

Harford County Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Summary: Wednesday April 5, 2023
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: Dan Coates
Eric Polk
Christina Presberry
Philip McCall – virtual
Jacquelyn Seneschal

Staff: Jacob Bensen
Daniel Furman

Public: Laura Bianca-Pruett
Representatives of Fairview AME Church and Fairview School

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was called to order at 7:03 PM.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Coates welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Coates opened the floor to anyone with comments on the March 1, 2023, minutes. A motion was made to approve the March 2023 minutes as revised. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

COA-2023-01: Fairview School (contributing to HA-2293) Roof Replacement

Mr. Bensen gave a presentation about the Fairview School roof replacement. The full name of the landmark is Fairview AME Church, Turner Memorial Cemetery, & Fairview School. The MIHP number is HA-2293 and its location is 2328 High Point Road in Forest Hill, Maryland. The property is owned by

Fairview AME Church and the applicant is Ms. Jean Gover. The original construction took place in 1927. It was converted to a residence in 1945 and the current roof was installed in 1980. A map was shown with the location of the church hall and school.

The feature in question is the asphalt shingle roof which was installed in 1980 and is extensively deteriorated with missing and cracked shingles and biological growth. The proposed undertaking is to remove the existing asphalt shingle roof and replace. Any damaged decking or structural materials will be replaced as well. The proposed replacement roof material is Owens-Corning 3-Tab Superior Asphalt Shingles in the color Onyx Black. The black color is different from the current red color to match the color of the church's asphalt and slate shingle roof. The staff recommends approval of the undertaking. The original roof (pre-1980) material is unknown. Mr. Coates asked about the condition of the beam at the apex of the roof. Ms. Gover said there was a misunderstanding and that the roof has already been installed. She said that the condition of the beam was acceptable and there was no additional structural damage. Mr. McCall asked if there are any photos in existence of the school prior to 1980. Ms. Gover said no. Ms. Seneschal made a motion to approve the COA based on the staff report. Mr. McCall seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

2023 Historic Preservation Awards Nominations Review and Recipient Selection

Mr. Bensen noted that six nominations were received and accepted. The ceremony is scheduled for May 20, 2023, at the Historical Society of Harford County Headquarters in Bel Air. The presentation of the awards will be part of the grand re-opening of the Historical Society's Headquarters to the public.

Gladden Farm Rehabilitation in Street, Maryland was nominated for the Preservation Project Award. The farm was listed on the NRHP in 1993. The rehabilitation was completed in late 2022. The project consisted of an interior and exterior restoration of the 1820 stone farmhouse and compatible addition. The property is not a County Historic Landmark. Mr. Coates asked if Mr. Bensen had a good sense of the historic nature of the building before the renovations. Mr. Bensen noted that the historic nature has been preserved throughout the renovations. Mr. Bensen noted that it would be suitable for County Landmark status even with the modern additions and renovations. Ms. Seneschal made a motion to present the award to the Gladden Farm. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. The HPC noted they would like the property owner to consider designation as a County Historic Landmark.

The Harford Civil Rights Project was nominated for the Special Preservation Award in Education. This was a project of Harford Community College. An HCRP digital exhibition went live in October 2021. There was a Civil Rights Leaders panel discussion in March 2022. There was a Civil Rights Tour in October 2022.

The Ma and Pa Railroad Trolley was also nominated for the Special Preservation Award in Education. The trolley is operated by Ben and Barbara Lowe of Benjamin's Landing, Pylesville, MD. There is a mobile exhibit housed within a replica trolley that tells the story of the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad in Harford County and Delta, PA, and its connection to the County's agricultural heritage. The display was

completed in Spring, 2022 and includes HO scale train garden, photograph, and descriptive and interpretive text. The trolley is a mobile bus and has gone to multiple events.

The Dr. George T. Stansbury Memorial Exhibition was also nominated for the Special Preservation Award in Education. The exhibition was developed by Thurl Brenda Snell who is a member of the Havre de Grace Colored School Museum and Cultural Center's Board of Directors. The exhibition celebrates the life of Dr. George T. Stansbury, a physician and member of the prominent Stansbury family. Dr. Stansbury served as the President of the Harford County Medical Society in 1957 and was the first African American to be appointed as City Health Officer. He was a pillar of the African American community, serving their healthcare needs in a racially segregated society and supporting his patients and community throughout his life.

Ms. Seneschal noted the special preservation awards are in multiple categories including communication, community involvement, and education. Mr. Bensen noted that the Commission has the authority to move the nominations around if they think a nomination suits a different category. Ms. Seneschal said that the Harford Civil Rights Project could be nominated for the Special Preservation Award in Communication. Ms. Seneschal made a motion to award the Special Preservation Award in Communication to the Harford Civil Rights Project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Polk. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Seneschal said that the Ma and Pa Railroad Trolley should be nominated for the Special Preservation Award in Community Involvement because it goes from place to place, and it appeals to people of all ages. It brings history into the community. Mr. Coates said that there is a significant community attachment to the Ma and Pa Railroad and Trail. Ms. Seneschal moved to award the Special Preservation Award in Community Involvement to the Ma and Pa Heritage Trolley. The motion was seconded by Ms. Presberry. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Polk made a motion to award Special Preservation Award in Education to the Dr. George T. Stansbury Memorial Exhibition for the was made. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

The Emily Bayless Graham Park Manor House Stabilization was nominated for the Local Government Award. Harford County Parks and Recreation's Angela Hoover led a team overseeing the stabilization of the late 18th century brick house for future reuse between May and September 2021. The house had been abandoned in the late 1950s until the county park opened in 2020. The work included a new slate roof; cleaning, repointing, and repairing brick; new chimney caps; new interior staircases and flooring repairs; securing of all window and door openings; interpretation of missing kitchen wing "ghosting" on south elevation. A question was posed if this property has applied for historic landmark status. The Department of Parks and Recreation has indicated that they would prefer to finish the stabilization process before considering the nomination. It was noted that they have done a great job restoring this property/building. A motion to approve this nomination was made by Mr. McCall. The motion was seconded by Mr. Polk. The motion passed unanimously.

The Preservations Honor Award received one nomination: C. Bernard “Bernie” Bodt. Mr. Bodt has dedicated significant time and effort to the preservation of the County’s once-prominent canning industry, amassing a considerable collection of canning tools, labels, laborer tokens, literature, and knowledge on the subject. Mr. Bodt is also a subject matter expert in farm and commercial ice harvesting, preserving the knowledge of this bygone practice for future generations. Mr. Bodt shares his collections and knowledge through donations and loans to local museums and historic sites, curates public displays, and gives presentations on the subjects with the goal of passing his knowledge on to the next generation. Ms. Seneschal nominated Carol Deibel for her many years of preserving Harford County’s history. The Commission noted that she is disqualified because she has already won the award. Ms. Seneschal made a motion to approve Mr. Bodt’s nomination. Mr. Polk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ongoing Business

Archeology Update

Mr. Bensen said that April is archeology month. This year’s archeology month theme is “Where Did you Find that Artifact?” Context is crucial in Maryland archeology.

For the Rochambeau Encampment Investigation, Mr. Bensen said that Maryland Historical Trust applied for a grant to investigate and document the two Rochambeau Encampment sites in Bush. Grant funding was also requested by MHT last year, but they were not successful. A letter of support was sent to NPS on behalf of MHT and they are hopeful for a positive outcome. For the Old Joppa Archeology project, donation of artifacts to Historical Society paused until after Easter at church’s request. Mr. Coates said that the materials will be in storage until it is decided what to do with them or until the Historical Society decides when they can receive them.

There was a Susquehanna Canal talk on March 15th. Some attendees visited the site the next day hiking the canal. There will be another Susquehanna Canal talk on April 19th at Port Deposit. There is an ASM (Archaeological Society of Maryland) symposium on April 22nd. Bill McIntyre will be speaking about Garrett Island at the Havre de Grace Opera House on April 13th. At Harford Community College, there is a lecture on Old Joppa and the other colonial towns like Annapolis as part of the Lost Towns Project on April 28th. There is a Susquehanna Green Ways Garrett Island cleanup. There will also be a picnic event on May 21st.

Harford 250 Commemoration Update

Harford 250 has officially been launched. There has been terrific support from local businesses. There will be a Harford 250 Ironbirds game on August 19th at Ripken Stadium which is the next signature event. The Historical Society’s museum “sneak peek” event will be May 20th. The library has a series of talks related to Harford 250. The Pride of Baltimore will be in Havre de Grace the first weekend of June. The second weekend of June will be legacy farm event at the Equestrian Center. The third weekend of June will be a

celebration of Juneteenth. There will be as replica of the *Dove* at Havre de Grace on the last weekend of June. The July 4th theme will be Harford 250. The Chesapeake Balloon Festival in August will draw between 15,000 and 20,000 people. Steppingstone is having Arden McClune give a presentation. There will be a Harford 250 table at Gallery 220. Harford County Department of Planning is hosting a tree planting for Arbor Day on April 9th at Schucks Regional Park.

Administrative Business

Monk Mausoleum

The Monk Mausoleum has undergone some significant damage. Here is a timeline of events for the notification of the damage and attempts to repair:

- 3/28/23: HPC Member alerts HP Staff to caution tape and traffic cones erected around John Clark Monk's Mausoleum (the 'swinging sailor of Perryman')
- 3/28/23: Episcopal Diocese responds to HP Staff inquiry –
 - One of 4 slabs holding sarcophagus has collapsed, leaving an open area in the grave
 - Cemetery caretaker coordinated off area for safety
 - Diocesan staff to meet with gravedigger to plan repair
 - HP Staff reminded Diocese of need for COA from HPC
- 3/29/23: P&Z Staff Conduct Site Visit
 - Met with caretaker on site
 - Concerns about further collapse
 - Issue may be stability of brick burial vault wall
 - Caretaker added pipe to support brick wall
- 3/31/23: P&Z Director issues Emergency COA for stabilization of the mausoleum
 - Directors of DPW, DILP, and Health Officer agree current state is a danger to public health and safety
- 4/5/23: Episcopal Diocese looking to contractor to perform stabilization work
 - P&Z staff sent links to PreserveList & MAHDC Directory
 - Suggested reaching out to Campaign for Historic Trades

Ms. Seneschal asked what sources of funding could be available. Mr. Bensen noted that they do not pay taxes, so they are not eligible for tax credits. Maryland Historical Trust has grant programs they could investigate. Ms. Seneschal said they should have a conversation with Preservation Maryland. Mr. McCall said Preservation Maryland could help. Mr. McCall asked if the orange posts and chains are temporary, and Mr. Bensen confirmed they will be removed. Mr. McCall asked if the stone slab fractured when it fell and Mr. Bensen said it is hard to say for sure at this point. Mr. McCall expressed concern for the potential for further collapse and damage. Mr. McCall asked if the firm who worked with the McComas Institute could be a source for this project and Mr. Bensen will investigate.

Public Comment

Ms. Laura Bianca-Pruitt is sharing this as a resident of Harford County. As part of the Harford 250 celebration, she will be hosting an event about the history of US1 and US40 in Harford County. There will be a virtual event on April 22nd at 6pm on the Roadway Wiz YouTube Channel. There will be an in-person tour of the two roads on May 6th. More information is available on youtube.com/roadwaywiz.

There was a public attendee who said the meeting was very informative.

Ms. Seneschal said that this month's historical society speaker will be Charles Nietubicz who is involved with the Discovery Center. This will be Tuesday April 11th.

Adjourn

There was a movement to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.