

Morris County Heritage Commission Minutes
Meeting of May 11, 2010

Present: Commissioners Larry Fast, Kathy Fisher, Tracy Kinsel, Karen Ann Kurlander, Virginia Vogt, James Woodruff; Archivist Peg Shultz; Freeholder liaison Jim Murray.

Absent: Commissioners Dave Bogert, Epsey Farrell, and Henry Kafel; intern Kiersten Fuchs.

The meeting was called to order at the Morris County Cultural Center at 9:42 a.m. by Mr. Fast. The Open Meeting statement was read.

Minutes: April minutes were read and approved as corrected.

Financial report, Mr. Kinsel. The official budget was approved April 14 for \$22,000. Currently a balance of \$18,349 remains.

Freeholder's report, Freeholder Murray. Approval of hiring our intern for a part-time summer position is moving forward; funding is in the budget. Formal approval is expected at tomorrow's Freeholder meeting. Ms. Shultz needs to know the hourly rate and maximum hours to be worked per week. There will be no benefits provided.

He attended the ceremony marking the rededication of the Pompton Plains railroad station. It is slated to be a museum of Pequannock Twp. history run by the local Historic District Committee. Partial funding came from the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund. It is eligible for listing on the NJ Register.

Chairman's report, Mr. Fast. April was relatively quiet. He continued to attend the meetings of our Long Range Plan committee, and commends the members who have put in so much time and effort to bring us up to date with the plan for all of the reasons that we need to have it in place.

On outside historic matters, He attended the trustee board meeting of the Edison National Historic Park in West Orange. He continued in his attempts to establish tourism links between that historic attraction and related technology history sites such as Speedwell in Morris County (which was the reason Edison came to NJ in the first place, actually). There was then a discussion of the recent *American Heritage* article touting Morse, a notorious self-promoter, and neglecting Vail's contributions to the development of the telegraph. Mr. Fast will discuss crafting a rebuttal with Mark Texel. His full report is attached.

Office report, Ms. Shultz. She continued to manage administrative, clerical, and archival responsibilities, and assist the planning and development department with its GIS project as it relates to cemeteries, veterans and veterans' burial locations, and history-related subjects. She has also been working with the GIS team on a project that will tie in MCHC marker locations – interactively – with the GIS historic site overlay on the county web site. Intern Kiersten Fuchs has been doing very well. Her last day as an intern will be this coming Friday. Ms. Shultz and Mr. Fast have been working with the county administrator's office and the Freeholders to hire her as a temporary summer employee where she will be titled as "Intern" and assist with the GIS and veteran records projects as well as daily clerical office tasks.

The Planning and Development Department will be providing several collections of maps to be accessioned into the collection over the summer. The maps include the locations of historic sites in the 1980s and 1990s as well as some map-sized aerial photographs that were used for construction of major roads throughout Morris County. They will be providing an inventory and description of the collection for us. However, we will need map cases and sleeves to house the maps properly.

The county ITD/Web Development Department has all editions of the *Heritage Review* and the *County Circular* available on our website in a searchable format. A media release will go out this week.

Re-grant site visits have been completed. Re-grantees' interim reports are due the end of the month. She hopes to know by August if there will be a 2011 re-grant program.

Ms. Shultz will attend the Freeholders' volunteer appreciation reception on May 18. Her full report is attached.

Subcommittee reports:

Archives: Larry Fast. Covered in office report.

Grants/Re-grants: Dave Bogert. Covered in office report.

Long Range Planning: Kathy Fisher & Jim Woodruff. The revised chart of tasks is done and has been reviewed by all. The revised mission statement has been proposed and the entire commission needs to vote on it. The narrative is 85 to 90 percent complete; when completed, it will be sent out for review. The Commission voted and accepted the new mission statement with one revision – the change of “history” to “historical.” The new mission statement will be included in the LRP, by-laws and other appropriate places. The new mission statement: “The Morris County Heritage Commission, an advisory body of the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders, maintains and preserves the Morris County Archives and promotes awareness, understanding, and preservation of Morris County's diverse historical and cultural heritage.”

Marker Program: Kathy Fisher. Has been awaiting budget to be approved to order a sign. Ms. Fisher will go through Mr. Mitros's files for the text.

Personnel: Henry Kafel. Covered in office report

Publications: Karen Ann Kurlander. Covered in office report.

Public Programs/Exhibits: The “10 Most” committee met last Friday. There were five nominations, two of them already nominated and one already on the list. The new candidates were the Prudden House in East Hanover (one for the property, the other for the 18th c. building) now endangered by family in-fighting, and Olyphant Place in Morristown. The category of the year is Historic Preservation Commissions. Bill Swayze, formerly of the *Star-Ledger*, is interested in free-lancing this story this year again.

Communications: *Daily Record* articles on the “10 Most” list and historic markers. A letter from Art Klein, “amateur historian,” asking for a marker for Dickerson's Tavern in Morristown, where Benedict Arnold was tried for treason. Ms. Shultz replied to him that the building is no longer standing, and perhaps he could dig into the history of the site. Section 106 matters: From NJDEP stating application for “egress door correction” at Madison and Brick Church railroad stations is not an encroachment. From EBI, invitation to comment on proposed 120-foot Metro PCS tower and buildings, at 9 Ridgedale Avenue, Florham Park.

Old business: None.

New business: The Committee noted the passings of Jim Del Giudice's mother Amalia del Giudice, age 93; Long Hill Township historian Mary Lou Weller, and photographer and historian Steve Hrobak, who saved significant Boonton photo archives. Thanks to MCHP Trust Fund money in the past, the 1917 portion of the Morristown-Morris Township Joint Free Library was well documented, which will be helpful in restoration work after the JCP&L-caused explosion earlier this month.

Adjournment: 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Ann Kurlander
Secretary

The next Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, June 8, at 9:30 a.m.** at the Morris County Cultural Center. Please contact Peg Shultz if you are unable to attend.