



Meeting Minutes
Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission
7pm – County Commission Room, Charles Town Library
Charles Town, WV
April 10, 2024

Present:

Guests: Ms. Ann Trumble; Mr. Thomas Trumble.

Jefferson County Commissioner: Jennifer L. Krouse

JCHLC Commissioners: Martin Burke, Chair; Ray Benzinger, Treasurer; John Demer, Secretary; Jim King; Addison Reese.

AmeriCorps member: Jake Blackall.

Call to Order: Mr. Burke called the meeting to order at 7:03

- I. Public Comments. Thomas Trumble summarized the history of *Shenandoah Oaks*, a farm complex owned and restored by him and his wife Ann, from 1999 to date:

“The original property was house built in 1851, as seen in a Samuel Howell-Brown map for 1852. It is a pristine example of the vernacular architecture that existed here in the county.

“The valley was settled essentially by English and German settlers, and our house and our barn reflect that. The barn itself, if you take a look at it, is the intellectual architectural descendant of the men who built the great cathedrals in Europe.

“The barn itself is framed of white oak. White oak was chosen because barns had to be built immediately. Ours is made with white oak trusses, pegged with yellow locust.

“The pegging had to be done in a particular way because the white oak dries so closely the wood will force the peg out. So yellow was used. It is a traditional German bank barn. It's not quite a square. The Germans were really hung up with squares.

“The barn measures 80 feet by 78 feet. When we bought the farm, the barn was close to falling down. The barn was in terrible shape, and wasn't strengthened until we began restoration in 1999.

“The house was originally a very traditional two-over-two, German style. It does not have and never did have a fireplace. It postdates the use of fireplaces by that time to go under wood stoves.

“The original horsehair binding in those walls. When we bought the house, it was covered with yellow siding which was horrible. But the good news was it preserved the original

cedar siding. And so we had the original cedar siding on the house. When we built the guest house, which I'm sure you're not interested in, we preserved as much original material as we could to use in the guest house.

“Subsequently, we had remodeled the interior. I had served on the historic preservation commission in Montgomery County for a number of years. And so I was aware generally of the Secretary of the Interior Preservation Standards.

“The house looks the same from the road as it would have traditionally. When we had a slate roof, we replaced slate with slate. We replaced the roof of the barn. The barn is now standing seam. It probably had originally been cedar, but that was a long time ago.”

- II. Introduction of new JCHLC commissioner(s) and Election of Officers. Mr. Burke volunteered to continue as Chair and Mr. Benzinger as Treasurer. Mr. King and Ms. Reese will continue as members-at-large. Mr. Demer will not renew his previous appointment.
- III. Approval of Minutes from February 14, 2024. Commissioners unanimously approved the draft minutes without further comment.
- IV. Treasurer’s Report. Mr. Benzinger. Mr. Benzinger reported that since February 14, 2024, income totaled \$13,605.78 and expenses were \$16,791.53. Current Balance: \$29, 409.81. All bills are paid as of April 10, 2014. All JCHLC accounts are current and in order.
- V. JC Courthouse Celebration on April 13, 2024. Mr. Burke reminded commissioners of a ceremony to acknowledge successful nomination of the Jefferson County Courthouse as a National Historic Landmark. The National Park Service will present a plaque to honor the nomination.
- VI. Jefferson County Landmark Nominations.
 - A. *Shenandoah Oaks.* Mr. Blackall summarized visits to the site, meetings with owners Ann and Tom Trumble, and deed chain and background research, actions culminating in a written nomination recommending *Shenandoah Oaks* as a Jefferson County Historic Landmark. Commissioners agreed unanimously.
 - B. *Shady Grove.* Mr. Burke reported that Maral Kalbian completed a Jefferson County nomination of *Shady Grove*. The property is owned by Wade Louthan who does not wish it nominated into the National Register. Ms. Kalbian’s research and nomination would otherwise qualify for inclusion in the National Register.
- VII. Reports and Announcements.
 - A. *Status of Website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube.* Mr. Blackall reported increases in numbers of viewers for all components of social media, especially history-content links. Otherwise, no one looks at our minutes. Mr. Blackall discussed links to CLIO, a history database maintained by Marshall University for travelers to historic areas.
 - B. *Status of JC Cemetery projects; Fairview, Kearneysville Methodist, Middleway.* Ms. Reese reported discussing with the mayor of Charles Town the possibility of perpetual care for Fairview Cemetery. He was not opposed to the idea. Ms. Reese discussed nominations of Black cemeteries to the National Register with Cody Straley, WV National

Register coordinator. Ms. Reese announced signage for the original burial sites of Shields Green and John Copeland, two of John Brown's raiders who were tried, hung, buried in Jefferson County, and then reburied in Winchester. Ms. Reese will speak on Black cemeteries April 17, 2024 at a meeting of the Shepherdstown Historical Commission.

C. *Status of NR & JC Landmark nominations*

- 1 Rt. 340 mitigation – *Straithmore*. Mr. Burke reported working with Mark Stolipher to research *Straithmore*, purchased by Mark Stolipher and now unoccupied. This would mark the fourth property Maral Kalbian researched and would satisfy funding allotted to the JCHLC from the WV Department of Transportation.
2. *Woodbyrne*. Mr. Demer will present *Woodbyrne* to the WV Archives and History Commission on June 13, 2024, as prelude to the site's review by the National Register Office in DC.

D. *Status of Concept plan reviews and Zoning changes*. Messrs.. Burke and King reported on Berry Hill, a stone house and potential NR candidate, in the middle of a proposed Franklinton Solar Farm. The property is owned by Mark Stolipher. Ms. Reese reported possible encroachment onto a Black cemetery (Locust Hill Cemetery) where the oldest headstone is dated 1908.

E. *JCHLC Properties*.

1. Peter Burr Farm. Mr. Burke reported that Wayne Braunstein hopes to begin baking bread in May with the understanding that this will be his final year as head baker. The Ranson Garden Club would like to tend the kitchen garden. The county Parks and Recs Department would like to use the site for archery camp this summer, as they did last summer.
2. Duffields Depot. The JCHLC awaits approval of its request for \$66,000 from the WV Department of Transportation. Funds will be used for to complete interior rehabilitation on the Depot.
- 3.

Shepherdstown Battlefield. Mr. Burke reported successful transfer of the James Osbourn Farm to the JCHLC. Mr. Burke will follow up on renewal of three leases for the property: house, modern workshop, and farmland. Mr. Blackall reported a successful park cleanup day on April 6, 2014, with brush cleared on Trough Road and at the James Osbourn Farm.

Adjournment. Commissioners agreed unanimously to adjourn at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Demer, Secretary