

Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission
MINUTES
Regular Monthly Meeting
9:30 a.m., Thursday May 28th 2015
Historic County Court House, 71 Main Street Flemington, NJ

Present: Lora Jones, John Kuhl, Maeve Pambianchi, Robb Sussna, Frank Curcio, Beth Rice **Absent:** Jim Davidson, Susan Oldroyd

1 Vacancy open on Commission

Executive Director: Carrie Fellows

Guest for Public Comment: Frank White

O.P.M.A.

At 9:38 a.m. Chair Lora Jones declared the meeting open and properly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Chair Jones recognized Frank White for public comment:

Historic Site Markers: Mr. White introduced himself. He lives in Clinton Township and is an avid bicyclist. He stated that the "Col. Charles Stewart" marker was removed from its original spot, and then replaced, then replaced again with a sentence that drew his attention: "The original House was built in 1763". Mr. White stated that he is a certified genealogist and has attempted to research this sentence for validity but has found no evidence that it is true. Going through the historical archives and requesting information from the county through the O.P.R.A., he has come up with nothing to substantiate the statement.

Mr. White came to the Commission to ask two things:

1. For evidence that proves and supports the statement that "the original house was built in 1763" as on the sign.
2. Standards for judging approval of texts which appear on the signs.

Mr. White went on to say that he found anecdotal evidence of a 1763 date in an article by Hiram Deats, but it was regarding purchase of land, not a house being built.

Chair Jones thanked Mr. White for his comment.

Mr. White asked when he could expect an answer. He has a third part of this that he wants to address the Commission when the first two parts are answered.

Executive Fellows stated that technically the Commission does not need to respond since this was made as a "Public Comment". However, she will seek advice from County Counsel to verify her statement, and if response is required, what the time frame would be; she will let Mr. White know the outcome of her conversation with Counsel.

After Mr. White thanked the Commission and departed, Mr. Kuhl reminded those present that the first Stewart marker was damaged by a snowplow. Ms. Fellows added that the Commission's correspondence files with Mr. White indicate that he has been provided with the information the Commission has available.

I. APPROVAL OF APRIL 30TH, 2015 REGULAR MONTHLY MINUTES

Moved by Kuhl to approve, Seconded by Rice, Motion Carried.

II. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Jones announced that Susan Oldroyd Laffler's appointment to the Commission came through.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- The "Creative Placemaking" webinars - she recommended that everyone looks at their website.
- The State History Fair on May 9 went well. Chair Jones and Commissioner Davidson were present. Lots of networking, and contacts made & updated.
- With Chair Jones, attended meeting of county Cultural & Heritage Agencies and the NJ Historical Commission on May 13th regarding potential changes to the NJHC in the General Operating Support grants and CCHA re-grants. The NJHC is receptive to ideas from the CCHAs about the re-granting process and changes that are being considered for the next grant round.
- Saturday May 30th is the one-day conference supported by the Commission at the 1759 Vought House. The site will provide volunteers to sell Commission publications, "Beneath these Waters" and "All Roads Lead to Pittstown". Fellows will attend.
- The month of June is very busy. A lot of meetings, travel, conferences. If Commissioners need anything Planning will be handling the phones on the days Ms. Fellows is not in the office.
- The NJ Historic Trust will be meeting here on June 17th for their board meeting. Following the meeting Sheriff Brown will give them a tour of the Historic Courthouse.
- June 19th – 24th Ms. Fellows will attend and present at the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM) annual meeting and conference in Williamsburg, VA. Meeting minutes and agenda will go out earlier than usual since the C&H regular monthly meeting is on June 25th. Fellows received a fellowship from ALHFAM to attend, and she will receive her regular salary while there.
- The county Management Team met on May 20 and learned about the new Edmunds financial software. The new program will put us into compliance with state and county regulations. Starting immediately, all funds must be encumbered before purchase orders are requested. Chief of Staff George Wagner announced that in 2016 all management team members will take part in the Rutgers Certified Public Managers Program.
- The winning Junior Historian essay, and the full list of winners, is up on the website.

V. COMMISSION PROJECTS

Arts

Kids Kulture: Commissioner Pambiachi is working on booking in the fall. Letters have been sent out to schools asking if they would like to know more about the program.

Art/History Expo:

Due to several conflicting events on the weekend of June 13 it was decided that the Expo will be postponed to a later date, to be determined.

Exhibitions and Programs: Commissioner Sussna brought draft documents regarding the “Bridging Art and History” exhibit being planned for young artists. A meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 3 to review and revise the documents. Commissioner Pambianchi asked about the awards budget available; Ms. Fellows will look into it. Chair Jones wants to kick off the exhibit with an announcement about the Most Endangered Historic list.

History & Preservation

Historic Site Signs:

Commissioner Kuhl asked for more ideas/nominations for signs this year. Three Brothers Rock formations on Rileyville Road, Butler Park, Hamden Pumping Station, and Barley Sheaf are on the table at this point for consideration. Currently, no signs need repair.

VI. FREEHOLDER UPDATES/COMMENTS/BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Freeholder Lagay reported that the budget has been approved and the new Commissioner was appointed.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Flemington Fair

Chair Jones reported that a schedule needs to be done to staff the booth there from August 19th – 23rd, shifts 10am - 9pm. Freeholder Lagay suggested maybe staffing the booth with re-grantees. Freeholder Lagay suggested constituents help bring the booth to life. Commissioner Curcio suggested having electricity available. Committee will meet June 8 at 11am and include Kuhl, Chair, Curcio and Rice; (ex officio) Jones and Fellows.

Horizons Speakers Bureau

Judith Russo was contacted to speak August 13th at 7:30pm about “Corn” upstairs in the courtroom. The public program will complement the Flemington BID’s Tomato and Corn Festival later in August.

MBO’s/Organizational Planning

Ongoing – a work in progress, reports provided monthly to Director of Planning.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Nothing to report at this time.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE:

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not needed.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Chair Jones moved to adjourn. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

Respectfully submitted
Susan Holcombe-Pena