

## **Minutes of Jefferson County Landmarks Commission Meeting**

**December 16, 2009**

**Members Present:** John Allen, Don Amoroso, Martin Burke, Michael Musick. Guests: Joyce Cole, Matthew Harris, Fran Phillips, Bill Theriault

**Minutes:** The minutes of the November 18, 2009 meeting were distributed. Acceptance of the minutes was moved by Don Amoroso, seconded by Martin Burke, and passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Don Amoroso summarized his report, noting that we received a \$25 donation from the last meeting. \$1,200 was spent to deal with the pressing structural problem at the Peter Burr house. \$222.60 was spent on scroll brackets and \$119.38 on utilities at the house. Joyce Cole, Don Amoroso, John Allen, Fran Phillips, and Bill Theriault discussed whether water at the Burr Farm had been turned off. Matthew Harris stated that water was shut off at the house, not the meter. Don clarified the issue by noting that this was a question of water in the two bathrooms. Michael Musick moved acceptance of the treasurer's report, which was seconded by John Allen and passed.

**Poor Farm:** John Allen reported that the deeds have been signed, and that the Historic Landmarks Commission now owns the Poor Farm. He noted the desire of Rock Spring Church to issue a press release about the transfer of the property. Michael Musick expressed concern lest such a press release come out before the property has been appropriately secured. Don raised the issue of obtaining the necessary level of liability insurance; we presently have some. Bill Theriault said that as of two months ago the rooms in the original house were in good condition. He suggested the possibility of moth-balling the place. A change in the account of the site on the HLC website has been requested by the church. Martin Burke and Michael Musick will discuss it and take necessary action. Bill Theriault volunteered to research the history of the farm, and contact Geraldine Link, Garland Moore, and James Grantham, who have personal knowledge and source material.

**Viewshed Survey:** A Scenic America contract has been signed with Jones & Jones. We will get a bill for \$5,000 for the first part of the contract; the total cost will be \$11,000. There is a GIS component. The final product will be a report with a viewshed assessment for every 1/2 mile. It will include a plan for all of Route 340.

**Peter Burr Farm:** David Gibney has an idea for what to do with the gable end of the house, but John Allen has not yet seen it. Bart Wheatley also has some ideas. The building's situation is pretty bad, but we will be as gentle as possible with it. Regarding water drainage issues, we have not yet heard back from Michael Schwartz, of the Freshwater Institute. Bill Theriault shared his thoughts on drainage, and asked John Allen to call Walter Washington about it. Bill noted that the last major water backup was two or three years ago. No report from the Friends of Peter Burr is available. Joyce Cole, from Reliving History, reported that her group had a sale of tools and equipment that raised \$746. She will mail 501-C papers this or next week.

**Ordinance:** John Allen has written a letter to Jennifer Brockman concerning amendments to the

current ordinance, but hasn't yet heard back from her or the county commissioners.

**National Register Nominations:** The Bullskin National Register District nomination was returned to SHPO by David Taylor. SHPO will do the Bullskin nomination. The Beverly nomination (expansion of the property) has been completed and HLC CLG forms submitted. The nomination will be reviewed at the next Archives and History Commission meeting in Charleston, January 29, 2010. John Allen has written the two letters supporting a grant for the battlefields and development survey.

**Ad Hoc Committee on Data:** Bill Theriault reported on a busy month that included several meetings. He hears that the content management server for the county will happen. It will include a great deal, with the HLC a part. He gave an extensive report on progress, and remarked on the benefit to be derived from working with other groups. John Allen read a proposed letter to the county commission supporting funding to put Bill Theriault's materials online. Bill spoke of various other ways the goal of the letter might be realized, which were discussed. Michael Musick moved that the proposed letter be sent, which was seconded by Martin Burke and passed. Bill then reported on a meeting he had on the project with volunteers, and identified several specific endeavors to focus on. He estimated a cost of \$400 to get legal copies of some documents, and said it would be useful to get a microfilm reader/scanner. He noted that he would need a ruling from the county's prosecuting attorney regarding documents belonging to the county before the landgrant project could be put online. Don Amoroso, John Allen, and Martin Burke discussed funding, asked about how the GeoHistory project would evolve, and how much to budget for. Bill suggested \$1,000 for next year for getting historic maps geo-referenced, observing that most work would be done pro bono. Don and John spoke about budgeting \$1,500 for the fiscal year, taking that amount from the Poor House budget and putting it into the GeoHistory project, creating a line in the budget for the project.

**Website:** Martin Burke reported that everything will be on GoogleMaps and GeoEarth, which brings up all the data we have. He proposed taking the current map offline. There was discussion of paying Lyle Rush to put Bill Theriault's materials online, concluding to put this on hold for the time being.

**Upcoming Events, Miscellaneous:** The county commission has asked for the HLC's position on proposals for a new county seal. We will write a letter stating that we are not in favor of any of the design proposals thus far submitted. John Allen recused himself prior to Martin Burke's update on PATH. Martin noted that the Public Service Commission has postponed hearings until October 2010. The power company must reapply to the Maryland Power Commission, which action will allow the HLC more time to gather data. PATH has the right of eminent domain. This matter will be litigated for years. Following this report, John Allen returned to the room. Landmark awards have been moved to April. Chris Robinson has done a stabilization report on the Cement Mill Property for Parks and Recreation.