

SOMERSET COUNTY CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Notice Act, Chapter 231, PL 1975 by President Donald Esposito.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Commissioners: Don Esposito, Rory Britt, Kathy Faulks, Phyllis Fittipaldi, Dennis Quinlan, Ann Osterdale Rosenblum, Edwin Scannell

Staff: Walter Lane, Thomas D'Amico, Kaitlin Bundy, Natalie Zaman

Freeholder Liaison: Brian Gallagher

Members of the Public: Sean Blinn, Brian Faulks, Brad Fay, Hilary Klimek, Jasmine Mathis, Kathleen Palmer, Ray Sanderson, Marge Sullivan

IV. Approval of February 5, 2020 Minutes

Motion to accept the minutes made by Phyllis Fittipaldi and seconded by Rory Britt. Passed.

V. Correspondence

Kaitlin Bundy noted that the correspondence and flyers for upcoming events were sent out electronically in a packet with the C&H Agenda and minutes. A hard copy of the correspondence and flyers is available in a folder for review.

1. Kaitlin Bundy received from Sean Blinn Re: AASLH National Visitation Survey
2. Kaitlin Bundy received from Isha Vyas, Division Head Middlesex County Arts and History Re: Free Conservation Workshop March 14, 2020
3. Kaitlin Bundy received from Sara Cureton, Executive Director New Jersey Historical Commission Re: NJ Historical Commission Capital Needs Assessment of New Jersey's Revolutionary War Sites and Crossroads Annual meeting March 25th
4. Tom D'Amico received notice from the Richard Grubb Associates of the creation of Catawba Park, 15 Old Vliet Road, Franklin Township in a historic district
5. Tom D'Amico received two notices for cell towers that need to go before the Land Development Committee review before being presented to the HC

VI. Reports, Old & New Business

The following reports were made by Tom D'Amico:

Historic Preservation Grant Program

Tom D'Amico stated that the County has received all the contracts for the six 2019 Historic Preservation Grant Program projects. We have one more payment to do then all of the initial payments have been completed. Guidelines and Application Forms for the 2020 Historic Preservation Grant

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Program have been sent out to all of the historic organizations and municipalities. They deadline to be submitted to the Cultural & Heritage Commission is Friday, April 24th at 5:00 p.m.

Historic Marker Program

Tom has a call into Sewah studios to check on the status of the three remaining markers. Tom has been in contact with Warren Township and the Raritan Public Library to set up field meetings for the Kirch-Ford-Terrill House and the General John Frelinghuysen House (Raritan Public Library) in Raritan.

Historic Preservation Plan

Tom has finished reviewing all chapters of the Historic Preservation Plan. All comments by staff will be transmitted to Heritage Strategies. We plan to have a Steering Committee meeting. Tom stated that he will be beefing up the section on the American Revolution due to its importance.

County Historic Preservation Projects

Tom stated that all of the leaded glass for all five doors has been restored and installed in the Jury Assembly Room by Leo Art Glass Studio in the former First Dutch Reformed Church in Somerville. This includes the Plexiglas type covering for each window. The work on the large stained-glass window will begin in April. He will try to get images of the removal and reinstallation of the large stained-glass windows.

The County Engineering Division will be applying to the New Jersey Historic Trust for a grant to help fund the second phase of the Van Horne House restoration project. The project will begin shortly and the County will be reimbursed for the project. The New Jersey Historic Trust Grants are due April 23rd.

Other

Tom D'Amico showed the work he has completed on the 18th century Place Name Map project. He added the Boudinot House in Bernards and the Duychink's Mill in Branchburg as well as the colonial era sites which are currently open to the public. He showed the map to the Commission and he noted that a terrain layer was added which clearly indicates the major land forms in the County.

The following reports were made by Kaitlin Bundy:

Local Arts Program Grant

2020 Grant: Staff has released the first payment for nine of the seventeen 2020 Re-grantees and continues to work with the remaining organizations to get their contracts finalized.

2020 Census

On Saturday, February 29th the Commission held its first event of the Culture Counts series. The event had a great turn out. The Eventbrite tickets were "sold out" prior to the event and even though not everyone who reserved a ticket showed up we still have a very full house at Villagers theatre. Freeholder Director Shanel Robinson attended along with Councilman Ram from Franklin Township. Kaitlin thanked Planning Director Walter Lane for also attending and for him and his wife helping out during the event. The next Culture Counts event will present music of the Philippines and will take place on Sunday, March 8th at 1:00 p.m., at the Raritan Library.

2020 SCCHC Meeting Dates

January 8th, February 5th, March 4th, April 1st, June 3rd, September 9th, October 7th, November 4th, December 2nd

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Technical Assistance Workshop

On February 11th the Commission held a technical assistance workshop on Insurance for Nonprofits led by New Jersey Risk Managers.

Historic Preservation and History Awards

The guidelines and applications for the 2020 Historic Preservation and History Awards were live last week. The press release for the applications should be going out shortly. Staff asked for help in promoting the awards to make sure a large pool of applications are submitted this year.

County Clerk and State Archives Historic Records Assessment

On March 4th, Commission Staff met with the County Clerk Steve Peter and State Archivist Donald Cornelius to discuss a number of records currently held in the Clerk's office that has significant historical value. The state provided insight and direction on how to proceed with preserving some of the documents that currently have not been preserved, and also on digitizing those records that would be of high interest to the public.

C&HC Strategic Visioning Plan

A Consultant has been engaged to help provide the Commission with a Strategic Visioning Plan. An RFP was sent out at the end of 2019 and a contract was awarded to the consultant Arts Market, Inc. (of Montana) Arts Market has worked with a number of other New Jersey Cultural & Heritage Commissions, and has begun reviewing pertinent documents, such as the Commission's previous cultural assessment and long-range plan. Staff asked that all Commissioners please provide staff with their availability to meet with the consultant on either March 10th or March 11th.

Weekend Journey through the Past

On February 13th the Commission held a meeting for Weekend Journey Participants. The meeting had a wonderful turn out and a lot of ideas were discussed. Commission staff is currently going through and consolidating the information from the meeting. Staff will then work with the Weekend Journey Committee Members to be able to present any proposed changes to the event to the full commission at the April 2020 Commission meeting.

250th Anniversary

Commission staff and Planning Director Walter Lane met to discuss the creation of a county task force for the Semiquincentennial. Staff is scheduled to meet with Freeholder Liaison Brian Gallagher on March 10th to discuss the plan and determine how the county will proceed. Additionally, Kaitlin attended a meeting of the Association of Cultural & Historic Agencies on March 3rd where the State Historical Commission and Crossroads provided insight on how the Crossroads 2020 Annual Meeting on March 25th will proceed in sharing the overview of the state's readiness and heritage tourism potential.

The following reports were made by Natalie Zaman:

County History Partnership Program Grant

2020 Grant: Staff has released the first payment for six of the nine 2020 CHPP re-grantees and continues to work with the remaining organizations to get their contracts finalized.

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C&H Gallery

Currently on display through March 5th is "Ukrainian Folk Art from the Ukrainian History and Education Center" (a CHPP and LAP Re-grantee and they will be doing two workshops for us for the Census). The next exhibit will feature the Contemporary Art Group with members of the Westfield Art Association. That exhibit will run from March 10th through April 23rd.

Teen Arts

- The 2020 Somerset County Teen Arts Festival will take place on Wednesday May 13th.
- Natalie passed a volunteer signup sheet around; a flier will go out to shortly. We also heard back from the Sheriff's office, of the volunteers who participated in previous festivals, only Don needs to be reprinted.

Ag Day

Cultural and Heritage is partnering with the Agricultural Development Board to Celebrate National Ag Day 2020 which will take place on March 20th. Programs include a History of Agriculture in Somerset County at the Somerville Library in the morning and a History of Agriculture through the eyes of female farmers at Duke Farms in the evening. Fliers were distributed with the details.

VII. Open Meeting to the Public

Motion to open the meeting to the public made by Don Esposito and seconded by Rory Britt. Passed.

VIII. Announcements: Next meeting - Wednesday, April 1st, 2020.

1. Kathy Palmer announced "James Fiorentino Traveling Art Exhibition" opening and Artist Reception March 20, 2020 6-9 p.m. Studio 7 Gallery, Bernardsville www.studio7artgallery.com
2. Kathy Palmer announced "The Mendham Antiques, Art & Design Show" April 3,4 & 5, 2020 DTuriAntiquesShows.com
3. Kathy Palmer announced a call for artists for the Juried Art Show at the Annual Mendham Rotary Antique Show April 3-5, 2020 kathleenpalmerartshows@gmail.com
4. Marge Sullivan announced that starting President's Day the flag of Washington's Headquarters from May-June of the Middlebrook Encampment has flown at the Wallace House/Old Dutch Parsonage daily 24 hours under illumination.
5. Marge Sullivan announced that a Women's History Month program will be held March 28 at the Somerville Public Library "Medicine Women Then & Now" about Mary Gaston, the first female doctor in Somerset County speaker Dr. Kathleen Toomey, Director of Oncology, RWJ Somerset Cancer Center.
6. Brian Faulks announced that the Heritage Trail Middlebrook Five Generals Bus Tour, Sunday, February 16, 2020 was successful with between 125-160 persons attending.
7. Kathy Faulks announced the first lecture of the 2020 Lecture Series: "An Evening with the Baron" at the Abraham Staats House., Saturday, March 28, 2020 funded in part by a CHPP grant. www.staatshouse.org.

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8. Brad Fay announced that a James Fiorentino painting was given to Bridgewater Township in cooperation with the D & R Greenway Land Trust. Giclee prints of that painting are available for purchase at the Studio7 Art Galleries. www.studio7artgallery.com

IX. Adjournment

A motion made by Rory Britt and seconded by Ann Osterdale Rosenblumto adjourn the meeting.
Passed. Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Faulks, Secretary

REMINDER: Doing our best to go paperless... If you need a copy of the agenda or the official minutes of the SCC&HC meeting, please print a personal copy for your own reference and bring it with you to the meeting. Your consideration is appreciated.