

Minutes
Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation Commission
February 8, 2007 Meeting

Mr. John Hill, Vice-Chairman, opened the regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) at 6:03 p.m. The following Commission members were:

Present

Mr. John W. Hill, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Carol Allen
Mr. C. Bruce Boswell
Mr. Thomas L. Reynolds
Mr. Louis S. Diggs
Ms. Wendy McIver
Ms. Norma Secoura
Mr. David J. Bryan
Mr. Steven Fedder
Dr. Robert Gregory
Ms. Nancy Horst
Mr. Edward E. Hardester, Jr

Not Present

Mr. James E. Matthews, Chairman
Mr. Qutub K. Syed

County staff present included Vicki Nevy (Secretary to the Commission), Jeff Long (Deputy Director for the Office of Planning), Caren Beth Hoffberger (Chief for Preservation Services, Mike Field (Assistant County Attorney), Mary Harvey (Director for the Office of Community Conservation), Terri Kingeter (Southeast Sector Coordinator for the Office of Community Conservation) Rick Wisnom (Baltimore County Hearing Officer for Permits and Development Management), Teri Rising and Karin Brown (Preservation Services staff).

Preliminary Actions

Mr. Hill informed the Commission that Mr. Matthews was ill and that he would be leading the night's meeting. He noted that the regularly scheduled meeting would be preceded by a special presentation by Mr. Louis Diggs. He introduced Mr. Diggs as the author of eight books on African American communities in Baltimore County. Mr. Diggs gave a brief power-point presentation about the County's 40 African American communities and the people who were born, raised and lived in them, including his own family.

Review of the Agenda

1. Ms. Rising informed the Commission that there were no changes to the Revised Agenda.

Approval of the Minutes

2. There were no corrections to the Minutes. Mr. Bryan moved to approve the January 11, 2007 Minutes. Mr. Diggs seconded the motion, which passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Consent Agenda

- 2A. Mr. Hill asked Ms. Hoffberger to describe the items scheduled on the Consent Agenda and determined that no person present objected to its approval as submitted. Mr. Fedder moved that, for the reasons stated, and in accordance with any conditions stated in the written Action Summaries provided to the members of the Commission by staff, items 5, 8, 9, and 10, be approved as submitted. Mr. Reynolds seconded the motion, which passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Public Hearing on a Nomination to the Landmarks List and Delineation of the Historic Environmental Setting

3. **“Dowden Chapel” and cemetery, Ridge Road, Perry Hall vicinity; County Register (MHT) # BA-1158; built ca. 1849-1853 [County Council District # 6]**

This item concerned a nomination to the Baltimore County Landmarks List by the Trustees of the chapel. Ms. Hoffberger read staff’s recommendation to vote placing the “Dowden Chapel and cemetery” on the Preliminary Landmarks List under criteria (1) – for its association with the evolution of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore County; for its association with the religious and educational development of the Perry Hall area African American community; for its association with the historically significant Gatch family (2) – for its unique and distinctive representation of ecclesiastical architecture from the mid-19th century that has been largely unchanged since its original construction (3) – for the cemetery’s collection of headstones that represent the notable skills of African American craftsmen (b) to delineate the entire property containing the chapel and cemetery, 0.73 acres total, (map 81, parcel 949) as its historic environmental setting.

Several people had signed up to speak in support of the nomination, Ms. Beverly Harvey asked those who had come in support of the nomination, to stand up and be recognized. Numerous members of the audience rose. Ms. Harvey stated that the church also served as a school and that her father attended the school in the late 1880. Mr. Diggs reported that along with Ms. Allen, Ms. Horst and Ms. Rising, he was part of the Technical Committee that visited the chapel and that he felt honored to move placing the structure and its setting on the Preliminary Landmarks List. Mr. Hardester seconded the motion, which passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Recommendations on Baltimore County Register (MHT Inventory) Structures

4. Towson Manor Village properties, Linden Terrace and Willow Avenue, Towson vicinity [County Council District # 5]

This item concerned demolition requests for 14 structures listed on the County Register, in order to allow for a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The PUD had been a collaborative effort between the developer and the community, which supports the proposal. Ms. Hoffberger read staff's recommendation to issue a notice to proceed for the demolition of the following structures:

County Register (MHT) # BA-2158; 1 Willow Avenue
County Register (MHT) # BA-2159; 29 Willow Avenue
County Register (MHT) # BA-2160; 31 Willow Avenue
County Register (MHT) # BA-2164; 22 Willow Avenue
County Register (MHT) # BA-2166; 26 Willow Avenue
County Register (MHT) # BA-2154; 11 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2155; 13 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2156; 15 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2147; 4 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2148; 8 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2149; 10 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2150; 12 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2151; 14 Linden Terrace
County Register (MHT) # BA-2165; 24 Willow Avenue

Mr. Ed Kilcullen, president of the Towson Manor Village Community Association, stated that while his community was sad to see the buildings go, the buildings were in such a state of deterioration that his association was in support of the demolition request. Ms. Carol Allen, LPC member and President of Historic Towson, Inc. (HTI), gave a brief presentation about the history of the buildings. She explained that HTI chose not to nominate them for landmarks listing because the previous owner had greatly altered the buildings and they were significantly deteriorated.

Mr. Boswell speaking on behalf the Technical Committee noted that the historic fabric of the buildings had been destroyed during the process of breaking them up into apartments. Additionally, the current owners have stripped the buildings of any materials that were of value. Dr. Gregory moved to issue a "notice to proceed." Mr. Diggs seconded the motion. Ms. Allen, Mr. Boswell, Ms. McIver, Mr. Hardester, Mr. Fedder, Dr. Gregory and Mr. Diggs voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Secoura and Mr. Reynolds voted against the motion and Ms. Horst abstained. The motion passed.

5. “Old Log House,” 204 Pleasant Hill Road, Owings Mills, County Register (MHT) # BA-671 [County Council District # 4]

This item concerned a demolition request.

Approved via the consent agenda to issue a notice to proceed.

6. 106 Avondale Road, Turner’s Station African American Survey District; Dundalk vicinity; County Register (MHT) # BA-3056 [County Council District # 7]

This item concerned a County initiated demolition request. The property had been acquired by Baltimore County at a tax sale after the previous owners failed to pay fines generated by numerous code violations. Ms. Hoffberger read staff’s recommendation, which encouraged the LPC to discuss the proposal. (Note: The LPC discussed and voted item 7, 102 Avondale Road, first. The order in which the items appeared on the agenda was maintained to avoid confusion.)

Mr. Wisnom summarized the events that lead up to the County’s acquisition of the property at a tax sale. Mr. Boswell stated that the building was structurally sound and, in his opinion, merits landmarks consideration because of its importance to the streetscape. Dr. Gregory inquired which of the five criteria the structure would meet. Mr. Diggs thought that it had a distinctive architectural style. Mr. Reynolds moved to approve the demolition request. Dr. Gregory seconded the motion. Mr. Reynolds, Ms. McIver, Dr. Gregory and Ms. Allen voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Secoura, Ms. Horst, Mr. Hardester, Mr. Fedder, Mr. Diggs, Mr. Bryan and Mr. Boswell voted against the motion. The motion failed. Mr. Fedder moved to deny the application for demolition. Mr. Diggs seconded the motion. Ms. Secoura, Ms. Horst, Mr. Hardester, Mr. Fedder, Mr. Diggs, Mr. Bryan and Mr. Boswell voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Reynolds, Ms. McIver, Dr. Gregory and Ms. Allen voted against the motion. The motion passed.

7. 102 Avondale Avenue, Turner’s Station African American Survey District; Dundalk vicinity; County Register (MHT) # BA-3056 [County Council District # 7]

This item concerned a demolition request of a County owned structure in the Turner Station African American Survey District. The request was initiated by Baltimore County in response to numerous code violations. Mr. Wisnom summarized the events leading up to the night’s hearing. He stated that the house posed a safety hazard. Mr. Dunbar Brooks, Director of the Turner Station Development Corporation, a local community group, stated that his community viewed the problem as a code enforcement issue. The community was primarily

interested in maintaining the neighborhood as a safe and well kept place where young families would want to live. He noted that he and his community were offended that the African American Survey District designation was imposed on Turner Station without allowing for community input. Ms. Gwen Esther Russel, a community activist stated that the property was an eyesore and that something needed to be done.

Ms. Rose Parish Riddix, the previous owner, stated that there was nothing wrong with the building. Mr. Wendel Webster, attorney to the former property owners thought it would be a problem if the dwelling were to be demolished before ownership of the property could be established. Mr. Fedder stated that the issue had been tabled so that the previous owners could attend a Circuit Court hearing scheduled earlier that day. Mr. Fedder pointed out that the previous owners did not bother to show up. Dr. Gregory wished to go on record that he was appalled. At the last meeting he was led to believe that more time was needed to allow the former owners to attend a hearing – only to learn that they did not show up. He stated that property owners are stewards of their respective communities and have the responsibility to maintain their property.

Mr. Boswell noted that he was part of the Technical Committee, along with Mr. Diggs. The structure was plain and had serious structural issues. Mr. Diggs moved to disapprove the demolition request. Mr. Bryan seconded the motion. Mr. Hardester, Ms. Secoura, Mr. Bryan, Mr. Diggs and Ms. Horst moved in favor of the motion. Mr. Reynolds, Ms. Allen, Ms. McIver, Mr. Fedder, Dr. Gregory and Mr. Boswell voted against the motion. The motion failed. Dr. Gregory moved to approve the demolition request. Mr. Fedder seconded the motion. Mr. Hardester, Ms. Secoura, Mr. Bryan, Mr. Diggs voted against the motion. Mr. Fedder, Mr. Boswell, Ms. Allen, Ms. Horst, Dr. Gregory, Ms. McIver and Mr. Hill voted for the motion. The motion passed.

Alteration to property in County Historic District

- 8. “Mathias House,” 29 Chatsworth Avenue, Glyndon; contributing structure in the Glyndon County Historic District and the Glyndon National Register Historic District; County Register (MHT) # BA-743 [County Council District # 3]**

This item concerned a request to replace a non-historic rear entrance porch with a new deck along the rear façade of the property.

Approved via the consent agenda to issue a notice to proceed.

Delineation of Historic Environmental Setting

9. **“Talbot-Fagon House,” 18907 Hillcrest Avenue, Parkton vicinity; Final Landmarks List # 159, County Register (MHT) # BA-2190 [County Council District # 3]**

This item concerned a request by the owner to delineate a Historic Environmental Setting.

Approved via the consent agenda to delineate the entire 0.79-acre property (map 17, parcel 268) as the Historic Environmental Setting.

10. **“Landis House,” 18909 Hillcrest Avenue, Parkton vicinity; Final Landmarks List # 173, County Register (MHT) # BA-1998 [County Council District # 3]**

This item concerned a request by the owner to delineate a Historic Environmental Setting.

Approved via the consent agenda to delineate the entire 1.39-acre property (map 17, parcel 222) as the Historic Environmental Setting.

Tax Credits

Report on County Tax Credit applications

The following historic property tax credit applications were approved because the applicants had submitted a signed/approved Part 2 State Tax Credit application:

Wroe property, 4802 Butler Road, Glyndon; repair/replacement of doors, windows and walls, exterior painting of contributing structure in the Glyndon County Historic District and the Glyndon National Register District [County Council District # 3]

Moore property, 29 Waugh Avenue, Glyndon; repair/replacement of doors and porch and insulation of attic of contributing structure in Glyndon County Historic District and the Glyndon National Register District [County Council District # 3]

Pometto-Adams property, 309 Gun Road, Avalon; complete rehabilitation of structure on the Final Landmarks List # 230 [County Council District # 1]

Other Business

Ms. Hoffberger reported the following:

The materials prepared for the Commission included a first ever Handbook describing the function and workings of the LPC.

Also included was a first ever Draft Final Landmarks List booklet.

In response to requests from Relay residents, it was established by staff that four property owners had not been notified when the Relay County Historic District was created. All were non-contributing structures at the edge of the district boundary. The Law Office sent a letter verifying this, stating that the structures in question would not be required to have LPC review for any exterior alterations. Additionally, Councilman Samuel Moxley is considering submitting a Resolution to the Baltimore County Planning Board that would consider legislation that would allow for the dissolution of County Historic Districts under certain circumstances.

A nomination for Landmarks consideration was received for 36 Church Lane.

An application for National Register designation for the Winters Lane community has been submitted to the State. A hearing, whether to consider approval of the application was scheduled for February 20, 2007 in Crownsville.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM