



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

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
April 4, 2012 - 2:00 P.M.
Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2012 Regular CCHPC Meeting

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. Order and Welcome

Ms. Goode-Walker called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Special guests in attendance were: Mr. Jerry Flemming of Park & Tree, Ms. Luciana Spracher, representatives from the Shinholster Leadership Institute, Ms. Lillian Shinholster, Ms. Margaret Shinholster Carthon and one of the representative's mother and a class from SCAD - Historic Preservation Law.

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

2. October 5, 2011 Minutes

Attachment: [October 2011 Minutes.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Approval. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Lisa L. White

Second: George Cohen

George Cohen - Aye

Jane A. Feiler - Aye

Vaughnette Goode-Walker - Aye

Stephen T. Lindell - Aye

Pamela Lossing - Aye

Dr. E. G. Daves Rossell - Aye

Lisa L. White - Aye

III. Posting

IV. Consent Agenda

V. Regular Agenda

3. [Presentation on Archaeology by Paul Brockington and Benjamin Roberts, Brockington and Associates](#)

Ms. Ellen Harris said a presentation on archaeology would be given today by Dr. Paul Brockington and Mr. Benjamin Roberts. But, before the presentation, she wanted to give the background information on why they are getting this information and what they are hopeful that this will lead to.

Ms. Harris explained that the United Zoning Ordinance (UZO) was released for public comment this past summer and is still open for public comment. When the UZO was released to the public, questions surfaced as to why archaeology was not included in the ordinance. It was surprising that Savannah did not already have an archaeology ordinance. Ms. Harris said she did some research on the issue and apparently in the 1980's an archaeology ordinance passed the MPC unanimously. However, the ordinance was never approved by City Council.

Ms. Harris stated she talked with Mr. Tom Thomson, Executive Director of MPC, and they came to the conclusion that they should pursue the archaeology issue again. They felt, however, that the UZO was not the right place to include it. They believed that an archaeology ordinance could be a stand alone document. Consequently, Mr. Thomson suggested that the Chatham County Resource Protection Committee (CCRPC) which is county wide, including all the municipalities, be involved as a task force or subcommittee to develop an archaeology ordinance for the City of Savannah and the unincorporated Chatham County. Ms. Harris said she has done a lot of research on what other communities are doing throughout the country. Yesterday, Ms. Rita Elliott gave a presentation to the Metropolitan Planning Commission and today, Dr. Paul Brockington will make a presentation regarding his experiences.

Ms. Harris informed the CCHPC that on May 12, 2012 Dr. Pamela Cressey, archaeologist with the City of Alexandria, VA will be in Savannah participating in a panel discussion. Alexandria serves as "the model" of archaeology. She did not have all the details at this time regarding this meeting, but will forward the information as soon as she gets it.

Ms. Goode-Walker asked how long is the time line.

Ms. Harris answered that there is not a deadline. This will have to go to the MPC, the City Council and County Commission. With the public comment period, it will probably be a process of six to nine months.

Ms. Ellen Harris introduced Dr. Paul Brockington and Mr. Benjamin Roberts of Brockington Associates.

Dr. Paul Brockington has more than 35 years of experience in archeology in the eastern United States. Dr. Brockington established Brockington and Associates in 1986. Since that time, the firm has carried out more than 2500 archaeological, architectural, and historical projects for a variety of public and private clients. He has directed archaeological projects of all types (survey, major excavations) in most regions of the nation, and has worked with sites of all major pre-contact and historic periods. As company President, Dr. Brockington directs the programs of the company; oversees individual projects, and works closely with clients in maintaining quality control and in developing new, more effective approaches to resources management. He performs pro-bono service by serving on government and professional committees and foundations. Dr. Brockington served as President of the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists.

Mr. Ben Roberts is a historian and geographic information systems (GIS) specialist. Mr. Roberts holds a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from Western Carolina University and GIS from Kennesaw State University. He has experience in architectural survey as well as the production of historic structure reports, National Register nominations, and local historic property designations. Before coming to Brockington, Mr. Roberts completed his graduate thesis entitled "Georgia's Historic County of Courthouses: Anchors in a Sea of Change," and has worked as an archaeological field technician throughout the Southeastern United States.

Mr. Roberts said he is a historian and a GIS specialist. He works at the Savannah office. They have several archaeologists that work in the Savannah office who were unable to attend this meeting today due to engagements on other projects. He believes this is a good interest in the archaeology because as a historian and working on historic preservation projects, he has teamed with archaeologists on several projects in and around Savannah as well as throughout the region. He believes that it is advantageous to have a discussion on an archaeology ordinance and eventually implementation of such an ordinance. On the historian side what would be useful is to have historic map comparisons and predictive modeling for archaeology sites and may be within the urban areas, although the unincorporated Chatham County has just as many possibilities for archaeological sites as anywhere else in the county including the City of Savannah.

Dr. Brockington said his main office is in Atlanta, but he also has an office in Savannah. Ordinance issues are his favorite concern. He was working on having local governments consider developing archaeology ordinances, but the recession came and everything slowed down. He gave the following background regarding how archaeology is managed in terms of regulatory or ordinance in the United States. Some local states have ways to preserve sites and consider archaeology sites, but how this started nationally was that the National Historic Preservation Act was passed in 1966. This law called for the study of historic sites [buildings] and historic districts, historic landscapes and archaeological sites before they would be impacted by any federal project. A council was created in Washington, DC that would be the final arbiter. The Act called on the governor of each state to appoint one of its officers as the state historic preservation officer. In Georgia this is under the Department of National Resources. After a long period of time, federal permits were finally considered to be a federal action that required Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to look into this. Therefore, every Corps of Engineering permit that comes out of the Savannah district has to be looked at to see if there are any archaeological sites or historic buildings that might be affected.

Dr. Brockington explained that the main things to be considered when developing an archaeology ordinance are:

1. If someone has put forth idea to do development and they are applying for rezoning, find where the property is located and check it out. Have a historian check the records of the property; look at maps to find out what went on. Do interviews with local historians that might have knowledge about the area.

2. Conduct an archaeological survey. But, if archaeological sites have been recorded already, this could be skipped. An archaeological survey means that someone needs to go to the site, walk over the property and at regular intervals dig little holes to see if there are artifacts.

Dr. Brockington said his company does a lot of this work for Savannah-Chatham County, Liberty County, and throughout the coast. His company would come in and conduct a study. There are other companies that perform this service, too.

3. Upon completion of this, a report is written and given to the federal agency to study to see what kind of decisions they would make on the permit. This information will be sent to the state historic preservation officer at DNR in Atlanta where it will be studied.

4. If something is found to be significant and will contribute to the understanding of the history in Chatham County will cause deep consideration. Then you will look at how big is the archaeological site on the property. How is it configured. Is one part more important than the another part? This would be the testing process.

5. Come up with a plan to work with whoever is developing the property to find out how they will develop it and leave the important part alone and preserve it in place. If the individual says they can do so and have it for a greenspace, walkway, elevate and not disturb the ground, then a memorandum of agreement could be written up, given to the Corps of Engineers where they will sign off on it. The State Historic Preservation Officer will sign it. Then the federal permit would be issued.

This of course, could be done with an ordinance and these steps would not have to be necessarily followed in the order as stated above. However, the property has to be evaluated; then have the studies evaluated to see if the sites are really significant.

Dr. Brockington stated that he believes it would be appropriate for Savannah- Chatham County to work with the staff at DNR to ensure that it would be the same that is going on all over the state.

Dr. Brockington explained that public outreach is great. Develop a report telling what took place at a battlefield such as how things were arranged and what happened. This report could be used by many different people. They have actually made a study guide/teacher curriculum guide that the teachers are able to use in the classrooms. They have made films and videos. One of the squares in Savannah that was being redeveloped and they took the oral history of all the people who lived in the area for a long time and recorded the information on video and placed it in the library so that a hundred years from now people will still be able to study this along with any new ideas. All of this can count as

mitigation.

He is very excited about public outreach. When they started working ten years ago, they created a little division within their company called the "History Workshop" where their displays are made. They have done a lot of them in Savannah, Liberty County, and St. Mary's, Georgia. The title for St. Mary's was the "Forgotten Invasion." The exhibit tells the story about the war of 1812.

Savannah is a very historic city and everything that goes on here is not covered by the federal review process. A lot of small projects can have big impacts on specific things. You don't have to require maps of excavation and study by specialists from Atlanta or elsewhere to come in and do it, but you can work with local people from SCAD and elsewhere and design programs that will be public outreach. This could meet the requirements; you can make your ordinances consider this. There are a lot of options.

Dr. Brockington stated that as the CCHPC looks at this over the next year, he will be happy to come back and of course there are other people that he can recommend who will be able to assist in this endeavor. He urged the CCHPC to require some public outreach. Tell the story about the history or the archaeology.

Ms. Goode-Walker asked what would be the pros and cons of an archaeology ordinance in a City such as Savannah that already has a historic base.

Dr. Brockington answered that there are many projects that disturb the ground. If the projects are doing some sort of visual intrusion on the historic neighborhood, the historic preservation ordinance would catch them and cause it to be looked at in a different way. He said that once these things begin, they will probably have a consultant or staff member that would be expert enough to do the work in-house. If something becomes tricky, hire a consulting firm. Dr. Brockington suggested that whenever the review begins, that we work with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). They are required to help and their assistance is free. SHPO will come to Savannah, check the site, read all the reports and give their opinion.

Ms. Goode-Walker acknowledged that many persons were present today to hear the archaeology presentation.

Ms. Harris asked Dr. Brockington to restate his comments regarding the different phases that might be included in the archaeological process.

Dr. Brockington stated that the first thing to do is conduct a background check on the property then do field studies, if needed. The federal process has evolved to do the background resources, then do a Phase I archaeological study. Sometimes reconnaissance is done before this. Phase II is usually testing for any additional information. Phase III is comprised of doing an excavation of a sample. The other aspects could be called public outreach, which could be Phase IV. He stated that in the development of the ordinance, the phases may be put in how we want to. Dr. Brockington said we are not required by the 1966 law to do this. He said you can do what you want to. May be there is a better way to do it and split one of those phases.

Ms. Harris said one thing we will be faced with is how much this would cost.

Dr. Brockington said that once they see where the property is located, they will be able to do a good process. Estimates must be given, but he could not say how much it would cost per acre. However, he could work up the numbers. For average properties that may be in a rural part of the county, such as an open field or applied field, could be based on how much would it cost to study one hundred (100) acres. Phase I survey might be twenty dollars (\$20.00) an acre. If something was found and they had to go to Phase II, it might be five or six thousand dollars (\$5,000 or \$6,000) per site. However, if the site was big and complicated, it might cost more. Nevertheless, estimates would always have to be given before it is done.

Dr. Brockington said he would be happy to work out somethings that the CCHPC would need to know.

Ms. Harris asked Dr. Brockington what was his opinion about how to treat artifacts that are recovered.

Dr. Brockington suggested that in the ordinance, they become owned by a public entity; either the county or whoever is paying for it such as a developer. Curation of the artifacts would have to be arranged, the notes and photographs, at a repository such as a museum. Usually, this is a one-time fee to the museum. It might cost one hundred to two hundred dollars (\$100 to \$200) for a one foot-by-one foot box. But, sometimes the curation cost could be more. The remaining cost of the study could be approximately fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000); twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for the public outreach; and three or four thousand dollars (\$3,000 or \$4,000) for the curation. Federal projects are required to be done and they check to ensure that it is done. Presently, there are not enough curation facilities in Georgia.

He said that he would be happy to work with SCAD and any other advisors to setup a technical committee. They have actually thought about their company getting into the business of creating a curation facility. One time they were going to get the Sea Island Company to build it for them as they have a lot of artifacts from their projects.

An audience member asked Dr. Brockington if the state has tried to create a database of the things they are targeting.

Dr. Brockington answered that there are many reports that the state has commissioned to look into usually with federal grants. Archaeologists and historians give papers at history and archaeology meetings informing persons of what they found.

Mr. Carey asked if there are any benefits to having an archaeological ordinance in terms of Certified Local Government status with the state department for grants.

Dr. Brockington said as historians and archaeologists, they are trying to get some ordinance ideas for all the local governments in the region. Commissioner Mike Battey has emphasized over and over to them that they were not going to be able to get the regional commission to have regulatory authority to require all these things. They ought to require the local governments to create ordinances that the regional commission would design so they could require everything. But, the regional commission idea needs to be

pushed out by the legislature. They need to figure out ways to set up model ordinances and then the counties and local government decides if they wanted to put this as a part of their plan, would move up from class three (3) local government to class two (2). This would enable them to be eligible for bigger state grants. This is a good idea and it is all written and is in lots of areas, not just archaeology and history. It covers fish protection and many other things. The only problem with this is by the time the regional commission came in, the recession came in. Tax revenues are dropping for the state and they do not have a lot of money to pay for these things. Consequently, the counties and cities are not eager to push politics to get these things done.

Mr. Thomson explained that in the regional plan Dr. Brockington referenced, there is a section that encourages an ordinance for archaeological purposes. They have a point system that encourages regional goals. Chatham County has a standard that everybody is held up to. Points are given, but here in Chatham County, we don't need the points.

VI. Request for Extensions

VII. Staff Reviews

4. [COA20111221-13-1 9924 Pin Point Avenue- Fence](#)

Attachment: [Staff decision.pdf](#)

Attachment: [PPHM - Fence - Original drawings submitted to County.pdf](#)

Attachment: [PPHM - Fence - Photos - 12-21-11.pdf](#)

Attachment: [PPHM - Fence - Request and drawing for additional 25 feet.pdf](#)

Ms. Harris reported on the fence that was approved by staff in the Pin Point area. The information was given to the Commission in their packet.

No action was required by the Commission. Staff approved.

VIII. Other Business

Report on Items Deferred to Staff

5. [Officer Elections- follow up](#)

Attachment: [County Preservation Bylaws.pdf](#)

Ms. Harris reported that at the last CCHPC meeting, a question was raised about the dates of the next election for officers. The CCHPC's bylaws state that the chair will appoint a nominating committee after the July meeting. The vote for the new officers should take place at the October meeting.

IX. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

X. Adjournment

6. Adjourned

Ms. Goode-Walker explained that the next meeting of the CCHPC is scheduled for July 4 which is a holiday. She asked the CCHPC the day they wanted to have the July meeting. They agreed to have their next regular meeting on Thursday, July 12, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Ms. Goode-Walker adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Harris
Cultural Resource and Urban Planning Manager

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.