

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

7 January 2013

I. ROLL CALL

- A. WELCOME A NEW COMMISSIONER – TCHPC welcomed newly appointed Commissioner, Dr. Dorothy C. Fenwick, Ph.D. Dr. Fenwick, speaking briefly of her historic preservation background, said she has served 13 years on the Oxford Historic District Commission, both as chair and as a commissioner. She added that she has purchased a number of historic homes in Oxford to ensure they would not be demolished or unfavorably altered. She also mentioned her success in obtaining a grant from the State of Maryland to fund an application to place the Town of Oxford on the National Registry of Historic Places, and that the registry was granted in 2001.
- B. The regular meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:02 pm on Monday, 7 January 2013. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Mr. Robert Amdur, Mr. Ron B. Mitchell, and Ms. Alice Marie Gravely, as well as newly appointed Dr. Dorothy C. Fenwick. Mr. Jacob Lareska was on hiatus and therefore not present. Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF 5 NOVEMBER 2012 MEETING – The minutes of the TCHPC meeting on 5 November 2012 were read, and no corrections or additions were noted. Mrs. Marsha Kacher moved to approve the minutes as read. The motion was seconded, and carried.
- B. STATUS UPDATE ON THE MILLER'S HOUSE (T-70) – Mr. Ward Bucher said most of the work to secure the house has been done, and the only thing left to do is to close up the roof on the west end of the structure. O. N. Andrew is to submit a proposal soon.
- C. PROGRESS ON THE SALE OF DONCASTER (T-178) – No one had anything new to report. Since the property has been listed for several months with no apparent activity, Mr. Ward Bucher suggested removing the topic from the agenda.
- D. NEW BEGINNINGS: DISCUSSION OF IDEAS FOR 2013 TCHPC ACTIVITIES –
 - 1. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely emphasized the need to start planning for the next social event which she has generously offered to host at her home at Beverly (T-240). It was agreed that spring would be the best time to hold the event. A tentative date of Sunday 21 April was selected for the event to be held in the afternoon from 1 to 3 pm. Ms. Gravely said she would be happy to provide the food and beverages. Since the event will be planned for the end of April, it was decided that an invitation list

should be assembled in February and the invitations should be mailed in March. It was mentioned that the chairman was not present at the last social, and the commissioners felt that it is important for him to be there. Mr. Ward Bucher said he will make every effort to attend if the event can be scheduled so there are no conflicts in his schedule.

Ms. Alice Marie Gravely expressed concern that the County Council were not sent invitations to the last social event. Mr. Ward Bucher agreed that the invitations should go out to the County Council, and also to other parties of interest, such as other local historic preservation organizations. He suggested inviting Elizabeth Beckley, Director of Preservation Maryland.

Ms. Alice Marie Gravely said most of the people who attended the last event were expecting some sort of program, and she suggested having one or more individuals give a short talk. Mr. Ron Mitchell suggested asking one or two people who own HDOs who might be willing to speak. After discussing several possibilities, Mr. Ron Mitchell said he will contact Richard Tilghman to see if he would like to speak. Mr. Ward Bucher said he will ask Elizabeth Beckley if she could address the gathering. He said he will also contact Dirck Bartlett to see if he would attend and speak at the social. Mr. Bucher added that he will call the director of the Talbot Historic Society as well. Dr. Dorothy Fenwick said she will invite someone who can talk about tax credits.

Mr. Martin Sokolich reminded the commissioners that there were a large number of items returned in the last mailing because the owners of the properties on the list had changed. Therefore, the mailing list needs to be updated. Mrs. Marsha Kacher said she would be happy to try to find out who currently owns those properties and update the list accordingly. Mr. Martin Sokolich said he will find out when the next updated list from the Tax Assessment Office is available so the mailing list can be checked against it.

2. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely said TCHPC needs more exposure about what the Commission does and to stress the importance of historic preservation. She expressed a desire to continue writing articles on historic homes in Talbot County, and to try to get them published either monthly or every other month. Ms. Gravely added that she would be happy to write the articles. Mr. Ward Bucher said some articles had been submitted to the editor of Shore Life, but to the best of his knowledge, they were never published. Mr. Robert Amdur suggested contacting the Star Democrat. He said he knows the new editor, and he will be happy to contact him to see if the Democrat would be interested in publishing the articles. He mentioned that he will need copies of the articles to show the editor. Mr. Martin Sokolich said he will look to see if he has copies that can be forwarded to Mr. Amdur.
3. Mr. Martin Sokolich said County planning for the new budget year will soon begin and TCHPC will have an opportunity to comment on budget issues and make suggestions as to projects the Commission might want to fund. He suggested that the commissioners think about what they would like to accomplish and compile a list.

4. Mr. Ron Mitchell asked if TCHPC should be utilizing the website to enhance public exposure. After some discussion, Mr. Martin Sokolich suggested that the Commission could get their own website domain, separate from the County website which is currently used to post limited information, since a better presentation could be made on a website that is independent of the County website. Mr. Ron Mitchell suggested the possibility of including in the budget funds to pay a webmaster to set up and maintain such a website. Dr. Dorothy Fenwick said she knows someone who maintains a website, and she will check with him to see if he could do it, and get an estimate of what it might cost.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. SITE VISITS – Mr. Robert Amdur said he has been playing telephone tag with the owner of Crooked Intentions (T-48) since she works and is difficult to contact. He will try to arrange a site visit for 3 pm on Tuesday, 22 January since Monday is not convenient for Mr. Ward Bucher to attend the site visit. He will confirm the date and time of the site visit and email the commissioners.
- B. IMPACT OF FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE ON HDO PROPERTIES – Ms. Florence Ball distributed excerpts from the current draft of the proposed Talbot County Floodplain Management Ordinance that are relevant to historic structures. After reviewing the information, Mr. Ward Bucher said it is evident that historic structures are exempt from compliance with the portion of the code dealing with substantial improvement since it clearly states in the definition of substantial improvement that: *“the term does not include any alteration of a historic structure, provided the alternation will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as a historic structure.”* For clarification, Ms. Florence Ball read the definition given for historic structure, which specifies that such a structure must be listed and/or certified by national, state or county historic preservation agencies or commissions to qualify for this exemption.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. Mr. Martin Sokolich advised the commissioners that William Workman, owner of George Brooks House (T-1120), is proposing to enlarge his Historic District Overlay as one of the steps necessary to intensify the use of the property from a bed and breakfast to that of an inn. Because the property is in the Critical Area, Mr. Workman needs to obtain growth allocation, and must present a proposal to petition the State. He currently does not have the petition ready. However, he wants to be put on the next TCHPC agenda to ask for backing from the Commission. It was discussed among the commissioners that TCHPC cannot vote on an unfinished proposal, and ruled that Mr. Workman must have the specific petition and plans ready and submit his information using the normal protocol and submittal schedule that is applicable to any other project that comes before the Commission for review. They felt such a petition should be submitted for review at least one month ahead of the hearing date. Mr. Martin Sokolich said he will convey the ruling of the Commission to Mr. Workman accordingly.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on Monday, 4 February 2013, at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One of the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:10 pm.

9 January 2013