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2 **STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES**

3 **May 2, 2024**
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5 The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, May 2, 2024, was called to order at
6 3:00 PM by James Tully in the ABC Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.
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8 MEMBERS PRESENT: James Tully, Martha Newton, Jane Conner, James Powell, Frank White and
9 Anita Dodd
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11 MEMBERS ABSENT: Richard Chichester
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13 STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Kotting, Crissy Kendall
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15 GUESTS PRESENT:
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17 Kathy Knotts (Fredericksburg Free Press)
18 March and Vivian McLeod
19 Julie and Caleb Dodd
20 Chris Nerney
21

22 CALL TO ORDER:
23

24 Mr. Tully called the meeting to order at 3:00.
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26 ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS
27

28 Ms. Newton called roll and stated there was a quorum.
29

30 PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS
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32 Caleb Dodd (233 Belle Plains Road) read a statement on behalf of Dr. Brad Hatch concerning the Phase 1
33 request letter for the Belle Plains campground. Dr. Hatch has over 15 years of professional experience in the
34 fields of cultural resource management, archaeology and history and has served as primary author on over 70
35 technical reports on cultural resources throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Dr. Hatch feels the potential for
36 cultural resources contained within the project boundaries and the adverse impacts to those resources are of
37 great concern. The shores have traditionally been the homeland of the Patawomack community, with human
38 occupation dated as early as 15,000 years ago, confirmed by previous and ongoing archaeological
39 discoveries along the shores. The landscape of the project area, in addition to previous archaeological
40 discoveries and historical events nearby suggested the potential for significant archaeological resources on
41 the parcel is high. A previous survey of the project site and adjacent land focused on collecting surface-
42 visible artifacts. Wooded areas were not surveyed and retain the potential to produce significant
43 archaeological discoveries. Depending on the types of pre-colonial settlement sites encountered there could
44 be potential for exposing human burials. The area was heavily occupied after the arrival of Europeans and
45 there may be sites related to colonial occupation. Without a Comprehensive Phase IV Archaeological Survey
46 of the property the full range of cultural resources present cannot be determined with any accuracy. It's
47 imperative that a survey be done to identify archaeological resources that might be present from all time
48 periods. Based upon previous finds and due to the smaller size of parcel, a predictive model and service
49 reconnaissance approach would not be appropriate or cost effective as much of the area will be considered
50 high probability for both pre-colonial and postcolonial sites. Therefore, a shovel test survey would be the
51 most suitable approach.
52

Chris Nerney (436 New Hope Church Road), a self-described Civil War/historical buff, would like to encourage a study be done on the land at Belle Plains. The area was heavily used by the Indian army and the site was a confederate prisoner of war camp. There are probably people buried there and it seems like a pretty historical chunk of land to just go digging up without looking into it to make sure that you're not disturbing something that you want to save for future generations.

Mark McLeod is the applicant for Belle Plains Campground. He states everywhere else around the 75-acre property is already developed all the way down to the river. He understands the concerns that people may have but the people speaking have houses right next to his property.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Celebrate Virginia Development Review: Status of 2001 MOA (VDHR #98-2257)

Celebrate Virginia has a development under review right now. It was presented several years ago and the development has evolved. There is a lot of public interest in certain aspects of that parcel because of the natural features and the history. The first historic review failed because it is unclear whether or not the previous Memorandum of Agreement, which was a result of a section 106 Review back in 2001, is still in effect and enforceable. It is the developer's responsibility to figure out whether that MOA is still enforceable and whether they still need to comply with it. It's in question, because ownership has changed but one party to that MOA remains. Both the Department of Historic Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers have been contacted. No action needed. MOAs have a 25-year lifespan. There is a process for signatories to terminate a MOA.

2. Phase I/Reconnaissance Survey Request Letter, Belle Plains Campground

Ms. Kotting thanked the public for their comments. The historic review on the Belle Plains property has been approved because there are no code problems triggered by what has been submitted. There is a permit in play right now for a pier that the applicant wants to put in. That may be a 106 review but Ms. Kotting is not sure if that review will trigger an archeological request for a survey of the entire parcel because the pier is in such an isolated location. She is recommending that the Historical Commission draft a letter to the owner recommending that the owner conduct a Phase 1, or whatever they decide the level of survey, in the public interest of understanding what resources may or may not be located within that parcel. Anita Dodd made a motion to send a letter to the owner recommending a Phase 1 at Belle Plains. Seconded by Jane Conner. Motion passes, 6/0.

3. Scheel Map Sales Proceeds- Possible Uses

The Scheel Map was created and sold by the Historical Commission starting in 1996. The County has been retaining all the funds from the sales and the total is now over \$11,000. It is at the Historical Commission's discretion how those funds should be used. Ms. Kotting suggested bringing back the reception for the Historic Preservation Awards or there are a number of interpretive signs that have reached the end of their lifespan. A review of the language and content of the interpretive sign should be done and new panels produced and installed. Parks and Rec generally handles the interpretive signage and this could be put in as a budget request for 2026. Ms. Dodd feels that the signs are a better way to spend the money as it serves more of the population in Stafford County. Ms. Kotting will work with Parks and Rec to do an assessment of how many signs need replacing and what the cost will be. The Historic Commission will decide on how to spend the money once they have more information. Ms. Kotting asked if the Commission would be interested in bringing a working group together to do an assessment of the signs. The Commission agreed to put a group together.

4. Sherwood on the River

This development was in for review and the historic review was approved without comments on April 28, 2024. It is located adjacent to the Rappahannock River. In 2020 the property was reviewed under a 106 by the Army Corps and Department of Historic Resources and they concluded that there was no impact on the historic resources there. Almost the entire property is located in the rural Historic District, which runs along the Rappahannock River and extends out from the riverbank. Ms. Dodd asked if the Commission is allowed to request a Phase 1 because it is likely to have Native American sites all over this parcel because of the river. There may also have been Civil War activities at the site. Anita Dodd made the motion to send a letter to Sherwood on the River recommending a Phase 1. Martha Newton seconded the motion. Motion passed, 6/0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Proffers / Ivy Project at Oakenwold / Update on Memorandum of Agreement

The area of study was cleared to be reduced because work has been completed and that continues to protect the area where they're finishing up the archaeological work. This allows work to begin on the rest of the property. The representative from Mount Vernon and the person who's doing the salvage of the Aquia Stone met on-site last week to assess. This will be wrapped up soon.

2. Counting House Update: Request for Proposals Status: Under Review

The County is in the middle of the oral interviews so this ongoing.

3. Little Falls NRHP Eligibility Determination- submitted to VADHR

This has been submitted and Richmond confirmed they received it. They will be putting it out to the northern office advisor. A determination should be made fairly quickly whether its eligible or not.

4. Commission Member Recruitment Update

Mr. Tully spoke to Ms. Bohmke. She will be looking for someone new to replace Mr. Chichester. They are planning to give Mr. Chichester a proclamation at the May 7 meeting. Mr. Tully asked if that could be moved to the meeting the 21st to coincide with the Historical Preservation Awards but did not receive a response.

5. Preservation Awards: 7:00 PM May 21, 2024 Board of Supervisors Presentation

Preservation Awards are at 7pm on May 21st. Mr. Tully has the scripts and is ready. Interviews have been done by Ms. Dodd and Mr. White and community engagement is producing a program which explains what the projects were all about. The audience will have visuals about these projects and what each of the winners did to earn the award.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Historical Commission Minutes
May 2, 2024

None other than the information about Mr. Chichester.

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Ms. Dodd asked about the status of including the minutes of the Historic Commission meetings in the BOS package. Ms. Kotting is going to check her emails and report back.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Anita Dodd made a motion to approve the minutes from April 4, 2024.

Martha Newton seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Tully adjourned the meeting at 3:30