

**MINUTES of the January 16, 2024 MEETING of the Commission  
(via Zoom)**

**Adopted February 20, 2024**

**Members Present**

The meeting began at approximately 7:35 p.m. Bob Booher, Wendy Harris, Marilyn Frey, Mimi Styles and David Stopak were present. Rob Gilmore, TC liaison, was unable to attend.

**Approval of Agenda**

Minor modifications were made to the proposed agenda, and it was unanimously approved.

**Adoption of Minutes**

The Minutes of the December 19 meeting were unanimously approved.

**Review Session**

There were no projects presented for review.

**New Member**

As Jeff McCrehan has formally resigned from the HPC, potential replacements were discussed (Note: Marilyn prefers to remain an alternate member of the commission). Bob will inform the mayor of the vacancy and contact the suggested candidates to gauge their interest in serving.

**WG Steatite Quarry Archaeological Site Registration**

Wendy provided an update on her efforts with Don Housley re updating the official WG Steatite Quarry Archeological registration. Don located a bag of artifacts in the basement of the Needwood Mansion that includes a stone projectile point from the Archaic Period (dating back as far as 9,000 years). Now they are researching other known archeological sites in the general vicinity (within a 10–15-mile radius of Town) to see whether they also include artifacts from the same period. Five sites have been identified; some, like Washington Grove, include quarries. Wendy reported that she will begin examining the artifacts and mapping the sites in the next days. This may lead to the conclusion that the Washington Grove quarry was part of a broader settlement pattern. Interestingly, steatite bowls from the Ednor quarry site are included in the Needwood Mansion basement treasure trove. Wendy said until now, she has only seen photos of steatite bowls. (The Ednor site is in the general Sandy Spring vicinity and is now part of a new MoCo park.)

**Corrections to Architectural Survey**

David reported that he and Christine have not been able to get together to finalize material to be included on the website. She has raised questions that will need to be discussed in a phone call.

**ADU Zoning Text Amendment**

Bob reported on the most recent meeting of the Maryland ADU Policy Task Force. It was created by the legislature, which tasked the Planning Department to determine whether there should be guidelines for ADUs, and if so, what those guidelines should be. The focus now is determining what the State can/should do to enable ADUs. The tension between cost of ADUs vs. their impact

needs to be studied. The task force is examining what other states and cities have put in place. Urban, suburban and rural areas are included in the review, and HOA restrictions will be a focus of the next meeting. If local jurisdictions do not adopt ADU ordinances, the State may impose its ordinance. There is negative pressure against increased design review for ADUs, but historic districts may be exempt. Bob asked how historic districts would be affected and learned that the chair of the ADU Task Force is on the Board of MHT.

The draft “HPC Comments on ZTA No. 2023.08 concerning ADUs” that David had circulated before the meeting was discussed. It was voted to include a recommendation to limit the maximum gross floor area of an attached ADU to 800sf, as is the case for detached ADUs.

### **Masonry Restoration**

Bob reported that Sam Biggers of Traditional Building Group, the masonry restoration expert who visited last summer, has now declined to provide a report or quote. He has provided, at Bob’s request, the names of other potential restoration contractors, yet to be contacted.

### **Playground Equipment**

Bob had circulated a historical context description, noting that it lacked recommendations. One suggestion would be to include the recommendation of keeping evidence of the long “continuity of use” that contributes to the integrity of the historic district. Maintaining some of the old metal equipment, without specifying which pieces, should be considered. (The merry-go-round and the jungle gym are targeted for removal.) It was also suggested that Eva be invited to meet with HPC for further discussion.

### **Bulletin Material**

For the February bulletin, a piece on Wells and Pumps (based on Robinson & Associates’ 2019 Historic Context Report) has been provided to Kathy.

### **Planning Commission Meeting**

David attended the January PC meeting and reported that much of the meeting centered on the ADU issue, in particular adding Comprehensive Plan language to the ordinance. Bob mentioned that the Maryland ADU Task Force has stressed the importance of ADU ordinances referring back to jurisdictions’ Comprehensive Plans. The PC also reviewed areas of focus for 2024. PC asked about further joint efforts with HPC regarding mansionization issues. They also wish to obtain better current Town maps. Bob referred to a map that Wendy had obtained from the county that would probably suit their needs. HPC’s comments on the ADU ordinance should be sent to the mayor, PC, Christine Dibble, etc., so that it becomes part of the official record for the public hearing on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Bob and David plan to speak at that hearing.

### **Town Council Meeting Report**

Rob Gilmore was not present to give an official report, but Bob attended the January TC meeting. Re: the bike path, the Town has received a revised 15% design plan from the County. Bob noted that the plan acknowledges that, should the county proceed with plans to extend Amity Drive, the bike path will need to be redone. The county is also over budget on the bike path – it will need to go back through the capital improvements budget process.

**Upcoming Phil Edwards Talk**

The Montgomery County Historical Society is presenting Phil Edwards' talk entitled Washington Grove: The Montgomery County Outlier on Tuesday, January 23. Registration is required – links were circulated on the ListServ.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 20, at 7:30 pm via Zoom.