

**Orange County
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Meeting Summary--Approved

April 29th, 2015

**Special meeting location: Blackwood Farm
4215 Highway 86 South, Chapel Hill**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Dickinson (Chair), Susan Ballard, Rob Golan, Jaime Grant, Bob Ireland (Vice-Chair), and Grace White

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Rich Shaw, Peter Sandbeck

GUESTS: None

ITEM #1: CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

ITEM #2:

Tour of Blackwood Farm: Rich Shaw greeted members and started the meeting with a brief overview of the current plans to develop the farm into the County's newest park, scheduled to open with a "soft opening" in late May or early June. Sandbeck joined the group at 7:20 to give a more detailed tour of the historic farm buildings and farmhouse. Members toured the various structures, including the milk house, smokehouse, granary, chicken house, milking shed, barn and garage. Several members noted the presence of historic farm artifacts and household items that might be stolen or damaged by visitors. Sandbeck agreed that certain items needed to be removed from the outbuildings for safekeeping and future cataloging and proper storage. All buildings will be secured with padlocks. Members of the Blackwood family have stepped forward with many photographs showing various aspects of farm life and family members. One member, Judy Blackwood Womble, is now reviewing her extensive collection and has promised to share new photos with staff in May. Sandbeck reviewed the various outbuilding restoration efforts undertaken by the County over the last ten years. Members then moved inside the old farmhouse to view all the rooms on both floors, with discussion about the original plan and the many later alterations. More artifacts were identified as being in need of preservation and cataloging in the second floor bedroom of the front section of the house. Members then adjourned to the first floor back bedroom to view the site plan maps. Discussion followed. Members asked questions about the area of future development where the new education center and maintenance buildings will be located continue their regular meeting. The archaeological site maps show the potential for archaeological resources in those locations, so steps will need to be taken to survey those areas more thoroughly prior to site planning work. Staff will make sure that a second archaeological survey will be a component of that project. Members then took up the agenda for the regular meeting.

ITEM #3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES (March 25th, 2015): Golan moved to accept the minutes; seconded by Ireland; motion passed.

ITEM #4: ITEMS FOR DECISION: None

ITEM #5: DISCUSSION ITEMS: None

ITEM #6: UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Survey Project status:

Staff provided a brief overview of the current status. Our consultants, Jennifer Martin and Cynthia de Miranda have toured Cheeks and Chapel Hill townships with staff, viewing all properties identified in the 1993 survey and during the 2006 update, and noted any new properties worthy of documentation, especially mid-century modernist and African American resources. They plan to complete the field work for the project by August. Staff has been asked to present a program about the project for the Upper Eno Heritage Group's monthly meeting in Efland on May 11.

b. Update on County Preservation Projects and Initiatives:

A brief update was presented by staff about current county preservation projects and issues. A new home is needed for some doors salvaged from the 1954 Courthouse back in 2007, when it was renovated as part of the new Justice Facility addition. The building was designed by Durham architect Archie Davis, who also did a number of schools for the county. The current plan is to take approx. 20 doors to the Reuse Warehouse in Durham so that they can be repurposed. Work is underway on the renovation of the historic Cedar Grove School, built in 1950-56, for new use as a community center for the northern half of the county. This long low Modernist building was also designed by Davis. This will include a history exhibit focused on the story of the African American farm community that worked for over 15 years to convince the County to build the only rural consolidated school for African Americans. Work continues on the County's joint effort to reconstruct (for second time) the former replica of the Occaneechi Village that was built in River Park around 2000. This is located between the farmer's market and the Eno. There are plans afoot for the Vernacular Architecture Forum to take a tour of Hillsborough during their national convention in 2016, to be held in Durham.

c. CLG Training Workshop in Wake Forest:

Staff stressed the importance of having at least one or two members attend this workshop, in order to meet the training requirements for our CLG status. This is the closed, most convenient one available. Golan and Ireland volunteered to attend. Staff thanked them and offered to coordinate registration for them.

ITEM #7: STAFF PRESENTATION:

a. Orange County Historic Resources PowerPoint:

The Chair asked that this be postponed until our next meeting in consideration of the late hour.

ITEM #8: ADJOURNMENT: Golan moved to adjourn, seconded by White. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm

Meeting summary by Peter Sandbeck, DEAPR staff