

Minutes of Jefferson County Landmarks Commission Meeting

July 15, 2009

Members Present: John Allen, Don Amoroso, Martin Burke, Carmen Creamer, Michael Musick. Guests: Bill Berry, Joyce Cole, Irvan Groff, Maggie Keeler, Frances Morgan, Willis Nowell, Fran Phillips, Jim Surkamp, Bill Theriault.

Minutes: The minutes of the June 17, 2009 meeting were distributed. Acceptance of the minutes was moved by Carmen Creamer, seconded by Don Amoroso, and passed.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was presented by Don Amoroso, with handouts distributed. Don noted that income on the handout covers only 14 days, incorporating bread sales and utility bills. He is working with Bill Berry on the finances of the Friends of Peter Burr. There was a discussion of the very large bill for alleged use of water at the Peter Burr Farm, with \$252 being charged by Jefferson Utilities, and \$451 by PSC, for a total of \$723. Don stated that the amount of water use claimed is a physical impossibility. John Allen will talk with Jefferson Utilities and PSC about it. Don pointed out the need to exercise judgement on Burr Farm expenses. John Allen called attention to the need to prevent deterioration of the Poor Farm. Bill Theriault spoke about the goal of having a simple way to get money from bread baking going to archaeology. He also brought up the large amount of photocopied material he received from Galtjo Geertsema, and requested that \$50 be given to Mr. Geertsema for this, which was approved. Carmen Creamer moved acceptance of the treasurer's report, which was seconded by Michael Musick and passed.

Peter Burr Farm: John Allen reported that Bart Wheatley has not yet started work. John spoke to Doug Reed about windows. Four sets of sashes will be fairly expensive. Bill Theriault noted that David Gibney's specialty is windows. Irvan Groff, from the Friends of Peter Burr, reported that there was no problem in getting a crew to clean up. He showed us a painting of the farm done by John McGarry's wife around 1957. The Friends will sell copies of the painting. Mac McGarry allowed Irvan to take a pitchfork, and Virginia Tabb wants to donate a rope bed to the house. There is not enough time to plan campouts, but a group of 7th through 9th graders from Harpers Ferry may clean brush and work in the garden. Insurance coverage will be checked. Bill Berry reported from the Friends treasury that he wrote only three small checks; the balance is now \$4,005.22. It was pointed out that the Burr Farm was not in the Robert McGarry bequest, as had been talked of. Joyce Cole, from Reliving History, reported on archaeology at the Farm, and on the reenactment of a pumpkin race from the period 1750-1800 which could become an annual event that brings in money. There will be a trial run November 2.

Site Reviews: On the proposed elevated water tank at Shepherd Grade and Scrabble Roads, John Allen reported that such tanks would be well visible from the road. The proponents have not yet contacted the state. Don Amoroso noted that Shepherdstown will have to raise funds for this project. John Allen has been talking with SHPO regarding the proposed Bullskin National Register District. It will extend from Summit Point to

Kabletown. Potential reaction of the state reviewer was considered.

Poor Farm: John Allen has been talking with Rock Spring Church regarding landscaping their property. Frances Morgan commented that county maintenance was supposed to contact John about cutting brush around the house. Possible uses for the Poor Farm were discussed, with contributions by Jim Surkamp, Carmen Creamer, John Allen, and Don Amoroso. The issue of partial ownership was noted. We will proceed with obtaining information.

Ad Hoc Committee on Data: Martin Burke reported on improvements to the HLC website. Burr Farm can add events on its own via password, link to Googlemaps, etc. In response to a question from Willis Nowell, Martin said that the Friends of Shannondale Springs can add information also. It will be possible to add photos, HABS documentation, and more. Mike Musick, John Allen, and Bill Theriault will be involved in the GIS Grant Project. They met earlier today to discuss the project, which will be modelled on the Philadelphia GeoHistory Project. Bill Theriault described the undertaking. This was followed by discussion involving Bill, Jim Surkamp, John Allen, and Frances Morgan. Bill noted that we might not meet the deadline for a grant. Martin Burke asked whether we want to keep ownership of the domain name "preservehistory.org." Following discussion, Carmen Creamer moved that we spend \$15 to retain ownership, which was seconded by John Allen and passed.

Vote on New Landmarks (#95-97): The commissioners visited the following sites today: Hopewell (William Little House), criteria C; Hopewell Mill, criteria A and C; and Little Falls Lock, criteria A and C. Michael Musick moved approval of all three as county landmarks, which was seconded by Carmen Creamer and passed.

Courthouse: The courthouse committee will meet August 7. Members of the committee, along with others, went through the building. There is a need for measured drawings. John Allen remarked on the need for each of the three different courthouse projects to talk to one another. Bill Theriault urged that the microfilm of the county records be moved out of the building that contains the original records.

Upcoming Events, Miscellaneous: John Allen recused himself and left the room before Martin Burke presented an update on PATH. Martin said there is a new map as of June 5. Now even more landmarks would be impacted. There was discussion of PATH involving Frances Morgan and Jim Surkamp. Martin Burke moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission be put on record as an intervener, which was seconded by Michael Musick and passed. If we can, we will file the paperwork. John Allen then returned to participate in discussion of plans for the John Brown Sesquicentennial. Jim Surkamp and Frances Morgan spoke about the effort to have President Obama attend the events on October 16. Carmen Creamer said the Jefferson County Historical Society will echo this request. Jim called attention to the newly rediscovered documents on the Brown Raid now available on the Circuit Clerk's website, and Bill Theriault added that these records were also a state archives matter.