

NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST
Wednesday, June 16, 10:00 am
Virtual Board of Trustees Meeting

Via ZOOM

10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

AGENDA

Call to Order

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

Open Public Meetings Act

Ms. Guzzo notified the Board that public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call

Ms. Guzzo called the roll and confirmed the meeting had quorum.

Trustees present: Kenneth Miller, Katherine Ng, Lisa Easton, Janet Foster, Debbie Kelly, Peter Lindsay, Meme Omogbai, Chris Perks, Annie Salvatore, Bob Tighue, Sean Thompson, Allen Kratz (joined 10:06am)

NJHT staff present: Dorothy Guzzo, Glenn Ceponis, Carrie Hogan, Haley McAlpine, Erin Frederickson, Ashley Parker, Sam Siegel (joined 11:00am)

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Miller asked if there were any comments or discussion regarding the March minutes of the Board. Ms. Foster asked that an unfinished sentence at the end of the minutes be removed and that Meme Omogbai be added to the list of present board members as she was in attendance. With these changes incorporated, Ms. Kelly moved and Mr. Miller seconded a motion to accept the meeting minutes.

Public Comment

There was no public present to comment.

Communications

Ms. Guzzo referenced the communications included in the board packet.

Reports of Officers

Chair

Mr. Miller thanked staff for their hard work.

Vice-chair

Ms. Ng reiterated Mr. Miller's sentiment and added the importance of planning for the future while continuing to address issues brought on by the pandemic.

Treasurer

Ms. Guzzo explained that the treasurer's report is abbreviated. She stated that the accounts for FY 21 are solvent. The line item for personnel in the FY 21 budget should be adjusted to reflect the addition of one new permanent staff person (Ashley Parker). Ms. Guzzo has requested the board to consider an increase in administrative costs from \$1 million to \$1.2 million in FY 22 in order to accommodate two new

temporary staff people to begin in July. She also noted a draw down in the easement account for an appraiser to complete an appraisal for the potential preservation easement purchase at Point Breeze. Lastly, Ms. Guzzo reported that the 25% holdback from our CBT account will likely be higher than originally anticipated due to the revenue generated by the CBT.

Secretary

No report.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Guzzo referenced her report in the board packet. She noted that the virtual conference has been well-attended as the format allows for increased access; most sessions have over 100 participants. The conference has over 300 registrants and 28 non-profit sponsors.

Ms. Guzzo reported that Troy Simmons' appointment to the board is pending. There is one additional vacancy to be filled. Ms. Guzzo welcomed Ms. Easton and Mr. Kratz to the board.

The database project has kicked off with a new contractor, Beringer, who is currently adjusting their original proposal.

Additionally, the 2020 Annual Report is complete.

Mr. Kratz thanked Ms. Guzzo for her report and the newspaper articles. He added that the final day of the conference is tomorrow.

Report of Department of Community Affairs

Mr. Thompson reported that the department is anxiously awaiting the passage of the FY2022 budget, which will include the surplus and \$6.2 billion in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. At this time the department is focused on rental and homebuyer assistance programs. In addition, the department's Fire Safety and Codes & Standards divisions are particularly busy.

Mr. Kratz asked about the implications and benefits of ARP funds on historic resources, referencing framework in other states. Mr. Thompson replied that the governor's office is currently entertaining proposals and program ideas. Mr. Kratz encouraged the board to make a statement to the governor's office to advocate for the eligibility of historic resources to receive ARP funding. Ms. Omogbai asked if any information has been provided by the governor's office in order to tailor a statement and provide guidance appropriately; Mr. Kratz referenced the Treasury's interim final rule identifying the eligible activities. Additionally, the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) provided a fact sheet approximately a week ago. Mr. Thompson agreed that constituents should refer to the DLGS document and that the Trust should advocate for funds on behalf of the local elected officials.

Report of Department of Environmental Protection

Dr. Marcopul was not present to provide a report.

Report of Department of Treasury

Mr. Tighue also noted the budget surplus. In response to Mr. Kratz's question concerning ARP funds, he stated that Treasury was recently asked to identify projects that might be eligible to utilize this money. He added that it is not too late to request funds for specific projects. Mr. Tighue stated that the Delaware Chapter of the Appraisal Institute is offering a course in appraising historic property. This is the first time this course has been offered in several years.

Reports of the Standing Committees

Mr. Miller explained to the new board members, Mr. Kratz and Ms. Easton, that there are four committees available in which they can participate. Mr. Kratz stated that he would confer with Ms. Guzzo and Mr. Miller before making a decision. Ms. Easton volunteered to participate in the Education & Outreach Committee.

Executive Committee

No report.

Report from the Grants & Loans Committee

Requests for Extension

Ms. Foster explained that the singular request for extension to November 2021 is the result of pandemic complications. The request was included in the board packet and, therefore, was not reviewed by the Grants & Loans Committee and is open for full board discussion.

DNJHLPF Request for Extension:

Grantee: Morris County Historical Society

Project: Morris County History Association

Ms. Kelly moved and Mr. Tighue seconded a motion to approve the above request for extension. All were in favor.

Ms. Foster referenced the Preserve New Jersey program's guidance documents and new special initiatives. She encouraged the board to review the modifications to the grant guidelines.

Discover NJ History License Plate Fund

Ms. Foster reviewed the applications received under the License Plate program and, specifically, the two applications recommended for funding by the committee.

Applicant: Delaware River Mill Society

Project: Interpretive Wayfinding Signage Prallsville Mills

Ms. Foster made a motion on behalf of the committee to approve funding for the Delaware River Mill Society's DNJHLPF grant application. All were in favor.

Applicant: Camden County Historical Society

Project: Camden County American Revolution Heritage Tourism Trail Map

As President of the Camden County Historical Society, Mr. Perks recused himself from the Camden County American Revolution Heritage Tourism Trail Map discussion and vote. Ms. Foster made a motion on behalf of the committee to approve funding for the Camden County Historical Society's DNJHLPF grant application. All were in favor.

Ms. Foster referred to the committee's recent discussion concerning the need for an updated statewide heritage tourism economic impact study. Ms. Guzzo stated that a new study, likely using the consultants who complete similar studies for the state Tourism office, would cost approximately \$50,000. The board should anticipate voting on a precise proposal at September's board meeting. Previous discussions with consultants suggested that the data should be revisited every five years and an impact study should be

completed every ten years. Ms. Guzzo added that a recently introduced bill would allot additional funds for tourism.

Acquisitions and Easements

Mr. Miller stated that the committee met twice since the March board meeting to discuss two easement applications for Lullworth Hall in Haddonfield Borough, Camden County and another for the Fox-Seals General Store in Clinton Township, Hunterdon County. Mr. Ceponis explained that Lullworth Hall was the subject of multiple Trust grants several years ago. The City of Haddonfield intends to sell the building to a private owner which triggers review under the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act and requires a preservation easement be placed on the property.

Mr. Ceponis explained that the Fox-Seals General Store in Clinton Township is located in an area identified as being in need of redevelopment. The applicant has worked closely with the Historic Preservation Office to plan for low-income housing at the rear of the property. The proposal involves the removal of later, non-historic additions. It is not clear what historic material remains and has been covered by the newer additions. The Historic Preservation Office requires a preservation easement be placed on the property as a condition of sale.

Mr. Miller moved to approve the acquisition of both easements. All were in favor.

Mr. Ceponis provided a brief update on the potential easement purchase at Pointe Breeze in Bordentown Township, Burlington County. Trust staff have met with experienced appraisers and the D&R Greenway. When the appraisal is received, it will be shared with the board for discussion.

Ms. Foster inquired about the increasing number of easement applications. It was agreed that number of easement applications is the result of municipal divestment of historic properties and regulatory requirements under the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act. Ms. Foster asked if the committee might investigate raising easement application prices to cover costs. Ms. Guzzo stated that once the endowment account yields enough interest, these funds might fund an annual, temporary staff position focused on easement inspections. Mr. Ceponis answered that the Trust's fees have remained the same for years. Municipalities have expressed that the fees are burdensome. These fees will also need to be discussed as the Trust continues to consider purchasing easements.

Mr. Kratz inquired about economies of scale to assist with managing easement inspections on a regional basis. Mr. Ceponis stated that the Trust is the primary easement holder in New Jersey. Land trusts, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and some other entities might hold a small number of easements.

Legislation & Policy/Strategic Planning

Ms. Ng asked that the four strategic planning sub-committees provide reports on the status of their discussions.

Heritage Tourism: Ms. Kelly provided a brief summary of the sub-committee's discussions. They suggest the establishment of a (tentatively named) Journey Through Jersey History Travel Network, which would identify restaurants and other establishments within historic buildings. Network members would be offered a QR code to showcase at their establishment and would be encouraged to offer discounts or promotions to those who found their restaurant/shop via Journey Through Jersey. Ms. Salvatore discussed the importance of heritage tourism in Cape May County, which is responsible for a majority of the state's tourism income. Ms. Kelly asked if it was possible for the board to offer a session at the Travel Industry Association (TIA) conference; Ms. Guzzo replied that staff have reached out to that office to inquire. The conference will be held December 1st and 2nd. Ms. Guzzo provided some brief updates concerning Journey Through Jersey, including new women's history and tourism pages on the website.

The subcommittee discussed a potential vetting process for commercial businesses included on the Journey Through Jersey website and thanked Ms. Parker for her hard work in creating a QR code.

Enhanced Collaboration with State Agencies: Ms. McAlpine stated that there are no updates. Mr. Thompson added that the committee has not yet selected a state agency to focus on at this time.

Local Outreach and Connections: Ms. Foster explained that these meetings focused on the encouragement and promotion of countywide history groups (modeled on the Camden County History Alliance model); elementary-age education and a pilot program in Lambertville spearheaded by Ms. Easton, who is currently drafting curriculum; attending other organizations' conferences, including that of realtors, architects, engineers and the League of Municipalities conference. Ms. Foster inquired if the Board is interested in pursuing attendance at the League knowing that it is a large financial and board commitment. Ms. Kelly stated that the League conference could serve as an opportunity to promote Journey Through Jersey. Ms. Guzzo suggested that we might have an opportunity to share a booth with Preservation New Jersey. Ms. Kelly reiterated that there are three fall conferences that the board would likely want to participate in. Ms. Foster suggested that board members have a phone conversation in the coming week to discuss options. Ms. Guzzo added that staff have completed sufficient background research to feasibly prepare for the Tourism conference in 2021.

Large-scale Redevelopment: Ms. Ng reported that the subcommittee most recently agreed to wait for tax credit regulations to be developed. Ms. Guzzo provided a brief update and stated that EDA has hired Aidita Milsted, a preservation professional, as the Director of Historic Preservation at EDA. It will likely be possible to combine tax credits. Ms. Ng asked if there is any intersection between Trust grant funds and tax credit opportunities. Ms. Guzzo answered that the intersection may lie in our easement program, and non-profit partnerships. Mr. Kratz asked if there is an opportunity to provide comments on the pending rules and Ms. Guzzo replied that EDA is currently soliciting input on its website.

Education and Outreach

No report.

Fiscal Oversight

No report.

Unfinished Business

Retreat Follow-up – Committee Reports

This discussion was included under Legislation & Policy/Strategic Planning above.

Nominating Committee

Mr. Miller requested volunteers for the nominating committee. Ms. Easton, Ms. Omogbai and Mr. Perks volunteered.

New Business

Public Comment

There was no public present to comment.

Adjournment

Mr. Miller suggested that the September board meeting may be in-person. A discussion about 2021 grant applicants' interest in attending a virtual meeting ensued. The meeting may be held in-person with a virtual component to accommodate the public.

Ms. Kelly moved and Ms. Omogbai seconded a motion to adjourn at 11:59am. All were in favor.

Next Meeting Date & Location:
September 29, 2021
Location TBD