

SOMERSET COUNTY CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION
Wednesday, April 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes – Virtual Zoom Meeting

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Commission President Donald Esposito in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Notice Act, Chapter 231, PL 1975.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Commissioners: Don Esposito, Rory Britt, Kathy Faulks, Donnetta Johnson, Dennis Quinlan, Peter Stavrianidis, Marge Wolan-Sullivan

Excused: Edwin Scannell

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

Members of the Public: Brian Faulks, Brad Fay, Hilary Klimek, Kathleen Palmer, Ray Sanderson

Commissioner Liaison: Melanie Marano

IV. Approval of March 4, 2021 Minutes

Motion to accept the minutes made by Rory Britt and seconded by Donnetta Johnson. Passed.

V. Correspondence

None

VI. Staff Reports/Old Business

The following reports were made by Tom D'Amico:

Historic Preservation Grant Program: Tom reported that the two contracts for the 2020 Grant round have been sent out, and that the executed Hillsborough Township (the Van der Veer Harris House) contract has been received and sent to the County Commissioners Office to be executed. When the executed copy is received we will process the first payment.

The 2021 Historic Preservation Grant Program Guidelines and Application Form have been sent out and are due on April 30, 2021.

Historic Preservation Master Plan: We have transmitted our final comments to Heritage Strategies on the Tourism and Education Chapters and have received the historic preservation maps for final review. A Steering Committee Meeting was held on February 11, 2021 concerning the Farmland Preservation Chapter. Staff made comments on the Introduction Chapters and we have received the revised introductions. After all chapters have been reviewed by the Steering Committee and finalized, they will be posted on the county website and distributed for public review. We will hold the appropriate public hearings and the plans will be adopted by the County Planning Board as part of the County Master Plan. The Historic Preservation Plan will be submitted to the Cultural and Heritage Commission for your endorsement.

2021 SCCHC Meeting Dates:

Jan 13, Feb 3, Mar 4, April 1, May 6, Jun 3, Sep 16, Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2

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County Historic Preservation Projects: The last piece of the stained-glass window which is being restored was to be installed last month, but it has been postponed.

Work will begin this spring on the east wing of the Van Horne House in Bridgewater. This will include replacing the siding and installing a new cedar roof and replacing the gutters on that side. The County will also be reparging the top of the brick oven, repointing the foundation on the east side will be replacing the metal roof on the back side of the building.

Historic Marker Program: We are still waiting for the mark out from Raritan Borough concerning the Raritan Library (General John Frelinghuysen House) historic marker. All the parties had previously agreed on a location and Tom sent the Borough the installation specifications. Tom is has not heard the results of the mark out at this time.

Tom will be contacting Warren Township for the next marker installation at the Kirch-Ford Terrill House.

The following reports were made by Kaitlin Bundy:

Local Arts Program Grant, 2021 Grant: Eleven (11) 2021 LAP grants were approved by the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners at their meeting on March 9, 2021. Re-grantee contracts were sent out shortly after approval and are due back April 30, 2021. First payments to re-grantees will be released upon completion of their contracts, which includes signature from the County Commissioner Director.

250th Update: C&H Staff held of first meeting of the internal group for the County 250th Task Force; the included members are interested in being part of the conversation. Staff is working to schedule a meeting with County Administrator, Colleen Mahr. Crossroads of the American Revolution will be holding its annual meeting on April 8, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. to provide an update on the state's movement on the 250th. It is expected that the states interpretive framework, themes and guidelines will be announced at this meeting.

Ag Day: The Agricultural Development Board shifted their initial plans and postponed their "Influencing Agriculture" event, a celebration of Somerset County's vibrant agricultural history as seen through the eyes of female farmers. However, they did produce a beautiful story map (similar to the story map used for the virtual Journey through the Past), and were kind enough to mention and link certain C&H pages to their virtual Ag Day events (e.g., our Journey through the Past trading cards).

Other: Staff thanked County Commissioner Melonie Marano for presenting a proclamation to former C&H Commissioner Phyllis Fittipaldi at the County Commissioner meeting on March 23, 2021.

The following reports were made by Natalie Zaman:

NJ Historical Commission County History Partnership Program Grant, 2021 Grant: Four (4) 2021 CHPP grant awards were approved by the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners at their meeting on March 9, 2021. Re-grantee contracts were sent out shortly after approval and are due

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Arts and History Organization Guides: Staff has been updating our Arts and History Guides and working with our Graphics Department to present them in an attractive format. They will be up on the website shortly. Due to the ever- changing nature of our local organizations (meeting dates, contact information, etc.), the process of updating is continuous. Staff will continue to contact organizations to obtain the latest, most accurate information for them.

2021 Teen Arts Festival: Coordination of the 2021 Virtual Teen Arts Festival is underway. We have:

- 18 Schools with 865 students participating in 8 disciplines.
- Staff is engaging diverse artists to do video adjudication of each students work in each of the 8 disciplines.

Student work is due on April 12th. Once student work has been reviewed by staff it will be sent out for adjudication. Artists are expected to deliver adjudications to staff for review in mid-May.

VII. New Business/Action Items

1. **Strategic Visioning Plan:** C&H Commissioners were provided with the final draft of the Strategic Visioning Plan. Kaitlin asked that a vote be held to approve the Commission's Strategic Visioning Plan. Motion made by Kathy Faulks and seconded by Marge Wolan-Sullivan to accept Strategic Visioning Plan passed by roll call: Don Esposito, Rory Britt, Kathy Faulks, Donetta Johnson, Dennis Quinlan, Peter Stavrianidis, Marge Wolan-Sullivan = seven ayes.
2. **C & H Annual Report:** C&H Staff have been working with the County Graphics department to create an annual report for the Commission's accomplishments in 202. This is something the Commission has not traditionally done in the past, but staff and the Executive Committee have been discussing for some time. Since this something we ultimately want to be able to provide on the county's website, we have worked to make the document very visual and easy to read. We also would like the Commission to help us determine what information they want more of, less, etc.
3. **Other:** Motion made by Donetta Johnson and seconded by Peter Stavrianidis to endorse Somerset County Library System Youth Services Summer Reading Challenge and Teentober as part of National Arts & Humanities Month passed by roll call: Don Esposito, Rory Britt, Kathy Faulks, Donetta Johnson, Dennis Quinlan, Peter Stavrianidis, Marge Wolan-Sullivan = seven ayes.
4. Don Esposito reported the Bylaws Committee recommended changes are under review by County Counsel before going to the Somerset County Commissioners for consideration.

VIII. Open Meeting to the Public
Announcements/Other News:

Next SCC&H meeting will take place VIRTUALLY on Thursday May 6, 2021.

1. Hilary Klimek announced that she is in contact with Hartley Dupont, executor of the estate who is offering a collection of historic carriages. Hilary will be going to take pictures Saturday.

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2. Donnetta Johnson announced that she would like to see the C & H Commission do programming with a broader cultural theme and asked if there was a way to do a Juneteenth program this year. Kaitlin will email Donnetta and Kathy Faulks on Monday.
3. Brad Fay announced:
 - a) At the Crossroads of the American Revolution virtual meeting on April 8 they will announce plans for an audio tour of the Ten Crucial Days via an App. It is GIS enabled and goes from Washington Crossing to Trenton, to Princeton, to the Millstone Valley to Morristown. They will want input from SCHC.
 - b) This is the 240th Anniversary of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route march. The East Coast Greenway and Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition are collaborating. ECG has announced a bike ride from New York to Philadelphia through Somerset County with a rest stop at Colonial Park in Franklin. The event is the last weekend in August 28-29, 2021.
4. Kathy Faulks announced that the Battle of Bound Brook will be on April 10, 2021 with all of South Bound Brook's activities to be on the site of the Abraham Staats House, 17 von Steuben Lane.
5. Don Esposito expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Commission for all of the work done by Kaitlin Bundy and the C & H staff in making the Special Recognition Award to Phyllis Fittipaldi. Phyllis greatly appreciated it.

IX. Adjournment 8:35 p.m.

Motion made by Rory Britt and seconded by Marge Wolan-Sullivan. Passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Faulks, Secretary

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