

## **NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST**

### **NJHT Board of Trustees Meeting Wednesday, March 12, 2014 Howell Living History Farm Titusville, Mercer County**

#### **Call to Order**

Ms. Omogbai called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

#### **Open Public Meetings Act**

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

#### **Roll call**

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

Trustees present: Carolann Clynes, Janet Foster, John Hatch, Deborah Kelly, Peter Lindsay, Ken Miller, Ana Montero, Katherine Ng, Meme Omogbai, Chris Perks, Patricia Salvatore and Dan Saunders

NJHT Staff present: Dorothy Guzzo, Judith Adams, Glenn Ceponis, Lauren Giannullo and Catherine Goulet

Also present: Carol Cronheim, Sara Cureton, Margaret Newman, Don Reilly, Paul Tindall, and Peter Watson

#### **Special Election of Officers**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Ms. Kelly moved to nominate Ms. Omogbai as Chair, and Mr. Hatch was nominated as Vice Chair. Mr. Perks seconded, and the motion passed.

Ms. Omogbai welcomed Ms. Ng to her first board meeting since being appointed.

Ms. Omogbai motioned that the Board accept the draft resolution for outgoing Chair Elan Zingman-Leith recognizing him for his years of service as a Historic Trust board member. Mr. Miller seconded, and the motion passed.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Omogbai asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December board meeting. Mr. Miller moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Kelly, and the motion passed. Ms. Montero, Mr. Saunders and Mr. Perks abstained.

## **Public Comment**

Peter Watson, director of Howell Living History Farm, welcomed the Trustees and expressed his appreciation for the Trust's assistance over the years. He introduced two of his board members and staff member who were in attendance and invited the Trustees to join them for a tour of the Phillips farmhouse restoration after the meeting.

## **Communications**

Ms. Omogbai introduced Ms. Cronheim, Assistant Secretary of State, who was invited to discuss heritage tourism in New Jersey.

### 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Ms. Cronheim began by summarizing the tourism activities focused on celebrating the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of New Jersey, both short-term events and long-term projects that will leave a legacy. She introduced Ms. Cureton, who distributed *NJ Business* magazine's special issue about the 350<sup>th</sup> and talked about establishing the 350<sup>th</sup> web site that has a calendar, blogs and teacher resources. Ms. Cronheim suggested the link to the Historic Trust's Economic Study of Heritage Tourism would be added to the 350<sup>th</sup> web site: [www.officialnj350.com](http://www.officialnj350.com)

Other projects related to the 350<sup>th</sup> include the Historic Preservation Office's development of 36 "places to visit" and DCA/Main Street NJ's Popup stores that are selling New Jersey-themed merchandise in Main Street communities. Ms. Omogbai suggested the Historic Trust email its grantees to promote their interaction with the stores through book signings, demonstrations and other activities. Ms. Montero will ask Main Street NJ to email the Trust's board members with Store announcements.

With funding from the Dodge Foundation, there are activities throughout the year for arts programming, museum events and a Trenton festival in June to celebrate the anniversary day at the Capital. Ms. Kelly acknowledged support from the NJ Historical Commission to the Alice Paul Foundation to redesign the Women's History website to incorporate the Women's History Trail.

### Heritage Tourism Message

Ms. Omogbai asked for recommendations on how to make municipalities aware of the economic impact of heritage tourism and incorporate the information into the state's overall message. Ms. Cronheim suggested the report could be posted to the State's Travel and Tourism site, though she expressed the challenge to expand the message beyond selling "the Shore" relies on outside people pushing for change. Ms. Salvatore suggested Cape May's experience as a model, where traditional "vacation" tourism was combined with culture and heritage under direction of a new staff member, which has created a focus on incorporating history into the overall tourism package.

Other ways to create new partnerships with heritage tourism were discussed: When Ms. Kelly expressed disappointment that heritage tourism has no presence at the states' Tourism conference, Ms. Cureton offered to share the 350<sup>th</sup> table with the Historic Trust. Ms. Cronheim suggested partnering with Joe Simonetta of Public Strategies Impact, who is a lobbyist for TIA (and also provides staff for Preservation New Jersey). The Advocates for New Jersey History could distribute a press release that promotes the results of the economic study. The 350<sup>th</sup> web site could host an ongoing feature about heritage tourism.

Ms. Omogbai thanked Ms. Cronheim for her contribution to the meeting and stressed the need for ongoing development of partners to share the Historic Trust message.

### **Reports of Officers**

#### **Chair:**

No report.

#### **Vice chair**

No report

#### **Treasurer:**

Mr. Miller referenced the Treasurer's report included in the board packet, summarizing that the Trust was within budget. Approximately \$20,000 is available for grants from the License Plate Fund. Approximately \$2 million in grant funds remains from the 2009 GSPT bond. Mr. Miller also noted that the revolving loan fund account is still frozen by Treasury.

#### **Secretary:**

No report.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Guzzo referenced the Executive Director's and the staff reports in the Board packet. She gave an update on the Sandy grant program, reporting that the MOU between HPO and NJHT was signed. She has interviewed and found qualified candidates, but the Trust has not yet received permission to hire, which is holding up the grant program development. Computers and equipment have been ordered, and staff moved furniture to create work stations because the neighboring cubicles are occupied by Sandy consultants.

Ms. Guzzo noted that the grant organization, publicity and review must be completed in very compressed time frame. The NPS requires that monies be obligated by December 2014. This becomes less likely the longer that the Trust puts off hiring staff and making the grant round announcement. Ms. Omogbai stressed that the Trust board strongly supports giving out the money that is available as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Ms. Montero reported that DCA has laid out a plan for the Sandy grant program, and that the plan is moving forward. However, she cautioned that the process is complex, involving the interests of the Governor's office, two different departments, and the additional levels of scrutiny that come with accepting Federal funds. Ms. Omogbai asked that Ms. Montero convey the wishes of the Trust board to meet its due diligence in distributing available funds to worthy projects.

Ms. Guzzo also reported on the status of the 2014 NJ History and Historic Preservation Conference. She requested the board's assistance to identify conference sponsors, as the sponsor support is down from last year. Ms. Omogbai also requested that each board member contribute personally, in support of the conference reception. Additionally, Ms. Guzzo encouraged board members to attend the Opening Reception, which is sponsored by the Advocates for New Jersey History in honor of the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. At the reception, the Advocates will recognize the Historic Trust, the Historic Sites Council, the Historical Commission and the League of Historical Societies, all organizations that were founded from the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary commitment to New Jersey's history. The reception will be June 4<sup>th</sup> at Thompson Park.

The report on the appointment of the Strategic Planning committee is under "Reports of Special Ad Hoc Committees," below.

Ms. Guzzo explained that ArtPride had a meeting with the Arts Council and the Historical Commission to plan an exhibit for the League of Municipalities Conference in November. The Historic Trust was asked to contribute \$2,500 toward the cost of reserving an exhibit space and in the design of a new backdrop and banner that would create a presence for the history/arts community. The proposal also calls for development of a conference session that would focus on the impact of cultural tourism. She requested the board's permission to use \$2,500 from the FY 2015 budget toward this project. Ms. Omogbai supported the request, noting the combined efforts of the four organizations would be more impactful than the Trust alone. Ms. Kelly motioned to approve the funding allocation, Mr. Hatch seconded, and the motion passed.

There was some discussion about having a "history" presence at the conference, noting that the booth will need volunteers from the history community. Mr. Hatch stressed that the educational session needs to attract mayors, council members and decision makers, not just members of the arts and history communities. Ms. Cureton suggested that the Arts Council has a full-time staff member who makes those connections with elected officers and could be enlisted for publicity. Ms. Cronheim also suggested that elected officials could be personally invited by their constituents.

### **Report of the Department of Community Affairs**

Ms. Montero offered assistance from the DCA to prepare the policies and procedures related to the NPS Sandy grant funds, explaining the department has an existing working relationship with the comptroller's office and OIG as a result of administering other Sandy grant funds.

### **Report of the Department of Environmental Protection**

Mr. Saunders shared an observation about the legacy of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in which we are creating content for contemporary technologies and developing partnerships across interest lines. He contrasted this with the legacy of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, where the focus was on building boards and organizations that would save buildings.

Mr. Saunders reported the HPO staff has reviewed about 1,100 projects for the RREM program. He expressed his appreciation of the Historic Trust's readiness to take on the NPS grant program. One of the longer-term issues will be to develop an effective mitigation strategy for those funded projects that are being elevated and adversely affecting historic resources. One future effort may be to move money to the Historic Trust for capital grants that address mitigation projects.

On the Federal level, Mr. Saunders announced that the Park Service is holding a conference on climate change and coastal resources that will help create decision criteria for dealing with historic resources. The Federal Advisory Committee is also addressing strategies for allowing historic buildings to be occupied, which greatly ensures the buildings' preservation. A new RFP for Sandy Hook resources will now address leasing resources for private ownership.

### **Report of the Department of Treasury**

No Report

### **Reports of the Standing Committees**

#### **Grants & Loans Committee**

Ms. Kelly referenced the Grants & Loans Committee Report in the Board packet.

#### Requests for Extensions

**Grantee:** City of Bridgeton

**Project:** Bridgeton City Hall

**Grant Award No.:** 2010.0016

*The Committee recommends that the Board extend the Work Period to **August 15, 2014** to allow sufficient time for the final cost estimates to be prepared for the preservation plan.*

Ms. Kelly motioned to approve the extension, Mr. Saunders seconded, and the motion was passed.

Mr. Ceponis reported on the East Point Lighthouse, a 2000 grantee, which has also received transportation enhancement funds. Changes to the grant rules for that fund have affected the grantee's management ability to meet the rule requirements. Cumberland County has expressed an interest in administering the funds, and its involvement should enable the project to move forward.

Mr. Ceponis also reported on the status of Ellis Island, which has outstanding grants from 2004 and 2008. The Sandy damage to the building that the Trust funded is repairable. The only current delay is the NPS determining a strategy to address common HVAC issues in all the buildings to replace the temporary systems. The newly appointed superintendent for the Park has developed a good working relationship with the Save Ellis Island organization.

#### Discover New Jersey History License Plate Fund

The Fund received two applications in the last quarter:

**Applicant:** Franklin Township

**Project:** Historic Signage Markers for East Millstone Historic District  
Request; \$5,000

**Applicant:** Historical Society of Riverton

**Project:** Historic Marker for Riverton Bicycle Track  
Request: \$1,840

Ms. Kelly said the evaluation committee recommends funding both applications, with the stipulation that staff review each project's signage design prior to fabrication. Mr. Miller motioned to fund the projects, Ms. Omogbai seconded, and the motion passed.

Ms. Kelly reported the committee noted the high percentage of License Plate (LP) Fund applications that are for signage and recommends the Trust hold a workshop in the coming year, with the goal of explaining the purpose and types of signage for historic resources. Ms. Foster also suggested that the web site and LP Fund application should more directly emphasize that the grant fund is not limited to signage programs.

Finally, Ms. Kelly reported that the LP funds awarded to Middlesex County for a book about marketing for historic sites was already completed with funds from the Humanities Council. The LP funding will instead help fund marketing workshops in Middlesex and Passaic Counties. No motion was required.

#### Education and Outreach

Mr. Lindsay and Ms. Foster reported that the committee planned to explore one of the six themes of the Heritage Tourism master plan, bring together groups that shared the thematic interest and develop a workshop to be scheduled for October. The theme selected is military history, and the committee has initiated an inventory of potential sites, organizations and partners. Ms. Salvatore said the committee would reach out to small museums, and Ms. Montero suggested the theme also incorporate diversity and ethnic populations.

Mr. Lindsay motioned the board approve the committee's pursuit of this theme and workshop, and Ms. Salvatore seconded. The motion was passed.

### **Easements and Acquisitions**

No report. Ms. Guzzo referred trustees to the easement report included in the board packet.

### **Legislation and Policy**

Mr. Perks offered to chair, and Ms. Kelly and Ms. Ng volunteered to serve on the committee.

Ms. Guzzo reported a bill was introduced that would create a Corporate Business Tax for open space and historic preservation, and a hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 17, 2014. If passed, money previously dedicated to Parks and Forestry would be removed. At the time of the meeting there was no consensus on the bill from KIG. Ms. Omogbai requested that an email to the Trustees about the bill and hearing be distributed.

### **Fiscal Oversight**

No report

### **Reports of Special Ad Hoc Committees**

#### **Funding Task Force**

No report.

#### **Strategic Planning**

Ms. Omogbai asked for volunteers to serve on the Strategic Planning committee. Ms. Kelly agreed to chair the committee, with Mr. Miller and Ms. Ng volunteering to serve. The committee will look at other examples of strategic plans and determine a strategy for the board, to be reported at the June meeting.

#### **New business**

The board discussed the June meeting, and agreed to change the meeting date to Monday, June 16 at 10:30 a.m. The board will meeting in Cape May, location to be determined. (After the meeting it was decided that Cold Spring Village will host.)

#### **Public Comment:**

No Public Comment

#### **Adjournment**

There being no additional business, Mr. Lindsay made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Ms. Salvatore and passed. The meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.