



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
May 5, 2010 - 2:00 P.M.
Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2010 Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. [Called to Order](#)

Ms. Vaughnette Goode-Walker called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

2. [January 6, 2010 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [January 6, 2010 Minutes.pdf](#)

Board Action:

The minutes of the January 6, 2010 meeting were approved. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: George Cohen
Second: Stephen T. Lindell
George Cohen - Aye
Vaughnette Goode-Walker - Aye
Stephen T. Lindell - Aye
Pamela Lossing - Aye
Lisa L. White - Aye

III. Posting

IV. Consent Agenda

V. Regular Agenda

3. ["Recording and Interpretation of Cultural Resources: In Search of the Other Side of the Historic Montgomery Community" - Jonghyun Lim, Professor of Historic Preservation, Savannah College of Art and Design](#)

Ms. Ellen Harris introduced Mr. Jong-hyun Lim, Professor of Historic Preservation, Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). Accompanying Professor Lim were students in HIPR 202 Class. These students will report on the various projects they are undertaking in the Historic Montgomery Community.

Professor Lim explained that the students are doing a project in the Montgomery community area. The project objectives are: 1. Record and document of existing cultural resources in historic Montgomery community, 2. Complete Cultural Resource Survey Form/Historic Architectural Building Survey Form/HABS, and 3. Create historic timeline of Montgomery community. The future plans for Fall quarter 2010) are: 1. Intensive historic research and value assessment, 2. Create sustainable data management system, 3. Look for vernacular design context at historic Montgomery Community. The list of survey sites at Montgomery Community are: **two historic public buildings - Turner-Hodge-Young Community Center and Allison's grocery; three historic churches - First Beulah Baptist Church, Montgomery Presbyterian Church and Montgomery Baptist Church; four residential sites: 241 Shipyard Drive, 9952 Whitfield Avenue, 9962 Whitfield Avenue and 9984 Whitfield Avenue.**

The students made the following reports:

TWO HISTORIC PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Turner-Hodge-Young Community Center. This building is a single-story, T-plan, cinder block structure with decorative brick used above and below the windows and at the building's corners in the form of decorative quoins. The entrance is oriented centrally on the symmetrical northern facade. Tall metal casement windows are present on the original structure. An addition to the southwest facade was added in 2001 and houses the building's restrooms. An additional handicapped accessible door and ramp were also added to the east facade. It is located at 541B Shipyard Road. The Turner-Hodge-Community Center is deeded to members of the Montgomery Community and is, therefore, not owned by one single person. At a ground-breaking ceremony, Ms. Sarah Mills Hodge stated, "I want this community house to stand for all the community." This structure was a dream of Robert A. Young, a school teacher, who grew up in the Montgomery neighborhood. During his drive to promote and collect money for the project, he stated "the project has for its objectives the promotion of civic, social and moral life of its people; to provide facilities for groups, organizations, the church, the YMCA, Boys and Girls Scouts; games and sports for children after school and during vacation periods; the promotion of the county and city relationship and to provide semi-religious programs and educational activities."

The site was built on land purchased from the McLaws estate for \$150. The ground-breaking ceremony was held on May 11, 1948 and opened its doors on May 9, 1949. The center was originally named the Montgomery Colored Community House. The cost to build it was \$12,000. The community house was named for Dr. L. Newell Turner, Sarah Mills Hodge, and Robert A Young - all of who were major forces in the structure's creation, "T-H-Y Community Center." The architectural history shows that the southwestern addition was added in 2001 and funded by the Hodge Foundation, the organization which handles the estate of Sarah Mills Hodge. It was reported that they have collected data that shows the center was built for the African American community in Montgomery. This area hosted an emerging African American middle class. The center was renamed from Montgomery Colored Community House to Turner-Hodge-Young Community Center in 1963.

The building was used as a head start center in the 1970's. Much of the African American population has left Montgomery. The community center still exists to serve Montgomery's community, whatever its racial make-up may be.

Allison's Grocery. The Allison's Grocery is located at 241 Shipyard Road and is owned by Ms. Joan Boaen.

Family History:

- In the 1920's John Samuel Allison opens first store.
- In 1924, John Allison was recognized by Standard Oil.
- In 1920's-1940's, the first store burned; a second store was constructed and also burned.
- In 1933 the third daughter was born (Joan).
- In 1941-1972 constructed Allison's Grocery.
- In 1942-61, runs store and drives community's first automobile, runs river rescue and alerts community of blackouts.
- In 1961 store closed; opened Curbie Sanitation and in 1999, Joan Boaen built a private home.

Architectural History:

- In 1942, Allison's Grocery was completed, in late 1940's, red brick bathrooms were added.
- In 1950's, self-service gas pump added.
- Fire station moved into ice house and ice chute was added.
- Late 1950's, Allison closed.
- 1961, Curbie Sanitation opened; interior walls were added.
- In 1970's, gray exterior painted white, then cream.
- 1990, tin roof replaced.

Allison's Grocery served as a hub for the Montgomery Community during its prime. It became the center for fire and river rescues. Made by the owner, bricks and construction included, white and black members flocked to the grocery for necessities. John Allison built this grocery and ran it until his death in 1961. This group's future plans are to establish a more defined family and site history, complete the HABS form, refine site plan and elevation and conduct another interview.

THREE HISTORIC CHURCHES

The First Beulah Baptist Church. The church is located at 14 Railroad Avenue. The First Beulah Baptist Church owns the property and structure. The property was given to the church by heirs of the Reverend Thomas Bonds, the church founder and original landowner. It was organized on Ossabaw Island September 12, 1888 as "Hinder-Me-Not Baptist Church." The church moved to the Pin Point Community, but after a schism a new congregation was formed, called the "Sweetfield of Eden Baptist Church." When that congregation experienced unrest, Reverend Bonds formed the First Beulah Baptist Church which moved to Montgomery Community, its present site.

The First Beulah Baptist Church congregation was originally made up mostly of Bonds family members. Reverend Bonds' wife Nanette, son Robert, daughters Charlotte and Matilda, along with his brothers and nieces all made up the church community. Today, the church congregation is still filled with relatives and descendants of the founder, Thomas Bonds.

The first church building was a frame structure, 12 feet by 20 feet, located next to where First Beulah

Baptist exists today. The second church structure was also of simple frame construction, 16 feet by 30 feet. The present day site of the church was erected in 1953, an education building was added in 1960. The survey process included collection of data on the church's history (including general information and recent building modifications and repairs), historical and current photographs. In order to complete their survey, the students will visit the Georgia Historical Society to see if they can get newspaper articles; edit and finalize the architectural drawings; complete the HABS form; and as they promised Ms. Ernestine, they will submit a copy of their final findings to the church. The church is very excited about the work that they are doing in the community.

The Montgomery Presbyterian Church. The church is located one mile southwest of Whitfield Avenue/Diamond Causeway where Ferguson dead-ends into Shipyard Road. It is owned by the Presbyterian Church USA: Congressional Ministries Division. The current pastor is Reverend Craig Pope. During the early 1900s the first Sunday School started in a house at the end of Whitfield Avenue. In 1926-30, the Montgomery School and Community Center was built. In 1938, the Montgomery Presbyterian Church was built and on April 3, 1938 the church information was put in a time capsule and the cornerstone was laid. The Sunday School building dedication was held in 1950; the church won "Rural Church of the Year" in 1953; in 1957, the second building, third building, and Manse were built by community members. The Montgomery Presbyterian church held the first live nativity scene in Georgia in 1970. They originally had about 300 members, but in the 1980s, the church split and many members went to the Independent Presbyterian Church. Presently, the Montgomery Presbyterian Church has approximately 80 members. In 2002 restoration to the church was done by Gunn, Meyerhoff, & Shay architects. The group reported that the data collected so far focused on interviews and photos. Reverend Pope was interviewed regarding the current church standings and renovation; Bob English on the beginning of the church and community; and Beverly English on church history and current church standing. The primary sources used by the group were church scrapbooks and the floor plans for the renovation. The architectural drawings done so far are: elevations of facade(s), elevations of stained glass window and elevations of ventilation. The group has completed the Cultural Resource Form and the Historic American Building Survey (HABS). They are investigating the mix between the black and white community as they now have the architectural history; they are looking at the integrity of the entire community. They have not talked with the community members, but will attend the church services this coming Sunday, May 9, 2010.

The Montgomery Baptist Church located at 9890 Whitfield Avenue. The Montgomery Baptist Church moved from a previous site at Beaulieu Station, rolled by two horses to its current site in 1911. The lot size is 91.3 feet x 346 feet. The cemetery on site started c. 1939. The Montgomery Baptist Church was organized under Rev. David Waters and 13 members on June 1, 1883. This church is an offspring of Whitebluff Zion Baptist Church. There have been 13 pastors since 1883 and currently 20 members make up the congregation. In c.1965, an addition to side facade (southwest) concrete walkway constructed; c.1990s, interior wood floor was covered with carpet and rear door closed off; the date is unknown when the metal siding was added to original wood clapboard siding. The survey process consists of photographs of building (exterior and interior, signage, cemetery). The grouped interviewed Ms. Carrie Belle Wingster, wife of Deacon Henry Wingster, and reviewed the deeds, site map, church programs and Chatham County property card to assist in the survey process. Their remaining process and future plans are to interview Ms. Wingster again; interview Ms. Maybell, further documentation of the cemetery, finish measured drawings and complete the HABS form. They are hoping to get answers to when was the metal sheathing added to the original building. When were both of the front doors used? Are there any significant memories or historic photographs?

FOUR RESIDENTIAL SITES

241 Shipyard Road. The owner is Mr. Jack H. Taylor. The materials consist of cement block from George Clark (Clark Block Company), roof-tin on top of wooden sheets with 2 x 6 wooden beams underneath, and the back shed has metal sheeting and plastic sheeting. In 1933 the family moved to the Montgomery community. In 1946, Mr. Taylor acquired land from Mr. Allison, his father-in-law, as a wedding gift and built first addition to the house. In 1956, a second addition was put on the house and in 1967 he built the back shed and carport. Central air was installed in 1995-2000.

The other three residential sites are: **9952 Whitfield Avenue, 9962 Whitfield Avenue and 9984 Whitfield Avenue.**

This concluded the students presentation. **Ms. Goode-Walker** asked the Board if they had any questions for the students. The Board had no questions.

Mr. Lindell stated that he knew the Montgomery community is very appreciative of all the detailed research the students are undergoing to put this project together.

Ms. Goode-Walker stated that she wanted to talk with the students who reported on Montgomery Baptist Church. She had some additional information she could share with them about this church. She said that Deacon Henry Wingster and Mr. Jack Stiles built the Montgomery Baptist Church pulpit. Ms. Goode-Walker informed the students that the first School Sunday was a part of the Independent Presbyterian Church and Dr. Turner was instrumental in getting this started at his home on the river. Ms. Goode-Walker thanked Professor Lim and the students for coming to the meeting today and presenting a fine presentation.

VI. Request for Extensions

VII. Staff Reviews

VIII. Other Business

IX. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

4. [Notice](#)

Ms. Harris reported that Mr. David Crass will make a presentation on the County's successful Certified Local Government application on May 28, 2010 at the County Commissioners meeting. The commissioners pre-meeting begins at 9:00 a.m. and the actual meeting begins about 9:30 a.m. She encouraged the Commission to attend this meeting to hear Mr. Crass' presentation.

X. Adjournment

5. [Adjourned](#)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chairman Goode-Walker adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 7, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Harris
Preservation Planner

EH:mem

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.