

**SOMERSET COUNTY CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION**  
**Thursday, Nov. 3, 2022, Meeting Minutes – Virtual Zoom Meeting**

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**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Commission President Rory Britt in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Notice Act, Chapter 231, PL 1975.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Roll Call**

**Commissioners:** Rory Britt, Kathy Faulks, Natalie Pineiro, Don Esposito, Jonathan Hress, Dennis Quinlan, Edwin Scannell, Marge Sullivan **EXCUSED:** Donnetta Bishop-Johnson,

**Staff:** Thomas D'Amico, Kaitlin Bundy, Robert Meyer

**Advisory Members:** Aldo Adiazola, Sean Blinn, Brian Faulks, Rose Kopf, Kathleen Palmer, Sharon Onderko, Lori Siqueira **EXCUSED:** Hilary Klimek,

**Members of the Public:** Jessie Havens

**IV. Approval of October 6, 2022, Minutes**

**Motion** to accept the minutes made by Natalie Pineiro and seconded by Don Esposito. Passed.

**V. Correspondence**

1. Kaitlin Bundy received a letter on October 17 from Kiona Miller, North Plainfield councilperson in which she tendered her resignation as advisor to the SCC&HC.
2. Kaitlin Bundy received a on letter October 24 from the Museum of the American Revolution with their expression of gratitude for supporting the Museum by hosting the replica of General George Washington's tent during Somerset County's "Journey Through the Past" event on October 9 and 10, 2022.
3. Kaitlin Bundy received a letter on November 2 from Paul Soltis requesting a letter of support for the Wallace House grant application to the National Park Service FY2022 round of the Semiquincentennial grant program.

**VI. Staff Reports/Old Business**

**The following reports were made by Tom D'Amico:**

**Historic Preservation Grant Program. 2022 Grant:** Tom stated the Board of County Commissions approved the allocation for the Historic Preservation Grant program for the six applications for the 2022 Historic Preservation Grant Program totaling \$724,410.

**2021 Grant:** All 2021 Historic Preservation Grant Program contracts have been executed by the grant recipients except for one municipality. Tom had a meeting with representatives of Rocky Hill concerning their Borough Hall project. The exterior work that has been completed and the initial interior work looks good and has upgraded the building. They have had to cut back on their latest grant due to the considerable increase in cost of the proposed project activities.

**County Preservation Projects. Van Horne House:** The County Public Works Department continues to work on the east wing of the Van Horne House in Bridgewater. All materials have been received

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and work should be completed on the east wing in two to three weeks. Phase III of the project, which will begin next spring, will include the windows and the back porch.

**Stained Glass Windows**

The State Historic Preservation Office has approved the Authorization to Proceed Application for Phase IV of the stained glass window project.

**Baker-Duderstadt Farm**

The consultants for the Baker-Duderstadt Farm, Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects, have completed an initial draft of the Historic Structures Report.

**Van Doren Howe Property**

All survey work has been completed by consultants Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects. A draft of the Historic Structures Report is expected to be completed in late October.

**County Owned Historic Sites Survey**

All field work by consultants Mills and & Schnoering has been completed.

**The following reports were made by Kaitlin Bundy:**

**Local Arts Program Grant.** The Local Arts Program Grant (LAP), are funds the Commission receives annually from the New Jersey State Council on the Art to primarily re-grant out to local non-profits and municipalities.

**2022 Grants:** Final report forms will be sent out to all 2022 re-grantees in early November and are due back January 10, 2023. Staff will work with all 2022 re-grant organizations to help them complete this final stage of the grant so that final payments can be released.

**2023 Grant:** The Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission received 23 applications for the 2023 grant cycle totaling over \$580,000 in grant request. The independent peer panel met on October 18, 2022 via Zoom to discuss all submitted applications. Staff is compiling all the panel comments and will be reaching out to the Commission in the upcoming weeks to schedule a closed session meeting to discuss the grants.

**County History Partnership Program Grant.** The County History Partnership Program Grant (CHPP), are funds the Commission receives annually from the New Jersey Historical Commission primarily to re-grant out to local non-profits and municipalities.

**2022 Grants:** Final report forms will be sent out to all 2022 re-grantees in early November and are due back January 10, 2023. Staff will work with all 2022 re-grant organizations to help them complete this final stage of the grant so that final payments can be released.

**2023 Grant:** The Commission received 11 Applications for the 2023 grant round totaling over \$325,000. The independent peer panel met on October 13, 2022 via Zoom to discuss all submitted

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applications. Staff is compiling all the panel comments and will be reaching out to the Commission in the upcoming weeks to schedule a closed session meeting to discuss the grants.

**Cooperative Marketing Grant. 2023 CMP Grant.** Staff received notice from the Division of Travel and Tourism that the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission will receive a fiscal year 2023 Cooperative Marketing Grant in the amount of \$10,050.00 to additionally advertise and market the 2023 Journey Through the Past Event.

**NEA ARP Sub-granting for Local Arts Agencies Grant.** On October 25, 2022 the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners awarded six grant awards in the amount of \$25,000.00 each to the following organizations for the NEA ARP Sub-granting for Local Arts Agencies Grant:

- Frontline Arts
- Center for Contemporary Art
- American Theater Group
- Music in the Somerset Hills
- Ukrainian History and Education Center
- Light Opera of New Jersey

**Diversity Festival.** On October 16, 2022 Somerset County held its 4th annual Diversity Festival. C&H staff is part of the committee that plans and executes the festival. Staff thanked Commissioner Kathy Faulks for coming out and helping Robert survey during the festival.

**The following reports were made by Robert Meyer:**

**Gallery.** The Center for Contemporary Art exhibit officially opened in the Cultural & Heritage Gallery on October 10, 2022. The exhibit features 26 acrylic, oil, pastel and watercolor paintings by artists from the Center. This gallery will run through November 29. The next gallery will feature the Camera Naturalists Photo Club and will open on December 1.

**History Awards.** On October 19 the 2022 Historic Preservation and History Awards Ceremony was held at the Environmental Education Center in Lord Stirling Park. The event was a big success and staff have been receiving numerous compliments about the ceremony. The event featured a keynote by Dr. Richard Veit, which was complimented by artifacts from the Lord Stirling Manor site on display at the Environmental Education Center by the Park Commission.

**Journey Through the Past.** The 17th Annual Journey Through the Past took place on Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, October 9, 2022, from Noon to 4:00 p.m. 31 historic sites participated, including the Replica of George Washington's revolutionary war tent on the Courthouse Green. It is estimated that over 600 people engaged with the tent during the event. Staff is currently still receiving feedback forms from all of the participating sites. Currently 17 sites have submitted their reports, with 2,461 reported visitors so far this year. Staff was informed that the Old Millstone Forge was open that weekend as well and they have reported their visitor numbers, which have been included in the total. A more detailed breakdown will be provided at the next commission meeting, as the feedback forms are due back November 4.

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**Technical Assistance Workshop.** Staff has been working with emergency preparedness consultant Ellen Korpar to provide a technical assistance workshop covering emergency preparedness for local organizations. The workshop is scheduled for 10:00am on November 15, at the Environmental Education Center in Lord Stirling Park and will last 4 hours. The workshop will cover the disaster planning process, the contents of a disaster plan and business continuity issues. Information will also be provided about resources to help with planning in order to protect people and property. There will also be an example walk-through risk assessment of the EEC which will show the process and explain its importance. This workshop will cost \$10 to cover lunch costs.

**VII. New Business/Action Items**

**2023 Excellence in the Arts** – It was decided to hold the event in October to allow for a new staff person to come on board rather than put so much pressure on the staff in the same month as Teen Arts. The application form would be available in May.

**2023 Journey Through the Past** – Date to be determined by staff in consultation with the County Administrator and accounting for other county events in October 2023.

**Other**

Marge Sullivan explained to the commission that Paul Soltis, NJ Interpretive Specialist of the Wallace House requests a letter of support for a grant to the National Park Service to update the Historic Structures Report and National Register of Historic Places form along with restoration work on the Wallace House due to water and moisture damage, improved landscaping and improved ADA accessibility. A **Motion** to endorse the letter to the National Park Service FY2022 round of the Semiquincentennial grant program on behalf of the Wallace House was made by Don Esposito and seconded by Natalie Pineiro. Passed.

Staff will test the County Commissioner’s room for a hybrid (virtual and in-person) meeting for December to know if it is possible for 2023 meetings.

**VIII. Commissioner Comments**

1. Marge Sullivan informed the commission that the Wallace House received a wayfinding sign honoring don Juan de Miralles and the Spanish support of our Country during the American Revolution. See the link to the website for the Unveiling Memories initiative and the book they wrote, [Spain and the Hispanic Contribution to U.S. Independence.](https://www.unveilingmemories.com/)
2. Kathy Faulks announced upcoming programs at the Abraham Staats House: “Colonial Tavern Night”, Saturday, November 12, 2022, at 6:30pm, “Holiday at the Abraham Staats House”, Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, “*Madrigal Singers of Franklin Twp. HS*”, Saturday, December 3, from 1:00pm 2:00pm and 18<sup>th</sup> century “Candlelight Tour at the Abraham Staats House”, Saturday, December 3, from 6:30-7:30pm.
3. Natalie Pineiro thanked the county for the use of the Courthouse lawn for a Halloween event on October 28. Natalie announced that Downtown Somerville Alliance will celebrate November 5 as

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“Native American Day”, starting at 12:00pm. Also, the 2022 “Annual Holiday Jubilee” will be Friday, December 2, 2022, from 5:30pm to 9:00pm, on Division Street and Main Street in Somerville.

<http://www.downtownsomerville.com/events/12/holiday-jubilee/>

4. Don Esposito thanked the C&H staff.

**IX. Advisory Committee Comments**

1. Sean Blinn announced Jacobus Vanderveer House will host two events: a Cocktail Party on Friday, December 2, 2022, from 6:00pm to 9:00pm, and a Tree Lighting on Saturday, December 3, 2022, from 2:30pm to 5:30pm. Sean also has some of the American Association of State and Local History’s “American 250<sup>th</sup> Field Guides” to share with the commission.

<https://jvanderveerhouse.org>

2. Kathleen Palmer announced that the business “Trick or Treat” and “Trunk or Treat” hosted by Downtown Bernardsville, Inc. on October 29 was a successful and fun event with at least 500 people participating.

Kathleen Palmer also announced that The Historic Society of Somerset Hills will present a program entitled, “How The Somerset Hills Became The Somerset Hills”, on November 6, 2022, from 2:00 to 5:00pm at the Upton Pyne Estate in Bernardsville.

[https://somersethillshistoricalsociety.org/event/how-the-somerset-hills-became-the-somerset-hills/?instance\\_id=154](https://somersethillshistoricalsociety.org/event/how-the-somerset-hills-became-the-somerset-hills/?instance_id=154)

3. Jessie Havens announced that the next program by the Van Harlingen Society will host Peter G. Rose presenting “From Garden to Table” on Saturday, November 12, 2022, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at the new Montgomery Library Meeting Room.

<http://vanharlingen.org>

4. Marge Sullivan wrote a summary of the New Jersey’s Revolution webinars, “Perfect Partners” for historic sites, managers, and teachers. Kaitlin Bundy will send that as well as Sean Blinn’s link to the AASLH 250<sup>th</sup> Field Guide.

**X. Open Meeting to the Public**

**Announcements/Other News:**

**The next SCC&H meeting will take place in-person and virtually on Thursday Dec. 1, 2022.**

**XI. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn made by Natalie Pineiro and seconded by Jonathan Hress. Passed.

**Adjournment 9:04 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Faulks, Secretary

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