner of the Counting House to prepare a nomination.

Ms. Baker stated she would have to check.

7. Falmouth Master Interpretive Plan Implementation

Ms. Davis asked if the Commission had an opportunity to review Mrs. Dodd's revisions, which fit in with the map. She stated if the changes were acceptable, she could bring a draft to the next meeting.

All of the Commission members agreed they liked the changes.

3. *Bloomington at Patawomek Park – Brion Southall, Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities*

Ms. Baker stated the Commission discussed Bloomington at the last meeting. She stated the overgrowth at the site was being mentioned because of the signage and flyers. It was suggested if the interpretative signage

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and flyers were onsite, people would like to see what is out there. Mr. Southall was invited to discuss that issue.

Mr. Southall stated when it was developed as a park, money was put in the budget to put a fence around the area because of the debris and safety concerns. He stated during the reduction in force the property was not maintained. He stated a prison crew will be used throughout the winter to reestablish the trail to the property and a trail around the outside of the fence.

Mrs. Dodd asked if there would be a trail inside the fence.

Mr. Southall stated no.

Mrs. Dodd asked if they would remove vegetation growing inside the fence.

Mr. Southall stated yes, so the view will not be blocked or if vines are deteriorating the property they will be removed.

Mrs. Dodd stated you have to be careful when removing growth from chimneys.

Mr. Southall stated they may have to kill the vines as opposed to removing them.

Mrs. Dodd stated there was a lot of vegetation to start with and is now worse since it has not been maintained. She stated there was some vegetation that is historic to the building, and should not be removed because they are part of the landscape features part of the terracing and orchards. She suggested someone go out and evaluate the situation within the fence to see what could be removed. She stated there are boxwood near the cemetery and suggested having an arborist give advice concerning trimming them down, because they block some of the cemetery view.

Mr. Southall stated they have an arborist on call.

Mrs. Dodd stated there are some trees inside the fence that were identified in the archeological study that should stay. She suggested they refer the report so the arborist could identify those trees. She also suggested stabilizing the chimneys and stated Dovetail could be helpful with that.

8. Proposed Ordinance O06-47 – July 18, 2006 – Archaeological Surveys & Investigations

Mr. Chichester stated the proposed Ordinance has been on the agenda for some time and moved on to additional presentation by the public.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Clifton stated she met with Bill Howell concerning the old Falmouth Elementary School and Mr. Howell is researching to see if the General Assembly can do anything concerning any assistance for mitigation of asbestos.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Chichester asked Mrs. Dodd about the email about signing a letter concerning broken down barns at England Run.

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Mrs. Dodd stated Ms. Baker has not received replies from the Commission concerning the letter.

Mr. Chichester stated the property was owned by G. W. Wallace who was his distant cousin. He stated he thought the letter was good.

Ms. Baker asked if the letter was okay and could be sent.

Mrs. Kirby stated yes.

Ms. Baker stated she would finalize it tomorrow.

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mrs. Dodd stated along with the Falmouth information there was also an application for Clearview, which was for a wedding venue, which she thought was fantastic.

Ms. Baker stated that application would also be going to the Architectural Review Board for comment next month. She stated if any of the Commission members wanted to provide comment, she can schedule it for the meeting next month also.

Mr. Pitts asked Ms. Baker if he could get the contacts for the Grandville property so he could obtain permission to visit the property with D. P. Newton.

Mrs. Conner stated she was at Hartwood Presbyterian Church and the old Hartwood Post Office was mentioned. She stated there is no longer any one living in the structure and would probably be destroyed.

Mrs. Dodd stated it was not. She stated that information came to her and she was disturbed so she spoke to the owner. She stated they are in the process of making some repairs and plan to open it as a county store again.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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Ms. Conner stated she had several corrections and gave them to Ms. Knighting.

Ms. Dodd stated she had many corrections and gave some of them to Ms. Knighting. Because there were so many it was decided she would email the corrections to Ms. Knighting.

Mr. Chichester stated because of the numerous corrections to the minutes approval of the October minutes would be moved to the next meeting after the corrections were made.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.