

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

7 March 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 March 2011. Those members in attendance were Mr. Steven K. Hack, Chairperson, Ms. Alice Marie Gravely, Mrs. Marsha Kacher and Mr. Ward Bucher. Ms. Peggy Pickall and Mr. Eric Lowery were not present. The Commission also welcomed its newest member, Mr. Robert Amdur, who was recently appointed by the County Council. A resident of Bozman, Mr. Amdur is a long-time resident of Talbot County who is retired from the Air Force and has served on several Talbot County committees in the past. Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF 7 February 2011 TCHPC MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read. Mrs. Marsha Kacher moved to approve the minutes minutes as read. The motion was seconded by Ms. Alice Marie Gravely and unanimously approved.
- B. POTENTIAL NEW HISTORIC DISTRICT OVERLAYS – Mr. Martin Sokolich announced that to date there was still no further word from the owners of Dolvin (T-350) and Emerson Point (T-235) who had previously expressed an interest in having their properties protected by an HDO. Mr. Sokolich said he wants to get back in touch with Rick Towle, Director of Parks and Recreation, in regard to the 925 Port Street house (T-347) which is owned by the County. Over the past several months, Mr. Towle had discussed with TCHPC using the property as a base for kayak rentals, a museum or other tourism use by applying for an HDO (Historic District Overlay) and HRO (Historic Rehabilitation Overlay). Mr. Sokolich said because the project was to be funded through Program Open Space, the adaptive reuse must be a public use. He will call Mr. Towle to find out when he might wish to continue his pursuit of this project.
- C. ESTABLISHING A PRELIMINARY LANDMARKS LIST– Mr. Steven Hack said he had a copy of the guidelines Baltimore County uses for establishing their Landmarks List that goes beyond the guidelines recommended by the Secretary of the Interior. The guidelines include standards for evaluation of the eligibility of structures for inclusion on the landmarks list as well as standards by which proposals for changes to historic properties are to be evaluated. The guidelines were adopted into the Baltimore County Code. The Commissioners discussed whether TCHPC wants to use Talbot County’s proposed landmark list guidelines as simply an internal tool for the Commission or, like Baltimore County, have them become part of the Talbot County Code. Mr. Martin Sokolich suggested that decision must be based on how TCHPC wants to use the list. He

enumerated various classifications of historic properties that might be included, such as historic buildings, historic sites of interest, historic artwork, the works of particular architects or builders, or particular architectural styles, a property where notable historic events occurred, etc. Mr. Steven Hack commented that all of the classifications Mr. Sokolich mentioned are relevant.

Ms. Alice Marie Gravely suggested contacting other counties to find out what guidelines they have and how they put their landmarks list together. Mr. Steven Hack asked, assuming we have this list of criteria, should TCHPC utilize it internally or present it to the County Council to be put into legislation? He was concerned about how the landmarks list will be of benefit. Ms. Florence Ball suggested getting a draft of the list together first, and then it may become more apparent on how it should be used. Mrs. Marsha Kacher said she took the list of MHT properties that was assembled for a mailing list and penciled in references to those properties that appear in *Where Land and Water Intertwine*. For the benefit of the newer Commissioners, Mr. Martin Sokolich explained that a mailing had been done over the winter months to Talbot County properties listed in the MHT inventory of historic places to encourage awareness and interest in TCHPC, and hopefully encourage more property owners to obtain Historic District Overlays for their historic properties. Mr. Sokolich explained that much of the information on properties on the mailing list is dated, and some of them may be deteriorated or demolished.

Mr. Ward Bucher felt TCHPC should first get the landmarks list done, and let people review it and become comfortable with it before deciding what restrictions and other criteria should apply if the intent is to include it in the Talbot County Code. Mr. Sokolich said he will try to get landmark list regulations from additional counties so they can be examined. Mr. Steven Hack expressed frustration in getting things done since TCHPC only meets once a month. Mr. Martin Sokolich replied that committees can be assigned to do some of the work, and it would not be necessary to have formal, advertised meetings to work on projects such as this. Ms. Marsha Kacher volunteered to work on getting the information she had on the mailing list into a more readable spreadsheet format.

Ms. Alice Marie Gravely said she felt more gatherings like the one that was held at Fairview this past fall would be helpful in encouraging more interest and public support of TCHPC, and encourage more people to apply for HDOs. It was discussed that Polly Shannahan's success promoting HDOs for many of the properties that are currently on the Talbot County HDO inventory was due to diligent personal contact.

- D. MILLER'S HOUSE IN WYE MILLS (T-70) – Mr. Ward Bucher said Elizabeth Beckley (Preservation Maryland) has negotiated the sale of the property to Friends of Wye Mills. They are currently moving ahead with emergency maintenance work and repairs to stabilize the Miller's House to avoid further deterioration. Mr. Bucher said Preservation Maryland had the Miller's House put on the List of Most Endangered Properties in Maryland. He suggested it might be a good idea to invite

Ms. Beckley to come to the next TCHPC meeting to talk about sources of funding and other helpful topics.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION ASSISTANCE FOR RELIGIOUS SITES – Mr. Martin Sokolich said he has been getting several calls recently from people interested in preserving and rehabilitating church buildings. He mentioned Williamsburg and Claiborne Methodist Church as two of the churches for which he had inquiries. The church in Claiborne has recently been purchased by a local non-profit organization.
- B. SITE VISIT – The site visit for this month will be at The Anchorage (T-52), and is scheduled for Monday, 21 March 2011. Those attending should meet at the Acme parking lot in Easton at 9:15 AM (if carpooling), or meet at the site at 9:30 AM.

Mr. Steven Hack said Mr. Kemp mentioned the Chapel which is located across the road near the foot of the bridge. It is part of his property and is included in the HDO. Mr. Hack said he invited Elizabeth Beckley to come to the site visit. Mr. Kemp said he does not know what to do with the Chapel, and he is considering either selling that part of the property or demolishing the Chapel.

III. OPEN FLOOR

- A. MAHDC SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR HISTORIC COMMISSIONS – Mr. Martin Sokolich distributed the latest copy of Maryland Historic Districts which is a publication of the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions. It contained information about a self-assessment survey for Historic District Commissions to take. Mr. Sokolich said he received the booklet and a CD for the survey, and can make it available to any of the Commissioner's who are interested. He said there is no time limit in which to do it.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 4 April 2011 at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One in the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:35 pm.

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