

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

7 November 2011

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:00 PM on Monday, 7 November 2011. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chairperson (*former Chairperson, Steven Hack resigned from TCHPC on 10 October 2011*); Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Ms. Alice Marie Gravely, Ms. Peggy Pickall, Mr. Robert Amdur and Mr. Ron B. Mitchell. Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. REVIEW MINUTES OF 3 October 2011 TCHPC MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read and no errors or omissions were noted. A motion was made to approve the minutes as read, was seconded and unanimously carried.

B. LANDMARKS LIST SURVEY WORK – Mr. Ward Bucher said he did not have anything new on this topic at this time; however, he suggested it might be a good idea to schedule the survey work with the monthly site visits to the County HDO properties. Mr. Ron Mitchell agreed it would be best to combine the two endeavors. Mr. Ward Bucher said the Commissioners will discuss scheduling further under New Business.

C. LETTER FOR SAMPLE SURVEY – Mr. Ron Mitchell said he received from Ms. Florence Ball suggested edits of the draft letter he emailed to everyone for comment. He said if he could get everyone else's suggestions within a week or so, he could write the final draft and circulate it for further comments. He would like to have the letter ready to send by the next monthly TCHPC meeting. Some suggestions were made to make the letter more cordial and appealing.

D. MILLER'S HOUSE IN WYE MILLS (T-70) – Mr. Ron Mitchell reported that the seller agreed to reduce the asking price so the sale could be finalized, so Historic Easton will gain ownership of the Miller's House by Friday 11 November. He said the house is in horrible condition, but the emergency repair work cannot begin until the property is professionally surveyed. He has appealed to Tom Lane (Lane Engineering) to donate the survey work, but has not had a favorable response. He asked the Commissioners to make inquiries to find a surveyor who would be willing to do the work pro bono. Because the property lines are not clear and there may be some encroachment onto the property, an accurate survey is essential. Also wells and other features need to be accurately located.

Mr. Mitchell said the next steps are to clear the lot, trim back trees and bushes and have contractors come look at the house so they can submit bids for the emergency work. He said he also needs to find out if someone is willing to donate the use of a temporary portable storage unit. The two porches need to be methodically documented, marking

all parts for later reassembly, carefully disassembled and stored in the storage unit while the main house is undergoing repairs. He said he must present to MHT exactly what will be done with the house, and that in order to maintain the original historic context of the house, heat and plumbing will most likely not be added. He discussed the possibility of partnering with other historic sites within Wye Mills such as the Old Mill and the Church, and plans to work with Preservation Maryland, Stories of the Chesapeake and other related organizations to develop plans for this project.

- E. TCHPC ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION IN A LOCAL MAGAZINE – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she, Mr. Ron Mitchell and Mr. Ward Bucher met with the publisher of Shore Life magazine about publishing articles by TCHPC to appear regularly in the publication. The publisher expressed interest in doing so, but would like variety, not just one theme. Focus would not be only on Talbot County, but even so, contributing the articles will (hopefully) give the Commission considerable public exposure. The first article is to be about Bellevue, to include Clay’s Hope (T-189). The article will also touch on the TCHPC initiative to preserve villages to maintain their traditional context.
- F. RESULTS OF OCTOBER SITE VISIT TO WEBER HOUSE (T-818) – Mr. Ward Bucher said he was not able to attend the site visit, and asked Mrs. Marsha Kacher and Mr. Ron Mitchell to report on their findings. In describing the house, Mrs. Marsha Kacher said she observed the five-bay front, judging the house to be circa mid-late 1800’s. It has asbestos siding over the original exterior and new roofing. The soffits are in need of paint, and bushes are growing up against the house and should be trimmed back to avoid damage. Deteriorating shutters were also noted.

Mr. Ward Bucher asked Mrs. Marsha Kacher if she would draft a letter of report for him to send the property owners. Mr. Martin Sokolich will send a copy of one of the previous letters to Mrs. Kacher to use as a template. Ms. Peggy Pickall explained to the newer commissioners some of the other procedures routinely used in connection with the site visits and maintaining a record of the HDO properties.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. SCHEDULING SITE VISITS – Mr. Ward Bucher opened the discussion, explaining that mornings are not a convenient time for him to make site visits and suggested scheduling them in the afternoon. It was decided that 3 pm on the third Monday of each month would be a convenient time, and site visits for the landmark survey will follow the HDO site visit on each occasion. Mr. Martin Sokolich suggested Longwoods School (T-69) for the next routine site visit. He said he can make the arrangements to visit the school on 21 November at 3 pm. He will confirm the arrangements by email. Those Commissioners attending will meet at the Acme parking lot at 2:45 pm.
- B. TCHPC TASK ASSIGNMENTS AND ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR – Mr. Ward Bucher said he is willing to chair the meetings until his term as Commissioner expires. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely was nominated as vice-chair, and she accepted. The Commissioners unanimously voted in favor.

Mr. Ward Bucher asked Ms. Peggy Pickall if she would handle arrangements for the monthly site visits. Ms. Pickall suggested emailing or calling Mr. Steven Hack to find out how he has handled the arrangements in the past.

Mr. Martin Sokolich reported that the owner of Jena recently passed away and the property was sold. He suggested TCHPC contacting the new owners to apprise them of the particulars of the Historic District Overlay on that property. Mr. Ward Bucher agreed with the recommendation. Ms. Peggy Pickall suggested making arrangements as soon as possible to visit that property and meet with the owners.

- C. THANK YOU LETTERS – Mr. Ward Bucher said he will try to get something appropriate together to send to Mr. Steven Hack in recognition and thanks for his service as Commissioner and Chair for TCHPC.

Ms. Alice Marie Gravely said she will draft a thank-you letter to send to the attendees of the October Afternoon Social, and will encourage them to attend a TCHPC meeting and consider obtaining HDO's for their properties.

Mr. Ron Mitchell said he feels some sort of short, informative presentation should be prepared ahead of time to offer at these social events. He suggested power point, slides, a film or some other display media could be used to enable any available Commissioner to do the presentation. He also suggested that the events be held more than once a year. Mr. Ward Bucher asked when the Commission should start planning the next social event. The general consensus was to begin planning it now. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely graciously volunteered to host the event at Beverly in the spring. She felt the month of April would work best for her since her schedule allows her to be available all that month. Mr. Ward Bucher said the Commission should consider inviting a broader group of people, and suggested including County Council members, representatives from Preservation Maryland, MHT and other related groups along with historic property owners. Ms. Peggy Pickall suggested inviting John Craig (County Manager) and Paige Bethke (Director of Economic Development), the local press and the publisher from Shore Life magazine.

- D. POTENTIAL COMMISSIONERS – Mr. Ward Bucher said in light of Mr. Steven Hack's recent resignation, a seat on the Commission needs to be filled, and asked if anyone had a nominee in mind. Ms. Peggy Pickall advised that suggestions from TCHPC may be considered by the County Council; however they prefer to select people of their own choosing for appointment to the Commission, although they are sometimes slow in doing so.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 5 December 2011, 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 4:00 pm.

8 Nov 2011