MINUTES OF TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MONTHLY MEETING

March 14, 2016

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 4:00 PM on Monday, March 14th, 2016. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Vice Chair; Ms. Cynthia Schmidt, Mr. Robert Amdur, Dr. Dorothy Fenwick, and Mr. Robert Mueller. Representing the County was Mr. Jeremy Rothwell. Also present were Mr. and Mrs. Steve and Audrey Forrer.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. REVIEW MINUTES OF THE February 8th, 2015 MEETING - The minutes of the meeting on February 8th were reviewed. Mr. Robert Amdur recommended that the minutes be approved as amended to account for eight minor typographical errors. The motion was seconded by Ms. Marsha Kacher and unanimously approved by the TCHPC.

B. PROPOSED RENOVATIONS TO DONCASTER (T-178) – Mr. Steve Forrer gave a brief presentation on the proposed installation of transom windows.

C. MHT CULTURAL RESOURCES HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he recently spoke with Ms. Jen Sparenberg from MHT, and she stated that the National Park Service and MHT are still finalizing the scope of work for one of the other grant recipients. Ms. Sparenberg relayed to Mr. Rothwell that it would likely be another three weeks before Talbot County receives its final notice to proceed and contract. Mr. Ronald Mitchell questioned how much the grant award is for? Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that the grant award was for $60,000, and that he would work on drafting an RFP for the TCHPC to review at the March monthly meeting.

D. DOCUMENTATION OF EASTERN VILLAGES - Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he sent a letter to Ms. Elizabeth Beckley in the first week of January, but stated that he has not heard back from her. Mr. Rothwell stated that if he has not heard back from her in the near future that he would send out an email reminder. He went on to explain that he would request Ms. Beckley to provide the draft MIHP forms in electronic form to him the Friday before the March meeting so that the TCHPC members would have a full weekend to review them. Mr. Robert Mueller stated that it was his understanding that the MIHP forms were due back in January. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that while we put in an expected completion date of January 2016, that the contract stated that final deadline was June 30th 2016. Ms. Dorothy Fenwick reminded the TCHPC that Ms. Beckley's bid was noticeably lacking and less thorough than the other two bids, and that she has been very disappointed in the lack of work that has been completed thus far. Ms. Fenwick suggested that the TCHPC use greater diligence in reviewing both the RFP and each of the bids to ensure that the selected consultant has the necessary experience and qualifications to complete the desired work. Ms. Marsha Kacher agreed with Ms.

Dorothy Fenwick that the other two bids for the project were more professional and thorough. Mr. Ward Bucher suggested that we add into the upcoming RFP for the four western villages a section requesting the applicants to put in their proposed timeline for completing the required documentation.

E. FY2017 CLG GRANT APPLICATION – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he spoke with Ms. Nell Ziehl (Program Officer at MHT), who explained that MHT has not received back from the National Park Service the requirements for this year's CLG grant application. Specifically, MHT is waiting to find out whether a local match will be required for the FY2017 CLG grant, but Ms. Ziehl relayed to Mr. Rothwell that MHT will hopefully release the grant RFP within the next two weeks. Mr. Rothwell stated that he spoke with the Planning Officer, Ms. Mary Kay Verdery, about the potential CLG grant application, and that she is comfortable with both the proposal and for including $5,000 in the FY2017 TCHPC budget for a potential match. Mr. Ward Bucher questioned what needs to be completed in the next month to ensure that a grant application can be sent out in a timely manner? Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he drafted a paragraph to include in the FY2017 TCHPC budget outlining the proposal for a qualified consultant to complete a National Register District Nomination Form for Cordova.

F. UPCOMING FEBRUARY SITE VISITS – Mr. Robert Amdur recommended that the TCHPC conduct a site visit to both Mt. Misery (T-207) in St. Michaels and Bolton (T-336) in Wittman in the same day. A discussion ensued as to the most appropriate date and time to conduct the site visits, and it was finally agreed to do it on Monday, February 22nd at 2 pm starting with Mt. Misery. Mr. Ward Bucher suggested that we rotate who conducts the site visits so that everyone gets a chance to visit every site. Ms. Marsha Kacher recommended that those individuals who have not yet visited the properties have an opportunity first. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he would send out the previous site visit reports for both properties the Friday before the actual site visit. It was decided that Mr. Robert Mueller, Mr. Ward Bucher, Ms. Cynthia Schmidt, and Mr. Jeremy Rothwell would go out on the site visit.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. PROPOSED RENOVATIONS TO DONCASTER (T-178) – Mr. Steve Forrer introduced he and his wife as the new owners of Doncaster, and passed out a site plan and elevation drawings of proposed renovations to the main house. Mr. Forrer gave a brief presentation outlining the history of the property and their proposed renovations. In particular, he noted that the previous owners, Mr. and Mrs Pitard, had completely restored Doncaster under the guidance of the TCHPC. First, Mr. Forrer explained that he and his wife are interested in installing a series of transom lights above the existing windows on the 2005-06 addition to the main house. He stated that the proposed Pella transom lights are similar in size and scale to those lights on the historic portion of the main house. Secondly, Mr. Forrer requested guidance from the TCHPC regarding the replacement of a two existing single second-story windows on the main (historic) block of the house with a new connecting triple window for the purpose of adding more light into the second story of the house. Mr. Ward Bucher explained that the TCHPC uses the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings in the review of proposed renovations and additions to those structures in designated County Historic Overlay Districts. Mr. Bucher further explained that these standards give greater

preference/protection to the historic and original character-defining features of structures, as opposed to changes to later additions or renovations. Mr. Ward Bucher emphasized that the proposed second-story window of the historic block of the house would not be in keeping with the intent of the Secretary of the Interior Standards. Other members of the TCHPC concurred in this assessment. Ms. Marsha Kacher noted that the proposed second-story triple window would be 'out of balance' with the rest of the house, which has a three-bay configuration. Mr. Steve Forrer asked whether if the fact that the new proposed window would be placed on the back of the house would make any difference? Mr. Jeremy Rothwell and Ms. Cynthia Schmidt stated that both the front and back faces of the house were constructed to be symmetrical and that it would not make a difference. Mr. Rothwell went on to state that the existing first-floor back porch was not an original feature of the house, and that the original house would have likely been constructed with a full-length open covered porch instead. Concerning the proposed transom windows, Mr. Ward Bucher stated that he would be comfortable with the installation of said windows, but that he did not think it was appropriate that the proposed transom windows went up to the top of the walls, to make it appear as it is a full-height window. Ms. Pamela Gardener explained that while it may be difficult to see in the exhibits provided, that there is actually a space of eight inches between the proposed transom windows and the top of the wall. Mr. Ward Bucher questioned as to whether the proposed transom windows were to be single-pane. Ms. Pamela Gardner explained that they would be Pella casement 'crank-out' windows. Mr. Ronald Mitchell suggested that the applicants provide to-scale elevation and detail drawings of both the proposed windows and how/where they would be installed on the house. Mr. Ward Bucher suggested that the applicants lower the sill of the existing windows (below the proposed transom windows) to make the windows appear more proportional. Mr. Robert Mueller stated that in his opinion, the proposed transom windows on the new addition mimic the transom windows above the doors on the historic block of the house. Mr. Steve Forrer questioned whether the TCHPC had any suggestions concerning the proposed second-story triple window. The TCHPC unanimously agreed that the proposed second-story triple window was not appropriate given the historic configuration and character of the house. Mr. Steve Forrer stated that he will work with Ms. Gardner to put together a package of elevation and detail drawings of the proposed transom windows to be formally reviewed by the TCHPC at the regular March meeting.

B. PROPOSED FY2017 TCHPC BUDGET – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell distributed handouts of the proposed FY2017 budget, and explained that his instructions from the County Manager's Office was not to increase from last year's budget and to reduce where possible. Mr. Rothwell explained that he went through the TCHPC budget from the last five fiscal years and compared actual expenditures of each of the individual line-item categories. Mr. Rothwell noted that the TCHPC rarely used all of the training, office supplies, and printing budgeted line items in the budget, so he recommended reducing the total TCHPC budget by $350 from the before-mentioned line-item categories. Mr. Rothwell stated that he also drafted a brief narrative of the proposed TCHPC budget, including how the $4,500 would be spent to complete the National Register District Nomination for Cordova, and suggested that he draft a formal letter to the County Council explaining the proposed budget in greater detail. Mr. Ward Bucher suggested that greater emphasis be placed on the fact that the proposed National Register District Nomination would build upon the documentation work completed during this past fiscal year. Mr. Rothwell stated that he would draft a formal letter on TCHPC letterhead and email it around for further review before it is sent up the Talbot County Council. Mr.

Ronald Mitchell questioned how much and what the TCHPC usually spent the training budget on? Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that in past years Mr. Ward Bucher would attend the National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference, which would be reimbursed by Talbot County. Mr. Rothwell went on to say that he intended (with permission from the TCHPC) to speak with Adam Goodheart who runs the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience at Washington College about potentially having an intern work in the Office during the summer on various historic preservation-related projects. Ms. Cynthia Schmidt made a motion to approve the FY2017 budget as presented with the $350 reduction from the FY2016 budget. The motion was seconded by Robert Mueller, and passed unanimously by the TCHPC.

OPEN FLOOR

Mr. Ward Bucher stated that the Maryland Room at the Talbot County Free Library is an excellent local historic resource, and asked whether any copies of the reports or findings from the TCHPC are sent over to them? Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that in the past, the TCHPC has not given copies to the library, but that in speaking with Mary Kay Verdery, she suggested requiring in future RFPs that consultants provide extra hard copies of their reports/documentation that can provided to the library. Mr. Ronald Mitchell also suggested providing copies to the Talbot County Historical Society as well.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will tentatively br held on Monday, March 14th at 4:00 pm in Conference Room #1.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:55 pm.