

ST MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

January – December 2021

A Certified Local Government



Prepared by Ben Cohen Planner III, Department of Land Use and Growth Management and the Historic Preservation Commission, February 24, 2022.

Reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission on February 24, 2022:

Members:

Teresa Wilson, Chair

Eve Love, Vice Chair

Anibal Delgado

Craig Lukezic

Ginger Newman-Askew

Robert Hurry

Christine McKay

Kent Randell

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Glossary

CLG	Certified Local Government
HPC	Historic Preservation Commission
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
MAHDC	Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions
MHT	Maryland Historical Trust

ST. MARY'S COUNTY HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Preserving and interpreting the legacy of St.
Mary's County's past.

Overview

The St. Mary's County Historic District Commission, later renamed the St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), was created on June 4, 1975, and was granted the authority to preserve historic resources and increase public awareness through education. HPC identifies and oversees the St. Mary's County's historic landmarks, districts, and sites. This annual report has been prepared in fulfillment of the annual reporting requirement under the Bylaws of Historic Preservation Commission of St. Mary's County and under the Maryland Historic Trust's and the National Park Service's Certified Local Government Program (CLG) established under the National Historic Preservation Act. The CLG Program is an initiative providing technical assistance and small grants to local governments seeking to preserve the important and significant aspects of their heritage. St. Mary's County has been a "Certified Local Government" since 2015 and the Certification was renewed in 2019. The Historic Preservation Commission enhances the quality of life in St. Mary's County by ensuring that the County's many historic resources are recognized, appreciated, and preserved. The Department of Land Use and Growth Management administers the HPC program.

The St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission takes pride in its endeavors in 2021, however, the public health crisis (COVID-19) had significant impacts on the HPC's ability to engage the Community with our programs.

Background

A historic district proposal by the Commission for the St. Mary's City area was met with public opposition and, as a result, the Historic District Commission was disbanded in 1986. As part of a requirement for a matching grant to St. Mary's County by the Maryland Historical Trust, the Commission was reestablished in 1993. The grant was a program designed in eight phases to develop an active historic preservation program and to add to the number of documented historic properties in St. Mary's County. The first phase of this project began in 1994 and resulted in the documentation of sites and structures in all election districts. Phases one through four covered the Chaptico, Mechanicsville, Valley Lee, St. George Island, Bay, Patuxent, Leonardtown, St. Inigoes and Milestown districts. The Commission has succeeded in establishing many historic properties on the local, State, and National Historic Register, and continues to work with the State, Maryland Historical Trust, and several other agencies. The HPC continuously maintains its status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) from the Maryland Historic Trust.

Membership of HPC

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County appoints seven county residents to serve on the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Their role is crucial in protecting and enhancing the county's historic resources and cultural heritage. Their advocacy helps to develop and implement effective preservation programs relying on the support of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and the strength of the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Comprehensive Plan, federal, state, and regional protective regulations. Title 8 of the Maryland Code, Land Use Article contains the enabling legislation for historic preservation commissions and allows the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to appoint seven volunteers to the Historic Preservation Commission for three-year terms, renewable for another three years. Those interested in serving for additional term(s) thereafter must wait a full year before they may re-apply. To qualify a candidate must (a) have special interest and knowledge or training in such fields as history, architecture, law, archaeology preservation, education, or urban design; (b) be a county resident; (c) fulfill the statutory rules and educational functions in a responsible and sensitive manner; and (d) have the ability to continue to provide leadership for the historic preservation movement. The HPC had two members complete their terms, two new members, one member returned, and one member has not attended. Five members meet the Professional Qualification Standards contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines.

1.0 Elections and Meetings of HPC Members

The St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission members elects the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary annually, during its January meetings. The HPC meets regularly at 4:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of every month, except in November and December, when the meetings are advanced to the third Thursday. The Chair may call other meetings when necessary. In accordance with COVID-19 public meeting protocols, meetings were either held at the Room 14 of the Potomac Building, the St. Mary's County Regional Airport, or by teleconference. "The meetings are conducted in compliance with the St. Mary's County Open Meetings Act located in §§9-501 through 9-516 of the *Local Government Article* of the Annotated Code of Maryland."

The Commission members in 2021 were as follows:

Name	Position	Date of Appointment	Expiration Date
Teresa Wilson	Chair	July 2021	June 2024
Eve Love	Chair	July 2018	June 2021
Anibal Delgado	Member	July 2020	June 2023
Ginger Newman-Askew	Member	July 2021	June 2024

Craig Lukezic	Member	January 2021	December 2023
Christine McKay	Member	July 2021	June 2024
Kent Randell	Member	July 2018	June 2021
Robert Hurry	Member	January 2019	December 2021
Peter LaPorte	Member	January 2021	December 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission members are supported by a Historic Preservation Planner of the St. Mary’s County Department of Land Use and Growth Management with a working knowledge of state and federal regulations pertaining to historic preservation, architectural history, and the cultural and landscape resources of historic preservation planning in St. Mary's County.

2.0 Planned Goals and Work in 2021

- Continued monitoring and collation of historic properties identified for demolition
- Identified potential CLG grant opportunities
- Coordinated and attended regional conferences and lectures
- Explored developing an additional barn tax credit under our CLG program
- Developed tools to increase customer engagement and promotion of the Local Historic District program

3.0 Significant Work and Activities in 2021

3.1 Historic Preservation Awards

Unfortunately, the HPC Service Awards were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the HPC has four nominees to acknowledge when authorization to proceed is given.

3.2 Certified Local Government (CLG) Status and Training Grant

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program recognizes counties and municipalities that have made a special commitment to preservation. This commitment includes, but is not limited to, establishing a qualified historic preservation commission to designate and review historic properties. Maryland's CLG program is administered by the National Park Service and the Maryland Historical Trust. The HPC submitted its annual report in February to maintain our certification. The HPC has access to training opportunities through the CLG program. The HPC was awarded \$2000 which will be used in January 2022 to train the HPC in community outreach.

3.3 National Alliance of Preservation Commissions - Commission Assistance & Mentoring Program

HPC members and staff virtually attended a two-day training in December which discussed major historic preservation concerns. Some topics discussed were preservation planning, legal concerns, ethics, and public outreach, to name a few. The HPC will use this information to promote the addition of new historic landmarks and inform the community about the benefits of historic preservation.

3.4 Website Improvements

The Information and Technology Department, staff, and members continue to collaborate on updates to the HPC website. Five links have been added to the site indicating local historic sites of interest. This project is ongoing, and staff continues to locate surveys, reports, photos and other helpful links for inclusion on the website.

3.5 Cemetery Projects

The HPC continues to compile a database for documenting burials located in St. Mary's County. The database is accessible to the public on the St. Mary's County Library website. Staff is collaborating with the MHT and other counties to develop a statewide burial database to allow public access, site protection, and to facilitate research.

3.6 Demolitions in 2021

There were 33 demolitions this year.

3.7 Section 106/Historic Reviews/Customer Assistance

- Hammett Cemetery (SM-4859) – sign permits
- 38713 Golden Beach Road - Corteau Vinyards
- Newtowne Manor – Local Historic District improvement
- 26815 Baptist Church Road – subdivision
- Emergency bridge repairs to Medleys Neck Road over Poplar Hill Creek
- 21780 Great Mills Road – Royal Farm Store
- 22232 Bayside Road – subdivision
- 25920 Friendship School Rd – subdivision
- 26780 Dixon Way – subdivision
- Summit Hill Drive - subdivision
- Inquiry regarding burials at West St. Mary's Manor
- 21500 Abell's Wharf Road – review of archaeological resources

- First Missionary Baptist Church inquiry regarding designation as a Local Historic District
- Cemetery survey for MHT
- Mattapany Road improvements
- Explore developing an additional barn tax credit under our CLG program

3.9 Surveys

No properties were surveyed from January 2021 – December 2021

3.10 National Register Nominations

There were no National Register Nominations.

3.11 New Entries to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

There were no new entries to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties.

3.12 Trainings, Meetings and Lectures

- Member, Eve Love, arranged site visits to support the University of Maryland’s investigation of extant assemblages of domestic and agricultural outbuildings survey.
- “New Streamlined Cultural Resources Reviews for MDOT SHA & Local Programs” webinar
- Listening session with MHT Director
- Maryland burial database collaboration meetings
- Maryland Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers 17th Annual Conference – protecting historic resources

4.0 Challenges

- The Commission has not yet adopted Design Guidelines/Design Zoning Ordinance Review
- The Commission does not issue Certificates of Appropriateness for local landmark properties that seek alterations due to Zoning Ordinance reviews and interpretations.
- The Commission has not yet considered any Historic District designations but plans to discuss local historic districts in 2022
- COVID-19 made it difficult for the commission to engage in outreach and educational activities in the community to promote awareness of historic preservation and the historic preservation commission.
- Problems with technology and equipment created some delays and technical glitches in virtual meetings.

- The HPC desires a larger financial commitment for historic preservation. This increased commitment has the potential to significantly increase tourism, historic education, and economic development in the county.

5.0 2022 Outlook and Future Plans

The following are work programs planned for the Historic Preservation Commission in 2022 and beyond:

- Continuing public education programs to raise awareness of historic preservation issues.
- Hold public presentations regarding historic preservation
- Present Historic Preservation Awards
- Continue to review items on the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) Agenda by the historic preservation planner to determine if proposed projects will have an adverse effect on historic resources and provide the opportunity for staff to suggest alternatives that may avoid these effects.
- Protect small family cemeteries by using the cemetery database to identify when proposed projects are submitted on lands containing cemeteries.
- The HPC is cooperating with MDOT to populate a cemetery database that is linked to GIS or a mobile application. The cemeteries may also be shown on the County GIS maps to allow convenient access for development review. This will help prevent inadvertent site desecration and may generate additional historic interest and research.
- Ensure that every HPC member receives training related to his/her duties every year. We encourage the HPC to apply for the non-competitive funds available for annual education and recommend that HPC members and staff consider attending the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions' biennial Forums.
- HPC members will utilize opportunities for qualified training available through the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Maryland, and others.
- HPC members plan to attend the MAHDC symposium at St. Mary's College.
- Apply for competitive CLG grants. A grant could support a local plan update and would give the Commission and planners an opportunity to revisit questions of potential new landmark designations, as well as integrate hazard mitigation planning and newer efforts into the overall local strategy.
- Continue work to find the locations of all the small cemeteries listed in Janet Tice's 1991 book, *Burials from Tombstones, Grave Markers and Church Registers of St. Mary's County, Maryland (1634 – 1994)* and other sources, so they may be protected.

- Work with developers in early project application stages to craft preservation-friendly development plans.
- HPC members to start work on "Maryland Rediscovery 400."
- The HPC will research the potential use of cadaver dogs to locate missing burial sites up to 300 years old.
- The Maryland Department of Planning recommended an update to LUGM's webpage referencing the Historic Preservation Commission. Efforts are underway to update the Historic Preservation Commission section to include direct links to its preservation code, preservation plan, ordinance, and property tax information. In addition, updates will include information for historic property owners who may wish to nominate a property for local landmark status.

6.0 Conclusion

There is a determination to give the St. Mary's County's historic preservation program the recognition it deserves, as one of the four sites of the original English Colonies in the New World and the "Mother County" of Maryland. From its current work, the HPC will move on to goals that will require the vision of elected officials, planners, and volunteers. The Historic Preservation Commission looks forward to strengthening relationships with the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, County Departments of Economic Development, Recreation and Parks, Land Use and Growth Management, Public Works and Transportation, Preservation Maryland, Maryland Historical Trust, County Administrator's office, archaeology groups, and local museums, to continue the comprehensive and successful programs that promote education about the historic and archaeological resources in Maryland's birthplace, St. Mary's County.

7.0 Attachments

7.1 Names of Historic Preservation Commission members and attendance record

Attachment 1: Historic Preservation Commission Member Attendance Record -January 2021 - December 2021

Commission Member	Position	28	25	25	22	27	24	22	26	23	28	18	16
		Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Quorum	Y/N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Teresa Wilson	Chair								Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Eve Love	Chair	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X						
Anibal Delgado	Member	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Kent Randell	Member	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
Ginger Newman-Askew	Member	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Robert Hurry	Member	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Craig Lukezic	Member	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Christine McKay	Member								N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Peter LaPorte	Member	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N
LUGM Staff													
Ben Cohen	Historic Planner	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Courtney Jenkins	Senior Planner											Y	Y
Kwasi Bosompem	Senior Planner	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N				