

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

5 December 2011

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:05 PM on Monday, 5 December 2011. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chairperson; Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Ms. Alice Marie Gravely, Ms. Peggy Pickall, Mr. Robert Amdur. Mr. Ron B. Mitchell was absent. Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball. Also present was Mr. James Mosner in support of a Work Permit request to replace some windows at Pleasant Valley (T-84).

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF 7 November 2011 TCHPC MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read and one error was noted. A motion was made to approve the minutes as corrected, 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.
- C. LETTER FOR SAMPLE SURVEY – Mr. Ward Bucher said everyone has sent their comments and edits to Mr. Ron Mitchell, who is to finalize the letter with the help of those comments. Mrs. Marsha Kacher said she has concerns about Mr. Mitchell's comment that the value of an historic property will be held during hard economic times. She asked if anyone has evidence that is true. Mr. Bucher suggested this has been the topic of past research by the National Trust, Preservation Maryland, MHT and the National Park Service. Mr. Ward Bucher asked if a target date has been set for sending these letters out. Mr. Martin Sokolich suggested sometime in January might be best. Since Mr. Mitchell was not present, further discussion regarding the letter was tabled until the next meeting.
- D. MILLER'S HOUSE IN WYE MILLS (T-70) – Mr. Ward Bucher reported that Historic Easton now has full ownership of the property. Clearing of the brush is nearly complete. Lane Engineering has surveyed the property. The survey reveals that the property line is on the flat part of the property, which will enable a truck to enter the site without grading and without making special provisions to access the property. Measure drawings are currently being done. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely said she knows some people who want to donate funds for the restoration project. Mr. Ward Bucher advised that they should contact Historic Easton.
- E. STATUS OF TCHPC COLUMN IN SHORE LIFE MAGAZINE – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she found documentation of the original Clays Hope (T-189) land grant, but has been unable to pin down anything about whether the barn was ever used as a tobacco barn. She is not sure when the house was built. Mr. Ward Bucher interjected as a

reminder that the article must be 600 words or less. He added that it would be nice to have some old photographs to include with the article. Ms. Pickall said she is still researching information to pull the article together.

- F. NOVEMBER SITE VISIT TO LONGWOODS SCHOOL (T-69) – Mr. Ward Bucher said the site visit went very well. The building was found to be generally in good condition with some deferred maintenance items noted on the exterior. Some of the brickwork in the foundation has open joints. Past repairs made with hard Portland cement mortar were noted. Mr. Bucher pointed out that hard cement mortar should not be used since it tends to compromise the strength of the brick. Recommendations were made to hand-scrape the open joints out to one inch in depth, and repoint with a soft mortar mix with minimal Portland cement content. Removal of the previous defective repointing is not recommended, as it might cause further damage to the bricks. Other needed repairs noted were areas where exterior paint was failing. The Commissioners also felt that the color might be brighter than what might be considered historically correct. Also, some corrosion stains were noted on the copper cupola roof from the base of the iron weathervane. Remedies for these problems were noted in a concise report assembled by Mr. Bucher.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. PLEASANT VALLEY (T-84) WORK PERMIT APPLICATION FOR REPLACEMENT WINDOWS – Mr. James Mosner, contractor for the owners, appeared to discuss the proposed window replacement project. He said the wooden third floor dormers were installed as additions in the 1930's and the windows are deteriorating. Water is leaking through and running down the interior wall onto the second floor ceiling, damaging the finish, the sills are rotting, and it is only a matter of time before more serious damage would occur within the wall structure. The owner has elected to replace the windows with custom Marvin aluminum clad wooden sashes replicating the existing windows in terms of size, muntins, and six-over-six true divided lites. He said no interior or exterior trim will be removed or replaced, and there will be no new framing. The only component that will differ will be the glazing, since the replacement windows will be insulated double panes instead of single pane glass. The Commissioners asked about storm windows. Mr. Mosner said storm windows do exist on the windows, and he believes they have contributed to the deterioration of the windows due to condensation that frequently occurs between the sashes. The storm windows will be permanently removed.

Mrs. Marsha Kacher said she does not like aluminum clad windows for historic buildings, and maintained that a well-built storm window enhances energy efficiency and does not cause condensation problems. Ms. Peggy Pickall said she does not object to aluminum clad windows as replacement windows for areas such as dormers where maintenance might be a problem and would be difficult to see from the ground. Mr. Ward Bucher commented that, in his opinion, clad replacement windows do not meet the Secretary of the Interior standards; therefore, he was not in favor of approving them. He felt a well-built mahogany window would endure as well as, if not better than, a clad window. Mrs. Marsha Kacher added that sealing a wood window with epoxy would make it impervious to the weather. Ms. Alice Marie Gravelly said it has been her

experience that many 1930's building elements are inferior, and she has no objection to replacing the 1930's windows with aluminum clad wooden windows. Mr. Ward Bucher called for a motion:

MOTION – Mr. Robert Amdur moved to approve the window replacement project as presented in the Work Permit Application and submittals. The motion was seconded by Ms. Alice Marie Gravely. The motion was approved with three Commissioners voting in favor. Two Commissioners voted in opposition.

- B. JANUARY SITE VISIT – Mr. Ward Bucher asked which HDO property should be visited next, and Crooked Intentions (T-48) was suggested. However, Ms. Florence Ball reminded the Commissioners that Ms. Peggy Pickall suggested at the November meeting, due to the recent new ownership of Jena (T-163), that property should be visited as soon as possible to acquaint the new owners with TCHPC. The Commissioners decided to try to schedule both Jena and Knox (T-172) for January. (*Customarily, TCHPC does not conduct site visits in December, since it is often an inconvenience to the owners due to the impending holiday.*) Ms. Pickall will contact the new owners and confirm the arrangements.

- C. GEORGE BROOKS HOUSE HROZ (T-1120) – Mr. Martin Sokolich gave a brief summary of the past proceedings regarding Mr. Will Workman's 2006 application for an Historic Rehabilitation Overlay District (HRO) to allow George Brooks House, which is currently used as a Bed and Breakfast, to expand its use to an inn. He explained that the HRO was reviewed and approved by TCHPC and the Planning Commission in 2006; however, the County Council tabled the application due to various violations occurring on the property. Mr. Workman had upgraded the use of several accessory structures to guest rooms without obtaining the required reviews and approvals. Therefore, the request for the HRO could not be approved by the County Council until all violations were corrected and resulting fines were paid. Mr. Sokolich said Mr. Workman is reopening the application process, since these requirements have now been satisfied. He explained that the County Council could possibly request TCHPC and the Planning Commission to review the application again, but most likely will not do so, since these approvals had already been granted. The County Attorney is advising the County Council of their options. Mrs. Marsha Kacher reminded the Commissioners that Ms. Florence Ball had emailed pertinent minutes and other information some time ago to familiarize the newer Commissioners with this topic.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. STATUS OF CLG REPORT – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she emailed the newest commissioners asking for their resumes, but has not received them. Mrs. Marsha Kacher and Ms. Alice Marie Gravely said they had sent theirs as soon as they were requested. Ms. Pickall said she will check her email again, and asked Mr. Robert Amdur to forward his. Mrs. Kacher and Ms. Gravely said they would resend theirs.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 9 January 2012, 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 4:25 pm.

8 Dec 2011