

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING**

Thursday, July 16, 2020 at 10:00 AM
Teleconference

Pursuant to notice, the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Historical Trust was held by teleconference.

Trustees present: Mmes. Bashiri, Earnstein, Filkins, Mears, and Paca; Messrs. Alberg, Brown, Buchheit, Feldstein, Little, Parker, and Robinson

Area Representatives present: Mmes. Linder and Uunila; Messrs. Azola, Camlin, Charlton, Reed, Spikes, and Stek

Ex-Officio Members: Senator Chris West; Delegate Jim Gilchrist, Secretary Robert Neall

Maryland Department of Planning: Robert McCord, Secretary

Office of the Attorney General: Rieyn DeLony

MHT Staff: Elizabeth Hughes, Anne Raines, Greg Pierce, Collin Ingraham, and Jennifer Ruffner.

Guests: Owen Blum, Liz Grozer, Olivia Johnson, and Linda Johnson.

AGENDA

Q1 CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Mears called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM. A quorum of Trustees was present.

Q2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Robinson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Parker, that the May 14, 2020 Board meeting minutes be approved. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.

Q3 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Q100 Capital Programs

Q101R Historic Tax Credit Appeal – Project #2019-250

Mr. Ingraham reported that Mr. Owen Blum is seeking homeowner tax credits for a rehabilitation that includes plumbing and wall repairs. The basis for the Part 3 denial is the statutory requirement that work be reviewed and approved prior to being initiated in order to be considered as Qualifying Rehabilitation Expenses (QRE) eligible for the 20% credit.

Specifically, the Historic Revitalization Tax Credit Program statute defines a “Qualified rehabilitation expenditure” as an expense that “is expended in compliance with a plan of proposed rehabilitation that has been approved by the Director.” A signed Part 2 tax credit application constitutes the Director’s approval.

Mr. Ingraham noted that MHT approved the Part 1 and 2 applications for this project on 1/17/20. The Part 3 application indicated that the project began on 10/7/19 and was completed on 11/13/19. In so far as the project was begun before receiving the Director’s approval, MHT determined the project to be ineligible for tax credits.

Following Mr. Ingraham’s presentation, Mr. Blum presented his request for reconsideration. Mr. Blum asked that the Board allow the application to move forward despite the procedural facts in the case and suggested that the procedural requirements of the program should not outweigh the substantive requirements.

The Board discussed the appeal request. Ms. DeLony noted that staff has no discretion under the statute to approve work performed by the homeowner prior to the Director’s approval of the Part 2 application.

The following motion was made by Mr. Feldstein, seconded by Mr. Little, and approved unanimously.

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees supports the Director’s denial of the Part 3 application for Project #2019-250.

Q102 Monument Relocation Working Group - Report

Mr. Robinson reported that the Monument Relocation Working Group met virtually on June 24, 2020 to discuss the current status of legal issues related to the monuments. During that meeting, Mr. Eric Holcomb, Executive Director of the Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, reported on the status of his office’s efforts to find a permanent home for the monuments. Mr. Spikes offered to explore new opportunities to find a location for the monuments in Maryland.

The Working Group expressed concern about the current security of the statues given recent events around the country with regard to monuments. Mr. Holcomb reassured the Group that security is tight at the current storage location.

Q200 Survey, Registration, Community Education & Museums

Q201 Maryland History Day Prize Winners - Presentation

Ms. Hughes reported that Maryland History Day is a program of the Maryland Humanities Council. Maryland History Day is the state affiliate of the *National History Day*, an innovative nationwide program bringing history to life for middle and high school students. The MHT Board makes a donation to the Maryland Humanities Council to sponsor two achievement awards – one in the junior division (grades 6 through 8) and one in the senior division (grades 9

through 12). Winners receive a cash prize and a plaque with the name of the Maryland Historical Trust, and sponsorship is also acknowledged in the Maryland History Day program, the National History Day program, and in press releases containing the names of Maryland History Day winners.

Ms. Hughes announced that the recipients of the 2020 MHT Special Prize in Historic Preservation included:

Title: Someone Decided We Should Get an Education: How Rosenwald Schools Changed America

Category: Junior Individual Documentary

Student: Linda Johnson

School: Southern Middle School

Teacher: Kyle Prescott

Title: Maritime Heroes of Liberty Ships: Breaking Barriers on Land and Sea

Category: Senior Individual Website

Student: Olivia Borkowski-Johnson

School: Bel Air High School

Teacher: Drusilla Herbert

Students Linda Johnson and Olivia Borkowski-Johnson then presented their projects to the Board.

Q202 JPPM Report

Greg Pierce, Executive Director of Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum (JPPM), reported on new and ongoing initiatives at JPPM.

Q300 Management & Planning

Q301R Election of MHT Board of Trustees Officers

Ms. Filkins, Chair of the MHT Board Nominating Committee, reported that the Bylaws of the MHT Board require the election of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a Treasurer at the first regular meeting of the Trustees after July 1. The term of officers is for two years and officers may not serve more than 3 consecutive terms. Ms. Filkins indicated that the Committee recommend re-election of the current slate of officers, including: Chairman – Laura Davis Mears.; Vice Chairman – Franklin Robinson, Jr.; Treasurer – Samuel J. Parker, Jr.

The following motion was made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Bashiri, and approved unanimously.

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees elects the following slate of officers for two-year terms beginning on August 1, 2020: Chairman: Laura Davis Mears, Vice Chairman: Franklin Robinson, Jr., Treasurer: Samuel J. Parker, Jr.

Q302R Election of Elected Trustee

Mr. Feldstein recused himself from the discussion and action on this item.

Ms. Filkins reported that the MHT Board Executive Committee consists of the officers, the immediate past Chairman (if still a Trustee) or the current Chairman's designee, and one other Trustee elected by the Trustees. Albert L. Feldstein currently serves as the Elected Trustee. Ms. Filkins indicated that the MHT Nominating Committee recommends that Albert L. Feldstein be re-elected as the Elected Trustee on the Executive Committee.

The following motion was made by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mr. Robinson, and approved unanimously.

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees elects Albert L. Feldstein to serve as the Elected Trustee on the Executive Committee.

Q303R Election of Area Representatives

Ms. Filkins reported that the MHT Board bylaws provide for the election of persons to serve as Area Representatives to the Trust. The term of an Area Representative is two years, beginning on the first day of the first month following his or her election. Up to ten Area Representatives may serve at one time. Area Representatives are to be chosen so as to afford, on a regular basis, participation in Trust deliberations by persons from areas of the State not represented by Trustees.

Ms. Filkins indicated that the Nominating Committee recommends re-election of all existing Area Representatives and election of Lisa Sasser, a resident of Kent County, to replace Margo Bailey who is not seeking re-election. Ms. Sasser's bio and appointee exemption disclosure form were submitted to the Board for review and consideration.

The following motion was made by Mr. Reed, seconded by Dr. Ernstein, and approved unanimously.

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees elects the following slate of nominees to serve as Area Representatives for two-year terms beginning on August 1, 2020.

Charles A. Stek – Anne Arundel County
Harry T. Spikes, II – Baltimore City
Martin P. Azola – Baltimore County
Kirsti Uunila – Calvert County
Dean R. Camlin – Carroll County
Lisa Sasser – Kent County
Sakinah Linder – Harford County
W. Dickerson Charlton – Prince George's County
Douglass C. Reed – Washington County

Ms. Filkins noted that one Area Representative position remains. In seeking candidates to fill this position, the Nominating Committee will be considering not only geographic diversity but diversity in ethnicity as well. Board members with candidate recommendations are invited to send names to the Nominating Committee.

Q304R Statement on Racism

Ms. Mears reported that the MHT Board of Trustees Executive Committee met on June 23 and July 6 by teleconference. During these meetings, the Committee discussed the many anti-racism statements that had been adopted by partner organizations in response to recent national events and the role and responsibility of the MHT in taking a stand against racism. Working from a draft prepared by Samuel J. Parker, Jr., the Committee finalized the following statement for consideration by the Board.

The Board discussed the draft statement.

The following motion was made by Ms. Uunila, seconded by Mr. Spikes, and approved unanimously.

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees adopts the following Statement on Racism:

The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Board of Trustees expresses its sincerest sympathy for George Floyd's family. His death along with that of countless others demand we commit to being part of the solution to ending racial inequality and work for social and economic justice for all.

There are very few events in our country's history that have moved such a diverse mass of individuals, institutions and organizations across sectors to collectively reconcile our Nation's noble principles of equality and justice for all, with the unfiltered contradictory actions of suppression and racial violence we now witness with our own eyes. The smoldering scourge of racism has existed in our country against African Americans from the first enslaved Africans in 1619 to this very day. The country must face the horrific consequences of systemic racism that plague the very fabric of our Nation. We also recognize that the history and legacy of national, state and local racially divisive policies have permeated the lives of minorities in housing, employment, education and criminal justice in ways that have marginalized vast swathes of our population and their communities.

MHT recognizes that as a historic preservation institution we cannot be neutral in how history is gathered, interpreted, protected and exhibited. We must include a place for all voices in telling the story of our communities and historic sites accurately and broadly. We will be proactive in supporting anti-racist practices and policies that promote inclusion of all residents and break down barriers caused by systemic racism.

MHT is committed to answering the question, "What is this moment asking of us?" Significant and lasting answers will not always be easy to unearth, nor will they always be obvious because of the manner racism permeates our society in ways we take for granted and have not

questioned. The commitment is to stay the course and forthrightly challenge our biases and assumptions as individuals and institutions until we are the equal society our country says it values.

Ms. Mears indicated that it will be important to identify next steps that the Board will undertake to fulfill its commitment to being part of the solution to ending racial inequality. To that end, she will be appointing a working group to identify action items for the Board's consideration.

Q305 Investment Committee Report

Mr. Parker, Chair of the Investment Committee, reported that the value of MHT's investments has decreased by only 3% for the year. The investment portfolio has largely recovered from the March downturn. MHT's conservative approach to investing has been beneficial during this turbulent economic time.

Q306 Budget and Legislation

Ms. Hughes reported that budget preparation for fiscal year 2022 will begin in August. Recent reductions in the fiscal year 2021 budget which were taken during the July 7, 2020 Board of Public Works meeting included a \$5.5 million reduction in funds from the state competitive commercial historic tax credit program. This reduction is expected to be back filled with prior year, unexpended funds. As a result, MHT still plans on the award of \$9 million in competitive commercial historic tax credits in fiscal year 2021.

The preparation of legislative proposals for the 2021 session of the Maryland General Assembly is underway. Due to the growing financial crisis resulting from COVID-19, it is unlikely that bills with fiscal notes attached to them will be successful in moving forward.

Q307 Litigation and Legal Issues

Ms. DeLony reported that prior to MHT's response to the complaint filed by The Maryland Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc. (SOCV), the SOCV voluntarily withdrew its complaint seeking MHT's enforcement of the easement on the confederate monuments. Because the SOCV filed a voluntary dismissal of the complaint without prejudice, it may re-file the complaint at any time.

Announcements

Ms. Mears made the following announcements:

- The next MHT Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for October 22, 2020
- The Non-Capital Historic Preservation Grant round opens on May 11 with Intention to Apply forms due by July 17 and full applications due on August 28, 2020

Ms. Hughes reported that MHT was recently awarded a National Park Service Underrepresented Communities grant to develop a Historic Context Study of Asian American communities in Maryland.

Meeting adjourned at 12:06 PM