

ST MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

January – December 2022

A Certified Local Government



Prepared by Ben Cohen Planner III, Department of Land Use and Growth Management and the Historic Preservation Commission, January 6, 2023.

Reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission on January 26, 2023:
Members:

Teresa Wilson, Chair
Anibal Delgado
Craig Lukezic
Ginger Newman-Askew
Robert Hurry
Christine McKay
(Peter LaPorte)

Glossary.....	3
Overview.....	5
Background.....	5
Membership of HPC.....	6
1.0 Elections and Meetings of HPC Members	6
2.0 Planned Goals and Work in 2022.....	7
3.0 Significant Work and Activities in 2022	7
3.1 Historic Preservation Awards.....	7
3.2 Certified Local Government (CLG) Status and Training Grant	7
3.3 Website Improvements	8
3.4 Cemetery Projects.....	8
3.5 Demolitions in 2022	8
3.6 Section 106 & Project Reviews	8
3.7 Surveys.....	9
3.8 National Register Nominations.....	9
3.9 New Entries to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties	9
3.10 Trainings and Other Projects	9
4.0 Challenges.....	10
5.0 2023 Outlook and Future Plans	10
6.0 Conclusion.....	11
7.0 Attachments	12
7.1 Names of Historic Preservation Commission members and attendance record	12

Glossary

CLG	Certified Local Government
HPC	Historic Preservation Commission
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
MAHDC	Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions
MHT	Maryland Historical Trust

ST. MARY'S COUNTY HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Preserving and Interpreting the Legacy of
St. Mary's County's Past

Overview

The St. Mary's County Historic District Commission, later renamed the St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), was created on June 4, 1975, and was granted the authority to preserve historic resources and increase public awareness through education. HPC identifies and oversees the St. Mary's County's historic landmarks, districts, and sites. This annual report has been prepared in fulfillment of the annual reporting requirement under the Bylaws of Historic Preservation Commission of St. Mary's County and under the Maryland Historic Trust's and the National Park Service's Certified Local Government Program (CLG) established under the National Historic Preservation Act. The CLG Program is an initiative providing technical assistance and small grants to local governments seeking to preserve the important and significant aspects of their heritage. The Historic Preservation Commission enhances the quality of life in St. Mary's County by ensuring that the County's many historic resources are recognized, appreciated, and preserved. The Department of Land Use and Growth Management is responsible for administration of the HPC program.

The St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission takes pride in its endeavors in 2022, however, the lingering public health crisis (COVID-19) had significant impacts on the HPC's ability to engage the Community with our programs.

Background

A historic district proposal by the Commission for the St. Mary's City area was met with public opposition and, as a result, the Historic District Commission was disbanded in 1986. As part of a requirement for a matching grant to St. Mary's County by the Maryland Historical Trust, the Commission was reestablished in 1993. The grant was a program designed in eight phases to develop an active historic preservation program and to add to the number of documented historic properties in St. Mary's County. The first phase of this project began in 1994 and resulted in the documentation of sites and structures in all election districts. Phases one through four covered the Chaptico, Mechanicsville, Valley Lee, St. George Island, Bay, Patuxent, Leonardtown, St. Inigoes and Milestown districts. The Commission has succeeded in establishing many historic properties on the local, State, and National Historic Register, and continues to work with the State, Maryland Historical Trust, and several other agencies. The HPC continuously maintains its status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) from the Maryland Historical Trust.

Membership of HPC

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County appoints seven county residents to serve on the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Their role is crucial in protecting and enhancing the county's historic resources and cultural heritage. Their advocacy helps to develop and implement effective preservation programs relying on the support of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and the strength of the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Comprehensive Plan, federal, state, and regional protective regulations. Title 8 of the Maryland Code, Land Use Article contains the enabling legislation for historic preservation commissions and allows the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to appoint seven volunteers to the Historic Preservation Commission for three-year terms, renewable for another three years. Those interested in serving for additional term(s) thereafter must wait a full year before they may re-apply. To qualify a candidate must (a) have special interest and knowledge or training in such fields as history, architecture, law, archaeology, preservation, education, or urban design; (b) be a county resident; (c) fulfill the statutory rules and educational functions in a responsible and sensitive manner; and (d) have the ability to continue to provide leadership for the historic preservation movement. Four members meet the Professional Qualification Standards contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. One member did not attend any meetings. The HPC has taken the necessary steps to have this member replaced in January 2023.

1.0 Elections and Meetings of HPC Members

The St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission members elect the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary annually during its January meetings. The HPC meets regularly at 4:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of every month, except in November and December, when the meetings are advanced to the second or third Thursday of the month. The Chair may call other meetings when necessary. In accordance with COVID-19 public meeting protocols, meetings were either held at Land Use & Growth Management, Room 14 of the Potomac Building, the St. Mary's County Regional Airport, or by Zoom. "The meetings are conducted in compliance with the St. Mary's County Open Meetings Act located in §§9-501 through 9-516 of the *Local Government Article* of the Annotated Code of Maryland."

The Commission members in 2022 were as follows:

Name	Position	Date of Appointment	Expiration Date
Teresa Wilson	Chair	July 2021	June 2024
Robert Hurry	Vice Chair	January 2022	December 2024
Ginger Newman-Askew	Secretary	July 2021	June 2024
Anibal Delgado	Member	July 2020	June 2023

Craig Lukezic	Member	January 2021	December 2023
Christine McKay	Member	July 2021	June 2024
Peter LaPorte	Member	January 2021	December 2023

The Historic Preservation Commission members are supported by a Historic Preservation Planner of the St. Mary’s County Department of Land Use and Growth Management with a working knowledge of state and federal regulations pertaining to historic preservation, architectural history, and the cultural and landscape resources of historic preservation planning in St. Mary's County.

2.0 Planned Goals and Work in 2022

- Continued monitoring and collation of historic properties identified for demolition
- Identified potential CLG grant opportunities
- Coordinated and attended regional conferences and lectures
- Explored developing an additional barn tax credit under our CLG program
- Developed tools to increase customer engagement and promotion of the Local Historic District program

3.0 Significant Work and Activities in 2022

3.1 Historic Preservation Awards

The Commissioners of St. Mary’s County and the HPC presented awards to the following in 2022:

- a. Sam Baldwin received a Historical Preservation Project Award for the John Hanson Briscoe Historical Project.
- b. Kent Randell was honored with a Historic Preservation Service Award for his *Manuscript on Susquehanna Estate*.
- c. A Historic Preservation Service Award was presented to All Saints’ Episcopal Church Oakley Parish and Don Cropp for the restoration of the All Saints’ Episcopal Church from 1846.
- d. John Richard Knott Sr. was posthumously honored with the Historic Preservation Lifetime Achievement Award for his many contributions to preserving our community’s heritage and recording its history.

3.2 Certified Local Government (CLG) Status and Training Grant

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program recognizes counties and municipalities that have made a special commitment to preservation. This commitment includes, but is not limited to, establishing a qualified historic preservation commission to designate and review historic properties. Maryland's CLG

program is administered by the National Park Service and the Maryland Historical Trust. St. Mary's County has continued compliance with the CLG program and its reporting requirements through 2022 and is required to request CLG training funds. The HPC was granted \$1,500 for training opportunities through the CLG program.

3.3 Website Improvements

The Information and Technology Department, staff, and members continue collaborating to update the HPC website. This year staff added the following links: A News and Updates section with current press releases, Historic District Designation Application, Historic Area Work Permit Instructions, Historic Area Work Permit Application, Historic Preservation Tax Credit Application, Historic Preservation Guidelines, Appendices to Historic Preservation Guidelines, uploaded the Historic Rural Roads Pamphlet, created a digital HPC nomination form, and included a link identifying past HPC award winners. This project is ongoing, and staff continues to locate surveys, reports, photos, and other helpful links for inclusion on the website.

3.4 Cemetery Projects

The HPC continues compiling our database for documenting burials located in St. Mary's County. The database is accessible to the public on the St. Mary's County Library website. In addition, staff has been collaborating with MHT, other counties and partners to develop a statewide burial database to allow public access, promote site protection, and to facilitate research. The project has run into some technical challenges regarding data management. To keep the project's momentum, the HPC began working with Tina Simmons from the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites to update burial resources until technical aspects of the project are resolved with the State of Maryland.

3.5 Demolitions in 2022

There were 33 demolitions reviewed and photographed this year. The HPC requested and was granted special access to document 38300 Palmer Road before its demolition. The HPC helped the property owner identify potentially suitable architectural salvage firms to possibly save anything of historical value.

3.6 Section 106 & Project Reviews

There were 51 reviews completed. The HPC assisted the Department of Land Use & Growth Management and community members with the appeal of a commercial development project located at Tulagi Place and the development's impact on sites that may have local historical significance. The HPC helped collect additional historic resources documenting the site and help evaluate if the site should/could have additional regulations imposed. The appeal was eventually withdrawn, and a separate agreement was negotiated between the parties that included concessions to protect and document the site further.

3.7 Surveys

No properties were surveyed from January 2022 – December 2022

3.8 National Register Nominations

There were no National Register Nominations.

3.9 New Entries to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

There were no new entries to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties.

3.10 Trainings and Other Projects

- HPC staff encouraged and supports an effort to bring a passenger ferry system to St. Mary's to encourage further appreciation of our historic resources.
- Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions Annual Symposium
- HPC 200 - Connecting with your Community: Communication, Education, and Outreach
- Historic Preservation Roundtable Discussion
- Site visit to historic Newtowne Manor
- Supported the Solar Task Force
- Supported the Comprehensive Plan update
- Supported the Hazard Mitigation Plan update
- HPC staff and County Administration met with Historic St. Mary's City to discuss regulations regarding a newly discovered archaeological resource.
- Staff attended a tour of the Drayden Schoolhouse
- Staff attended the Maryland Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers 18th Annual Conference for additional information used to protect historic resources from floods and storms.
- Planning for Sea Level Rise and using the 2022 MD Sea Level Rise Guidance Document Training for Local Partners
- Your Hour with APA Virginia: Advancing Resiliency Series
- The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) presented the Maryland Coastal Adaptation Report Card in January. This first-of-its-kind analysis of threats to the coast will aid in State planning to protect communities. This assessment was completed with the assistance and support from the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's Adaptation and Resiliency Work Group, multiple government agencies, and a variety of stakeholders.

4.0 Challenges

- The Commission needs to strengthen the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance regulations concerning procedures for addressing violations of the historic review process or design guidelines.
- The Commission does not issue Certificates of Appropriateness for local landmark properties that seek alterations due to Zoning Ordinance reviews and interpretations.
- The Commission has not yet considered any Historic District designations but plans to discuss local historic districts in 2023
- COVID-19 made it difficult for the commission to engage in outreach and educational activities in the community to promote awareness of historic preservation and the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Problems with technology and equipment created some delays and technical glitches in virtual meetings.
- The HPC desires a larger financial commitment for historic preservation. This increased commitment has the potential to significantly increase tourism, historic education, and economic development in the county.

5.0 2023 Outlook and Future Plans

The following are work programs planned for the Historic Preservation Commission in 2023 and beyond:

- Continued support for the ferry study to enhance and encourage historic tourism to the County
- Continuing public education programs to raise awareness of historic preservation issues.
- Hold public presentations regarding historic preservation
- Present Historic Preservation Awards
- Continue to review items on the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) Agenda by the historic preservation planner to determine if proposed projects will have an adverse effect on historic resources and provide the opportunity for staff to suggest alternatives that may avoid these effects.
- Protect small family cemeteries by using the cemetery database to identify when proposed projects are submitted on lands containing cemeteries.
- The HPC is cooperating with MDOT and other partners to populate a cemetery database that is linked to GIS or a mobile application. The cemeteries may also be shown on the County GIS maps to allow convenient access for development review. This will help prevent inadvertent site desecration and may generate additional historic interest and research.

- Ensure that every HPC member receives training related to his/her duties every year. The HPC is encouraged to apply for the non-competitive funds available for annual education and recommend that HPC members and staff consider attending the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions’ biennial Forums.
- HPC members will utilize opportunities for qualified training available through the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Maryland, and others.
- HPC members plan to attend the MAHDC Annual Symposium.
- Apply for competitive CLG grants. A grant could support a local plan update and would give the Commission and planners an opportunity to revisit questions of potential new landmark designations, as well as integrate hazard mitigation planning and newer efforts into the overall local strategy.
- Continue work to find the locations of all the small cemeteries listed in Janet Tice’s 1991 book, *Burials from Tombstones, Grave Markers and Church Registers of St. Mary’s County, Maryland (1634 – 1994)* and other sources, so they may be protected.
- Work with developers in early project application stages to craft preservation-friendly development plans.
- The HPC will research the potential use of cadaver dogs to locate missing burial sites up to 300 years old.
- The Maryland Department of Planning recommended an update to LUGM’s webpage referencing the Historic Preservation Commission. Efforts are underway to update the Historic Preservation Commission section to include direct links to its preservation code, preservation plan, ordinance, and property tax information. In addition, updates will include information for historic property owners who may wish to nominate a property for local landmark status.

6.0 Conclusion

There is a determination to give the St. Mary’s County’s historic preservation program the recognition it deserves, as one of the four sites of the original English Colonies in the New World and the “Mother County” of Maryland. From its current work, the HPC will move on to goals that will require the vision of elected officials, planners, and volunteers. The Historic Preservation Commission looks forward to strengthening relationships with the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County, County Departments of Economic Development, Recreation and Parks, Land Use and Growth Management, Public Works and Transportation, Preservation Maryland, Maryland Historical Trust, County Administrator’s office, archaeology groups, and local museums, to continue the comprehensive and successful programs that

promote education about the historic and archaeological resources in Maryland’s birthplace, St. Mary’s County.

7.0 Attachments

7.1 Names of Historic Preservation Commission members and attendance record

Attachment 1: Historic Preservation Commission Member Attendance Record -January 2022 - December 2022

Commission Member	Position	27	24	24	28	26	23	28	25	22	27	17	15
		Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Quorum	Y/N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Teresa Wilson	Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	
Robert Hurry	Vice Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Ginger Newman-Askew	Secretary	P	A	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	A	
Anibal Delgado	Member	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	
Craig Lukezic	Member	P	A	A	A	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	
Christine McKay	Member	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Peter LaPorte	Member	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	