

MINUTES OF TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING

12 September 2016

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 4:15 PM on Monday, 12 September 2016. Those members in attendance were Ms. Marsha Kacher, Chairperson; Ms. Cynthia Schmidt, Dr. Dorothy Fenwick, Mr. Ronald Mitchell. Mr. Robert Amdur and Mr. Robert Mueller were not in attendance. Representing the County were Mr. Jeremy Rothwell and Ms. Florence Ball. Mr. Willard C. (Burry) Parker, Esquire also attended on behalf of the Wye River House project, and the project architect, Philip Logan participated via a telephone conference call.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW THE MINUTES OF THE 8 AUGUST 2016 TCHPC MEETING – The minutes of the meeting which convened on 8 August 2016 were read. Ms. Marsha Kacher asked if anyone found any exceptions to the minutes as presented. Two corrections were brought to the attention of Mr. Jeremy Rothwell. Ms. Cynthia Schmidt moved to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded and carried.
- B. MHT HAZARD MITIGATION PROJECT UPDATE – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell said he received from MHT the AECOM research design criteria, and has forwarded copies to the commissioners along with MHT MIHP forms. Staff from AECOM will be coming to Talbot County sometime soon to review resources at the Talbot County Free Library, the Watermen’s Museum, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, and other sites in the County.
- C. APPOINTMENT OF NEW COMMISSIONER TO TCHPC – Ms. Marsha Kacher announced that she has talked with Mr. Victor MacSorley, and he has agreed to join TCHPC as a commissioner, pending approval and appointment by the County Council. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell said he made it clear to the County Manager that TCHPC needs a well-qualified person to fill the vacant seat, and that the County Manager’s office is trying to correct the appointment. Mr. Rothwell explained that the last individual selected for appointment to TCHPC by the Council was Joan Wetmore, who is a local realtor; however the appointment letter was never mailed to her. It is the opinion of the Commissioners that Mr. MacSorley is better qualified since he has many years of experience as an historic restoration contractor and has served on other historic commissions in the past.
- D. CLAY’S HOPE SIX-TO-FIX GRANT APPLICATION – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell announced that regretfully, TCHPC has been turned down for the grant to restore the tobacco barn at Clay’s Hope.

- E. REVIEW 5 SEPTEMBER SITE VISIT – Ms. Marsha Kacher said she and Ms. Cynthia Schmidt visited Pleasant Valley (T-84) and found the property to be well maintained and the buildings appeared to be in good shape. Some of the brickwork on the front steps needs to be repointed, but overall, the few issues that were observed are very minor. A follow-up report will be forwarded to the property owner.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WYE RIVER HOUSE (T-54) HISTORIC WORK PERMIT REVIEW – Before proceeding with the review of the proposed project, Ms. Marsha Kacher read the following affirmation: *“The qualifications of the members of this Commission and the staff to the Commission are on file with the Planning and Zoning Office and are hereby made a part of this application heard today. The guidelines and procedures adopted by the Commission are also made a part of this application. The application heard today is considered on its own merits and is not to be considered as establishing a precedent for any other application.”*

Ms. Kacher said the Wye River House is located on Wye Farm (T-54) which has a Talbot County Historic District Overlay. The River House is an historic two-story dwelling built in the 1940’s. The proposed project includes renovations and additions after removal of a portion of the front porch, side porch, a rear patio and walkways. The owner wishes to construct a new front porch, a side screened porch, front and side decks and a two-story side porch. Mr. Burry Parker was present to represent the owner in bringing the proposed project before TCHPC for review and approval. Mr. Parker commented that the River House is not included in the MHT easement. *(However, the entire 146.828 acre farm is protected under a Talbot County Historic District Overlay.)*

For the record, Mr. Jeremy Rothwell said Mr. Tilghman came to TCHPC meetings in August and September 2015 seeking the Commission’s opinion on the preliminary plans. In addition to needing TCHPC review, the project required Mr. Tilghman to obtain an Administrative Variance for the two-story addition, and a Special Exception to exceed the maximum 900 square foot gross floor area restriction for an accessory dwelling located on a property in the Rural Conservation (RC) zoning district. The existing gross floor area of the dwelling is 2,201 square feet. The Board of Appeals approved the gross floor area to be increased by 538 square feet in the part of the house outside of the shoreline development buffer in addition to 222 square feet approved by Administrative Variance in the portion of the house located within the shoreline development buffer for a total of 2,961 square feet in gross floor area upon completion of the project as proposed at that time.

Mr. Jeremy Rothwell said Mr. Tilghman’s architect submitted a work permit application last week. A conference call with Philip Logan, project architect, was arranged during the hearing. Mr. Rothwell advised Mr. Logan that there are some differences in the proposed additions from what had been submitted previously. Mr. Logan replied in acknowledgement that the cedar siding is rotting, and the owner wants to replace it with Hardie Board® which has a 6-inch exposure with a color to match the adjacent buildings. The owner also wants to eliminate the red roof shingles and replace them with new green asphalt shingles. He is also considering covering

the roof of the porches with standing seam metal roofing in green, and is seeking TCHPC approval of this change. The existing roof is red corrugated metal. The owner would like to leave it in place and paint it green. He said the revised second story fenestration is closer to what is existing. The owner decided to retain most of the rooms as they exist, so he feels that keeping the single windows makes sense. The proposed windows are Andersen® with simulated muntins.

The proposed deck surface is to be wide pressure treated board, and the deck foundation is to be skirted with dark green lattice. The railings are to be fabricated low maintenance PVC. Azek® is proposed for house trim. Mr. Logan suggested, instead of facing the foundation with brick, the foundation could be parged with a stucco finish which would be more in keeping with the existing house.

Mr. Burry Parker asked the Commissioners if they have any questions. Mr. Ron Mitchell asked about the appearance of Hardie Board® compared to cedar lap siding. Mr. Logan said cedar siding is slightly wider, but the Hardie Board siding is very similar in appearance. Mr. Mitchell said he is doubtful, and felt there is too much of a difference in appearance. He said he finds the use of the simulated siding “bothersome,” and felt that most of the proposed changes do not really match the existing historic fabric of the house. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell interjected that the dwelling was significantly altered in the 1980’s. Mr. Mitchell asked, “why not make the windows match on all sides?” Mr. Logan replied that on the west bedroom, adding double windows produces more light. The size of the window in the bathroom on the first floor is being reduced. Double windows are being proposed on the first floor to give more light to large rooms.

Mr. Logan asked if it is acceptable to change the color of the roof. Ms. Marsha Kacher replied that TCHPC is concerned that the building’s materials appropriately reflect the historic context of the dwelling, not color. The commissioners agreed that asphalt shingles on the roof of the porches is acceptable. Mr. Ron Mitchell repeated his concern about the use of Hardie Board siding. Mr. Logan said the owners feel that due to the issue of rot, the simulated siding is more durable and cost effective. Ms. Cynthia Schmidt said she feels the vinyl railing is really not appropriate. Ms. Marsha Kacher agreed, adding that trim pieces, railing, etc should all be wood. Mr. Logan countered that anyone would be hard pressed to tell the difference between Azek and wood trim. He agreed that PVC railing has a different feel, but he felt the appearance would not be very different. Mr. Ron Mitchell said he wants to see samples of the proposed vinyl railing and the Azek trim before making a decision. Ms. Cynthia Schmidt said she thought TCHPC approved Hardie Board siding in the past, and Ms. Kacher confirmed that the Commission had done so.

Mr. Jeremy Rothwell commented that the drawings show two sliding glass doors on the east elevation facing the water, which is a public right-of-way. He suggested that it is preferable that the fenestration essentially remain as the original on that side of the house. Mr. Logan replied that people rarely travel that area of the water; but said the owner may be willing to change to a three-panel door. Mr. Ron Mitchell and Ms. Marsha Kacher agreed that changing from two 4-panel doors to two 3-panel doors may be an improvement, but the Commissioners need to see it on the drawings. Mr. Burry Parker asked Mr. Logan if he would submit a revised drawing and cut sheets of

a 3-panel door system. Referring to a note on the drawing of the screened porch, Ms. Marsha Kacher said she was not familiar with what an “Easy Breeze” system is. Mr. Logan replied that it is a clear film plastic system that resembles glass, which provides the ability to create a three-season porch, and it is being proposed as an option. He offered to bring a sample to the October TCHPC meeting.

Regarding gutters, Ms. Marsha Kacher recommended half-round aluminum gutters painted white, with downspouts to match. Mr. Logan said that can be added to the specifications. At that point, Mr. Burry Parker announced that he needed to leave the meeting to keep another appointment. It was confirmed that the hearing for the River House project will be continued at the 11 October 2016 TCHPC meeting. Mr. Ron Mitchell said he also needed to leave the meeting at that time.

Mr. Jeremy Rothwell said the last time the Commissioners reviewed the project, they were not given a window schedule. Ms. Marsha Kacher observed that there are many issues in the information submitted for today’s meeting that need further thought and discussion. Ms. Cynthia Schmidt suggested that TCHPC should receive as-built plans of the original house before deciding anything at the next meeting. She added that aside from the proposed two porches and two-story porch, the project is essentially an ordinary re-build job.

- B. DEMOLITION OF LONG POINT HISTORIC DWELLINGS – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell said that the original farmhouse at Long Point Farm is to remain unaltered. The eleven other dwellings are not going to be demolished by conventional means. Instead, they are to be donated for destruction by the local fire departments as a controlled burning to take place at the end of October. The dwellings are slated for removal as a requirement of a proposed seven-lot subdivision of the farm.
- C. PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC PRESQUILE ROAD DWELLING – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that there is a colonial revival house at 26988 Presquile Road, Easton MD that is slated for demolition. The owners have not yet applied for a Talbot County demolition permit.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell suggested TCHPC might be able to find a use for the \$4,000.00 that is currently in the Commission’s budget. He said there has been an ongoing study in Bellevue, and one of the residents has agreed to pay for a gateway sign for the Bellevue Community Park. The sign will include historic information.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, 11 October in Conference Room One. *(The meeting, normally scheduled for the second Monday of the month, was rescheduled for the following Tuesday due to Columbus Day holiday falling on 10 October.)*

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 5:15 pm.