

STAFFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES
November 7, 2024

The meeting of the Stafford County Historical Commission of Thursday, November 7, 2024, was called to order at 3:01 PM by James Tully in the ABC Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Tully, Martha Newton, Frank White, and Anita Dodd

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jane Conner, James Powell

STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Kotting, Crissy Kendall

GUESTS PRESENT: None

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Tully called the meeting to order at 3:01.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

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

VOTE TO ACCEPT/AMEND AGENDA

Ms. Kotting requested to amend the agenda to add a discussion about cemeteries to New Business. A motion to approve the published agenda with the amendment was made by Martha Newton. Anita seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

NEW BUSINESS

1. 50-Year Rule Request: 229 McCarty Rd.: Staff Report and Recommendation

The owners of 229 McCarty Road would like to build a bigger dwelling on the property. The older home is too small for them. They don't want to take down the original home. Anita Dodd made a motion to approve invoking the 50-year rule. Martha Newton seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. The approval letter was signed by Mr. Tully. Ms. Dodd would like an opportunity to record the home. Ms. Kotting will get her in touch with the homeowner to ask permission.

2. Fiscal Year Budget Requests Related to Cultural Resources: Staff Report

Ms. Kotting updated the Commission on the budget requests that were included in the 2026 fiscal year budget. \$30,000, which will be a part of a matching grant, was requested to update the County Survey of Historic Resources. The current survey is dated 1992. Ms. Kotting feels confident that the request will be approved.

The second request was for \$20,000 toward the Falmouth Historic National Registered District nomination, specifically Falmouth Beach. The objective is to submit an application as a national historic landmark for the beach based on its location for the self-emancipation of a dense number of individuals. The funding will be used to bolster the research on that property. Ms. Newton asked if

any of the area would be disturbed when the new Falmouth Bridge is built. Ms. Kotting has not seen the plans for the new bridge but there is no doubt federal funds will be involved in the construction which will require a review of impacts and mitigation of impacts and Stafford County will be at the table as a consulting party to guide how that mitigation is drawn up. Ms. Kotting will send out a reminder when public comment is open for the 2026 budget so that Commission members can speak on these two requests.

3. Cemetery Staff Update

An inquiry was received about stones that turned out to be part of a cemetery that was surveyed in 2007 and known to be part of an African American burial site. Ms. Kotting mentioned to the owners that Virginia has a funding program to protect African American burial sites. The owner of the property is interested in filing out an application for the grant to help preserve this cemetery, getting it delineated, marked and protected with fencing or whatever funding will allow. Ms. Kotting requested assistance from the Cemetery Committee and the Historical Commission in identifying other African American cemeteries in the area. Not necessarily slave cemeteries, but simply African American burial sites that may need preservation. Ms. Dodd said that all cemeteries in Stafford County need preservation and most of the black cemeteries are on private property. She believes there are between seven and ten slave cemeteries in the area. Ms. Dodd mentioned the use of field stones doesn't mean the sites are early or slaves or Native American. She has found most cemeteries, black and white, used field stones from about the 1850s to the 1930s because nobody in Stafford had money to buy head stones. Prior to the 1850s most cemeteries had really nice markers because people had money. Aquia Church is a great example of this. Ms. Kotting said the funding requires the cemeteries be pre-1948 and there must be some type of documentation that supports it as an African American cemetery and must have the owner's permission. Owners, nonprofits and county governments can apply for the grant.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Development Review: Stafford Technology, TM Parcel 38-124 and 38-29A. Site contains three potentially eligible or eligible for National Register listing archeological sites with Phase II survey recommended based on results of Phase I survey.

A 106 review is in process. Once the archeological sites whose survey is still ongoing are delineated on the plans Ms. Kotting will sign off. There is no action needed by the Commission. Ms. Dodd would like permission to go onsite to check for a cemetery. A Phase 1 has been done but she doesn't feel it is correct and would like to check for herself. Ms. Kotting will help to get Ms. Dodd permission to visit the site. She asked Ms. Dodd to provide the Tax Map number so she can double-check the survey. There are several projects in the area with the name "Austin". Martha Newton made a motion to allow Ms. Dodd to write a letter on behalf of the Historic Commission for Ms. Dodd to have access to the property at Austin Ridge Logistics to identify the natural resources that may possibly be a cemetery. Ms. Dodd seconded the motion. Motion carried, 4-0.

Ms. Kotting also mentioned there is a new category on the historical resources page on the County website that says Development Review. Below Development Review is a list of developments currently under review that contain historical sources.

2. Scheel Map Sales Proceeds- Interpretive Sign Inventory Evaluation Status

No update from Tourism or Parks & Recs at this time. Items 2 & 3 should be combined.

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3. Update on interpretive signage inventory and conditions assessment

See item 2.

4. Byram's Corner Naming Request from Supervisor English

Supervisor English is not ready to proceed. The item will be removed from the agenda until Mr. English wishes to move forward.

5. Celebrate Virginia Development Review: Status of 2001 MOA (VDHR #98-2257)-no update

There is no update at this time. Ms. Kotting requested the item be removed until she has an update.

6. Counting House Update: Request for Proposals Status

No update at this time. This is still with the Legal Department.

7. Commission Member Recruitment Update

No update at this time. Mr. Tully will email Ms. Bohmke to remind her of the open seat and mention that while the nomination must come from the Falmouth Supervisor the nominee is not required to live in the Falmouth District.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

None

REPORTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Martha Newton made a motion to approve the minutes from October 3, 2024.

Anita Dodd seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, James Tully adjourned the meeting at 3:39.