



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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APPROVED 07/21/20

Summary of Actions

Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission
Tuesday, June 16, 2020, 6:30 p.m.
4th Floor Board Room, County Administration Building

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA GOTOMEETING

Commissioners Present:	Vice Chair Lisa Pfueller Davidson, Susan Pruden, Yolanda Muckle, Aaron Marcavitch, Chairman John Peter Thompson, Nathania Branch- Miles, Donna Schneider
Commissioners Absent:	Royal Reff
HPC Counsel:	Bradley Farrar, Esq.
Staff Present:	Howard Berger, Jennifer Stabler, Tom Gross, Tyler Smith, Daniel Tana, Ashley Hall, Ben Bernstein

Guest: Name/Organization	Agenda Item
Robyn Waxman	D.1.
Fai Nelson	C.1.

A. Call to Order

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Vice Chair Davidson read introductory remarks about the meeting and procedures into the record. Vice Chair Davidson chaired the meeting. Commissioner Reff was absent.

B. Approval of Meeting Summary – May 19, 2020

MOTION: Commissioner Pruden moved to approve the May 19, 2020 meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marcavitch. The motion was approved by acclamation and without objection (7-0).

C. Historic Area Work Permit

1. 2020-028, Black Swamp School (Historic Site 87A-057)

Mr. Tana presented the staff report. The Black Swamp School (87A-057) was constructed in 1899 and is of wood frame construction, clad in horizontal wood siding with corner boards, and a front-facing gable

roof. The Black Swamp School contains a single school room and a vestibule and was converted to a dwelling after nearly four decades as a schoolhouse. The property was restored by the current owner as part of a 2009 Historic Property Grant Program award. The applicant has proposed to construct a rear porch, the overall dimensions of which are 16'2" wide (10'8" porch with stairs extended down from one side at an additional length of 5'6") by 14' high by 6' deep. The proposed porch will be affixed to the north elevation of the building via a 10-foot-long 2" x 12" ledger, attached to the building with approximately 10 1/2" diameter, 4-1/2" long lag bolts, spaced 12" on center. The proposed porch will sit approximately 2-1/2' to 3' off the ground on 6" x 6" locust posts set on 12" diameter concrete piers, below grade. The proposed porch will be sheltered by a shed roof that will be affixed to the building by the same ledger system as described above. The roof will be composed of 2" x 8" rafters, spaced 16" on center with Simpson joist hangers at each end and will have a 10" eave projection and a pitch of 3.4/12 (2' rise over 7' run). The sides of the porch roof will be clad in vertical ship lap to differentiate it from the siding of the schoolhouse, the roof surface will be clad in metal roofing to match the roofing installed at the schoolhouse, and all exposed lumber will be rough-sawn. Lastly, the proposed porch will have a 3' high railing with vertical supports spaced 6" on center. The design and materials of the proposed porch were found to be compatible with the HAWP approval criteria of Subtitle 29-111(b) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approve HAWP 2020-028 as meeting provisions 2, 3, and 5 of Subtitle 29-111(b) and Standards 1, 9, and 10 of the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*.

Mrs. Fai Nelson, who had signed up to speak to HAWP 2020-028, was not present.

MOTION: Commissioner Pruden moved to approve HAWP 2020-028 as meeting provisions 2, 3, and 5 of Subtitle 29-111(b) and Standards 1, 9, and 10 of the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*, in accordance with staff's recommendations. Commissioner Branch-Miles seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote and without objection (6-0-1, Vice Chair Davidson voted "present").

D. Historic Resource Evaluation

1. William Wells House (Historic Resource 74B-016a)

Mr. Gross presented the staff report. The William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor (74B-016a) is a one-and-one-half-story dwelling constructed circa 1793 in a vernacular Tidewater style. The wood frame building is clad with flush clapboard wood siding on the front (south) elevation and irregular-sized weatherboarding on the secondary elevations. The steeply pitched side-gable roof is clad in standing-seam metal. The front elevation features a full-width porch sheltered by a kicked roof extension. The house was originally set on a foundation of hand-hewn wood posts that were later replaced by poured concrete piers; the structure has subsided and is now only partially supported. Exterior brick chimneys on the east and west elevations have both at least partially collapsed. The off-center front entry door of the house is missing. The front and side elevations are pierced by six-over-six wood-sash windows set in plain wood surrounds, with much of the glass no longer remaining. Concrete steps that previously led to the front porch now rest about four feet away. Trees and brush surround the structure. The property includes the Elliott Beall House (Historic Site 74B-016b), the Environmental Setting of which comprises the entire parcel. The resource is located approximately 1,300 feet east of the Elliott-Beall House, in a wooded area bounded by cultivated fields to the north and south.

The William Wells House is located on property known as Cool Spring Manor that was once owned by Benedict Swingate Calvert, the illegitimate son of Charles Calvert, fifth Lord Baltimore. Following his death in 1788, Elizabeth Calvert was named executrix of his estate and was awarded dowager rights to his real estate and personal property. Calvert's will also stated that "several parts of Cool Spring Manor," as well as other tracts of land, were to be inherited by his son, George Calvert. In 1793, together with their mother, Elizabeth, John and George Calvert conveyed 200 acres of "Cold Spring Mannor" to William Wells. The subject resource was most likely erected by William Wells soon after he acquired the property. Wells died around 1842 and his will devised his "home plantation called Coolspring Manor containing 270 acres" to his nephew, William W. Elliott. Soon after acquiring the property, Elliott constructed a larger, two-story house for his family on a large hill northwest of the subject resource. The Elliott-Beall House (Historic Site 74B-016b) is considered a good example of antebellum plantation architecture and has Greek Revival interior details. No longer serving as the main dwelling, the William Wells House may have been occupied by the overseer of Elliott's plantation and its enslaved workforce. In 1864, William Elliott and his wife conveyed the then 334-acre property to Samuel Leake Brooke. Brooke died in 1869 and bequeathed to his son, Thomas Blake Brooke, "all my land purchased of William W. Elliott on Patuxent River in Prince George's County." The 1870 Census records T.B. Brooke, a farmer, as residing with Florence and their three children on the subject property. Brooke was forced to sell the 334-acre property at auction in June 1878. The property was purchased by Brooke's older brother, Samuel L. Brooke. In October 1893, Brooke conveyed the property to his children Anna Brooke Steele, William Clement Brooke, Samuel Brooke, Jr., Charles H. Brooke, Laura C. Brooke, and Clarice Brooke. The family likely rented the William Wells House to a tenant farmer during their period of ownership. Following a court case among members of the family, multiple commonly held Brooke properties were sold in December 1908. A court-appointed trustee conveyed the subject property to William Meade Holladay, who shortly thereafter transferred the property to Samuel L. Brooke, Jr., as trustee for the family. The Brooke family continued to own the property until 1918, at which time it was conveyed to brothers James B. Beall and John F.X. Beall. James Beall and his wife, Mildred, were living on the subject property at the time of the 1920 Census with their children, James, Jr. Carlton, and Evelyn. The family of John F.X. Beall appears next in sequence in the Census record under the same dwelling number as James and Mildred, which suggests they lived on the same property, if not in the same house. In 1921, James and Mildred Beall conveyed their interest in the subject property to John Beall. The 1930 Census indicates that he was a farmer residing on the property with his wife, Olive, and their three daughters. Following John's death, Olive Beall took ownership of the property and transferred it to herself as trustee. After her death in 1992, the property was devised to her children as trustees. The subject property appears to have been occupied by tenant farmers until the 1960s, after which it was no longer habitable due to its poor condition. The property was sold to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in June 2019.

The William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor is significant as one of the few surviving examples of pre-1800 vernacular Tidewater architecture in Prince George's County. The resource is also significant for the association of the underlying property with the Wells, Elliott, Brooke, and Beall families, all of which were prominent landowners in Prince George's County in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. However, no conclusive evidence could be located to determine who occupied the resource after the death of William Wells in the early 1840s. HPC Policy #1-87, "Evaluating Integrity, Degree of Alteration, and Scarcity and Frequency," states that a property designated as a historic site "must possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent, or contain the values and qualities for which it is judged significant." The William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor retains a low level of integrity, which substantially compromises its ability to convey its significance as an example of late eighteenth-century vernacular Tidewater architecture. The structure has subsided such that it no longer rests on the concrete piers that replaced the original wood posts. It is not clear if any of the wood siding is original, although the presence of hand-forged, cut, and wire nails suggests that siding has been replaced piecemeal throughout the building's history. Both exterior end chimneys have at least partially collapsed. None of

the windows remain intact and the front entry door is missing. Policy #1-87 also states that a property's integrity should be considered in the context of the scarcity of the resource type it represents, with a less restrictive standard of integrity applied when few or no other similar properties exist in the Inventory of Historic Resources. Although there are few examples of pre-1800 wood frame vernacular buildings in the Inventory, the low level of integrity retained by the William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor and the limited prospects for its rehabilitation outweigh any benefit that would be derived from its designation as a Historic Site.

Staff concluded that the William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor meets criterion (2)(A)(v) of Subtitle 29-104(a). However, HPC Policy #1-89 indicates that the Landmark Criterion, (2)(A)(v), should not be used alone in designating an Historic Site; it should be used only in combination with one or more of the other criteria of historic or architectural significance. Staff further concluded that, because the subject historic resource is located within the Environmental Setting of the Elliott-Beall House Historic Site, the HPC would have the opportunity to review any proposal affecting the exterior features of the William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor even if it is deleted from the Inventory of Historic Resources. In addition, because the property is owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, any proposal to demolish the structure would include archaeological investigation and potential interpretation of the site by the Department of Parks and Recreation's Natural and Historical Resources Division.

Staff recommended to the HPC that the William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor (Historic Resource 74B-016a) can only be found to meet HPC Historic Site Criterion (2)(A)(v) and that in accordance with HPC Policy #1-89, it should not be designated as a Historic Site and should be deleted from the Inventory of Historic Resources. The deletion of the subject historic resource from the Inventory would have no effect on the status of the Elliott-Beall House (Historic Site 74B-016b) or its existing 192.36-acre Environmental Setting.

Commissioner Marcavitch left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Thompson asked, if the house were a historic structure and not a Historic Resource, and the property owner wanted to demolish it, what criteria would be used to evaluate its demolition. Mr. Gross indicated that, if the HPC were to accept staff's recommendation to remove the structure's Historic Resource designation, it would become a contributing historic structure within the Environmental Setting of a Historic Site and its demolition would be subject to review by the HPC.

Vice Chair Davidson asked what the mechanism was for this site, if removed from the Inventory of Historic Resources, becoming a contributing structure within the Environmental Setting of the Elliott Beall House. Mr. Gross clarified that its location within the Historic Site's Environmental Setting and its construction date coinciding with the Historic Site's period of significance are the factors determining the structure's designation as contributing.

Ms. Robyn Waxman, an owner of the property adjacent to the subject property, asked if there were plans for the Elliott-Beall House and if the HPC would review and comment on the plans. Mr. Gross indicated that the Parks Department's plans are unknown at this time, but they are currently maintaining the Elliott Beall House property. Mr. Gross also indicated that the HPC typically does not review proposals for use unless such proposals will affect the exterior features of a historic property.

Mr. Berger stated that it was his recollection that the Department of Parks & Recreation has budgeted some money for improvements to the Elliott Beall House for long-term preservation.

Vice Chair Davidson added that any exterior alterations proposed to the Elliott Beall House would be subject to HPC review.

MOTION: Commissioner Pruden moved to recommend the deletion of the William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor (Historic Resource 74B-016a) from the Inventory of Historic Resources in accordance with staff's recommendation. Commissioners Muckle and Branch-Miles seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote and without objection (5-0-1, Vice Chair Davidson voted "present").

E. Update from Department of Parks & Recreation

Mr. Gross presented the update from the Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR). He indicated that the majority of recent work completed by the DPR included maintenance work or in-kind replacement of existing features.

F. Commission Staff Items

1. HAWP Staff Sign Offs

There were no further questions.

2. Properties of Concern

Commissioner Pruden asked if staff was aware of the recent condition of the Arthur Magruder House, and stated that she drove by and the property is not visible from Maryland Route 193 due to overgrowth. Mr. Gross stated that staff can reach out to the property owner for an update on the condition of the property and the plans for the ongoing preservation of the structure.

3. Referrals Report

There were no further questions.

4. Correspondence Report – No Correspondence Report

5. New Business/Staff Updates

Mr. Tana provided an update on the FY 2020 Historic Property Grant Program Awards. He indicated that staff presented the HPC's recommendations to the Planning Board on March 5, 2020. He stated that after staff's presentation to the Planning Board, Ms. Jillian Seagraves, representing Kathleen Litchfield, gave testimony in support of the application for running electrical power to the Duvall Hopkins Store at Hall Road, which had not been recommended for funding. Mr. Tana indicated that the Planning Board voted in favor of awarding \$5,000 to the Duvall Hopkins Store at Hall Road project, which was deducted from the recommended award of \$35,000 for the Samuel Hargrove House project. Mr. Tana noted that several projects have been given the notification that work may begin, and the remaining projects require easements to be obtained before work can begin. He then indicated that a budget of \$350,000 had been approved for the FY 2021 Historic Property Grant Program.

Mr. Berger noted that the budget for the FY 2021 Grant Program, \$350,000, represents a gain of \$50,000 over the previous year's budget.

Commissioner Schneider stated that the Historical Society and Maryland Milestones are hosting a virtual lecture by Susan Pearl about the Burroughs Diaries on June 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Gross opened the floor for public comments. There were no public comments.

MOTION: Chairman Thompson moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Davidson. The motion was approved by acclamation and without objection (6-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ashley Sayward Hall
Principal Planning Technician
Historic Preservation Section