



Meeting Minutes
Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission
7pm – County Commission Room, Charles Town Library
Charles Town, WV
April 11, 2018

Members present: Martin Burke (chair), Sara Lambert (secretary), Jack Hefestay (treasurer), Leigh Koonce, Ben Horter
Guests: Peter Onoszko, John Demer, Bill Theriault, Lauren Kelly, Nicole Lambert

Burke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Burke noted that an addition will be made to the evening's agenda: **Magnolia Springs Concept Plan at Belvedere Farm.**

I. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

II. Minutes from March meeting – Submitted by Sara Lambert & Lauren Kelly

Koonce asked to add Cricket Morgan's name to the list of guests, and John Demer asked that the word "practitioners" be changed to "parishioners" in the section about Mount Zion Freewill Baptist Church.

Hefestay moved to accept the minutes with those corrections, Lambert seconded, and passed.

III. Treasurer's Report– Hefestay

Hefestay announced that the current balance is approximately \$15,500.

Burke said the Commission is currently carrying a large balance and expecting a \$6,000 check from the Civil War Trust to aid in the asbestos abatement and demolition of the Eyler house on the Shepherdstown Battlefield. The JCHLC has an insurance payment soon that will cost \$2,400. The commission still hasn't received the 2016 audit from WV State Auditor or the bill but had planned to pay that this fiscal year. Now in FY-19 the JCHLC will have 3 audits to pay for that will total up to \$8,000.

Horter motioned to accept the treasurer's report, Lambert seconded, and passed.

IV. Election of officers for 2018-19

Burke noted that Lambert is stepping down as secretary. The slate of officers was cleared in advance of the meeting: Martin Burke – chair, Leigh Koonce – secretary, Jack Hefestay – treasurer. There were no further nominations.

Lambert moved to accept the slate of officers, Horter seconded, and passed.

V. Historic Resources Inventory – Discussion and vote

The JCHLC maintains a historic resources layer at the county GIS office. Some needed corrections have been noted and must be approved by the commission. These corrections were sent out in advance of the meeting. Onoszko pointed out the inconsistency of continuing to use the name “Johnsontown” when “Johnstown” was noted as the preferred name in the nomination of the Mount Zion Freewill Baptist Church. Theriault said typically whatever name is used in the designation receives precedence but in many cases a site has multiple names. Demer pointed out that the Mount Zion parishioners have used both. Onoszko said if there are other fields in the attribute table, the JCHLC should note the other names.

Lambert moved to approve the updates, Hefestay seconded, and passed.

VI. Announcements and Reports

A. Status of the WV GeoExplorer Project – Theriault

The grant from the Two Rivers Giving Circle for \$1500 has been completed. Theriault will send information in to JCHLC so that the commission can turn in the final report. Programming should be complete by mid-June. Theriault would like to have a demonstration before the next meeting to find out what people think of the new format to make sure it is easy to use. He would like as many comments as possible in the next few months. Theriault also noted that he has another collection of materials to transfer, which totals 6-8 boxes. He also has a microfilm reader that he is willing to donate. Theriault also said updates are being done independently of the county server, so work is continuing while that server is down.

B. Status of text amendment for Historic Preservation Zoning Ordinance – Burke

After 11 years in the making, the ordinance passed in the JC County Commission by a unanimous vote on March 29th. The 2004 comprehensive plan requested this, and the request was renewed in Envision Jefferson 2035.

The text amendment:

- a. Recognizes JCHLC and its role in the Zoning and Land development process
- b. Recognizes JCHLC’s four categories of importance, established in 2007
- c. Defines certain terms used in Historic Preservation
- d. Establishes a very modest Protection Radius, 200 feet, around Category I historic sites.
- e. Gives JCHLC a role in adaptive reuse

f. Changed Appendix C, principal and conditional use table, for villages to allow some commercial uses, this is under the category of adaptive reuse

C. JC Courthouse Committee – Koonce

The courthouse committee has not met since the last JCHLC meeting. Koonce noted that there was a leak due to a burst pipe about two weeks ago but there was no damage to any documents. He also noted that Steve Redding is the sitting judge until the election in May, and his staff can handle any small problems that arise. Burke noted that the final decision on the courthouse windows was to remove the exterior storms and replace them with magnetic interior storms and repair the wood windows. This will greatly improve the appearance of the courthouse.

D. Status of projects at Peter Burr Farm – Burke

The JCHLC just paid to have the stairs in the barn reorganized. The work was finished on Monday and really opens the space inside. There are several events coming to Peter Burr Farm. On April 20-21, there will be a 2-day bread-making class, but baking for the public will not begin until May 12. JC Parks & Recreation, with whom the JCHLC has a MOU, has planned 2 events: a wedding and a craft fair. The wedding will take place on April 28. They will be erecting tents on the site and using the barn as a dance area. May 5 is the Blue Ridge Arts and Crafts Fair, and the 60 vendor spots sold out. Koonce asked if the JCHLC has established a plan to monitor the site before and after the events. Burke replied that someone from the JCHLC as well as Parks and Rec will be checking the farm. The JCHLC is due to renew its MOU in May, and the next few weeks will inform both parties about the capacity of the farm for these kinds of events. The JCHLC has also added a loop trail which is maintained by Parks & Rec. The JCHLC is taking on a student intern in Shepherd's Geomatics program who will be in the GIS office working with a local landscape architect. She will plan a 10-year evolution of the JCHLC's 10 acres & the Board of Education adjoining 40 acres to create the "Peter Burr Farm Native Species Park." The site will focus on WV native species. The JCHLC can expect a presentation on the proposed plan at the August meeting.

E. Status of *Wild Goose* NR nomination – Demer

Demer said the nomination remains in review in Washington, but the JCHLC should hear something this month.

F. Status of Rte. 340 – MOU with WVDOH – Horter

The JCHLC has until the end of May to come up with a plan for the National Register nominations, oral histories, and interpretive plans around Rippon. The WVDOH must approve the plan, and the JCHLC must prioritize the activities. After the money has been sent, the JCHLC has 5 years to complete the projects. Koonce asked if the MOU was voted on, and a review of last year's minutes' show that it was voted on in September 2017.

G. Status of interpretative projects – Kelly

The JCHLC has now received \$900 from the Stuart-Mosby Historical Society for work at Duffields Depot. They have also volunteered to conduct a panel discussion about Mosby's movements in Jefferson County that the JCHLC can use as a fundraiser. Burke & Kelly visited the depot with local architect Matthew Grove about the future of the site and dewatering the basement. A topo map was created by the GIS office, and Grove will be in touch about details of what is needed for an emergency grant through the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This grant can only be used for planning. The JCHLC should hear back about a grant through CSX this week and through the National Railway Historical Society in May.

H. Status of NR nomination – *The Rocks* – Kelly

Kelly continues to work on this project. Representatives from the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office were in Jefferson County for a site visit two weeks ago.

I. Status of JC Courthouse becoming a NHL – Kelly

Kathryn Smith from the National Park Service, along with the regional historian, several other office members, and a representative from Harpers Ferry NHP will be in Charles Town for a site visit on May 7th. Burke asked that Demer be present. The National Park Service will spend their own time researching the site to determine its eligibility, at which point the JCHLC will have to commission the nomination report.

J. Status of Eyler house asbestos abatement & demolition – Burke

Burke noted that this should occur soon. The JCHLC is waiting for the May hotel-motel tax and the check from the Civil War Trust to make sure the \$12,000 estimated cost can be covered.

K. Status of site reviews & design for pull off on River Road – Lambert

Lambert has finished the design. The JCHLC will have to reach out to the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle, who holds the easement on the property, for their approval of the plan. This pull off will allow people to visit the Shepherdstown Battlefield and cement mill more safely.

L. Status of preservation easement for Snow Hill/Poor Farm – Horter

Horter has completed a draft of the easement and will send it out this week.

M. Park Day April 14, 2018- Kelly

Park Day has been rescheduled for this Saturday, April 14. It is at 10 am at Shepherdstown Battlefield.

VII. **Magnolia Springs Development Discussion**

The Magnolia Springs concept plan for a 301-lot subdivision at Belvedere, a National Register Farm, was presented to the planning commission and approved Tuesday, April 10. Burke wrote a letter explaining the JCHLC's issues with the insensitive plan around one of the county's most important historic resources. Burke noted that the JCHLC always comments on concept plans and must address potential impacts on our historic resources. This proposed development will destroy the barn, tenant house, and corn crib, as well as the historic context of the site and its 200-year history as a working farm. Burke read his letter, which was sent to the planning commission, the developer, and the family who currently owns the property. Burke noted that the letter failed to mention part of the zoning ordinance in section 4.4 – prohibited uses. 4.4.C. states: "Any development which would destroy the historical character of a property listed on the West Virginia or National Register of Historic Places shall not be permitted." Burke spoke to the planning department this afternoon and would now like to know if the JCHLC wishes to pursue an appeal of the approval on the basis that it violates this section of the ordinance. Burke noted that this is not a section that is regularly looked at. Koonce asked what the vote was by the planning commission. Hefestay replied that it was 8 to 2 with Hefestay and Onoszko voting against it. He also said that he had voiced some objections and that the office's professional staff seemed receptive to his complaints. Burke noted that no development of this size has been presented since 2008. Burke presented a large copy of the proposed plan for discussion. Hefestay said he felt there was not enough discussion about the proposal at the planning commission meeting. The developers were also asking for four waivers, including one that would allow them to build smaller lots and fit more homes in the 100-acre parcel. Lambert said she did not feel the current market warranted this many new homes. Koonce asked for clarification about what the JCHLC is proposing to do and the possible ramifications. Onoszko said normally a member of the planning commission will ask to review the plan again and pointed out that their lawyer will want to know if the plan goes against the ordinance. Onoszko also said it is best to bring this to the attention of the developer as soon as possible, before they start spending large amounts of money on engineering. It will be more difficult to make these complaints when the developer comes back with an engineered plan.

Hefestay moved to go forward with an appeal, Lambert seconded, and passed.

Burke announced that Michael Taylor from the Shepherdstown Historic Landmarks Commission sadly and unexpectedly passed away last week.

Hefestay motioned to adjourn, Lambert seconded, and passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.