

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting held on October 26, 2006 at the Department of Land Use and Growth Management

Members Present: Hal Willard, Chairman
William Farrar, Member
Robert Gibbs, Member
Mary Hayden, Member
Ruth Mitchell, Member
Teresa Wilson, LUGM Staff

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 28, 2006 meeting were approved as corrected.

Cemetery Committee Comments

Ms. Mitchell informed the HPC that she, Mr. Gibbs and Ms. Wilson met at the Leonardtown Library on October 19th to discuss the cemetery project goals and steps. Locating the private, family, organizational and religious cemeteries in St. Mary's County and placing the location and other data about the cemeteries in a database is the initial goal of the project.

Mr. Gibbs has created an Excel database in which information on each cemetery will be recorded. He showed printed copies of the database to the members. New fields will be added as information is collected and verified. Eventually, the location of the cemeteries will be noted on tax maps and also placed in the County's HTE system in the Land and Parcel Management module. When a permit application is made for parcels containing cemeteries, a note to planning staff will come up. Staff can then inform the applicants who will have to determine the exact location of the cemetery and make provisions in site plans to avoid disturbing it.

The HPC continued its discussion of whether to use GPS to locate cemeteries. The point was made that determining the exact extent of a cemetery would probably require more than one approach, and it was not within the scope of the HPC project to do this. Ms. Wilson said that placing as detailed a description of cemetery as possible in the HTE system notes would provide landowners/developers with a starting point for determining the extent of a cemetery. Delineating the exact location and taking steps to avoid disturbance would be a requirement of developing the site.

Mr. Farrar agreed that the production of a database on cemeteries that provides planning staff and landowners with cemetery locations will help protect these historic resources. He noted that a large tract of land along Route 235 north of Hermanville has been cleared for development, and there may have been graves or cemeteries there.

Mr. Gibbs said that he plans to meet with the St. Mary's Genealogical Society to inform them of the cemetery project and to ask that they share information with the HPC. The HPC and the subcommittee agreed that work should continue to collect and verify data and that the project would be a long-term effort.

Maryland Historical Trust Grants FY 2008

Ms. Wilson reported that MHT has now made the grant applications for fiscal year 2008 available. At a grant information meeting with MHT in September, she was told that St. Mary's County could apply for a non-capital grant to continue its survey of historic roads. Also available will be the Educational Sub-grant, which is used to send HPC members to the annual Historic Preservation and Revitalization Conference.

Items from the Floor

Mr. Willard mentioned that he met a retired U.S. Navy commander through his work with the Power Squadron who has a grant from the Maryland Historical Trust to map the waters under the Potomac with side scan sonar to locate shipwrecks and other submerged objects. Marine archaeologists at the Trust will use the information in their research.

Ms. Wilson called the attention of the HPC to the revised memo which will be sent to the County Commissioners prior to presenting the History Roads Survey at a Commissioner meeting. The memo requests that the Commissioners accept the Survey and give direction to the HPC about examining the current protection for roads in the Zoning Ordinance. As explained by Mr. Jackman at the September meeting, this will be the first step in proposing text amendments to the Ordinance.

Ms. Wilson and the HPC determined the dates for the 2007 meeting schedule.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Signed by: _____