Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)
Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2016

Members Present: Patricia McCambridge (Chair), Thomas Sledge (Vice Chair), Victor Pickett, Venetta Stephens, Sam Leary, and Edd Conner

Staff/Others Present: Assistant City Attorney Meredith Jacobi, Senior Planner Alexis Baker, and Historic Preservation Planning Intern Kimberly Parker

The official meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by the Chair.

Mr. Pickett made a motion to accept the October 12, 2016 and October 20, 2016 meeting minutes as written. Mr. Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

An update was given on the HPC’s Facebook page. Ms. Jacobi requested that any public comments removed from the page be sent to her to make sure no First Amendment rights were violated. The HPC is using ChesapeakeHPC@gmail.com to communicate with the public.

Concern was expressed that the HPC has been left out of several opportunities to comment on important historic and cultural signs placed in Chesapeake. In the past, it has been a policy to have public and private applicants present their signs to the HPC for comment. Ms. Jacobi will review the HPC’s bylaws and the City Code pertaining to the HPC to better understand the HPC’s purview in historic sign review. The HPC further requested that the minutes reflect that they would like to be a participant in the design of any future City funded historic and cultural signs.

The Dismal Swamp Art Show was held on October 22-23, 2016 and the Heritage Festival was held on October 15, 2016. Both were very successful events for the HPC and the Cornland School Foundation.

The HPC would like to work on a poster of churches and bridges in Chesapeake as it has been a request of several citizens interested in the history of Chesapeake.

The HPC would like to possibly spend some of their budget on historic books, tie downs for the tent, and a booklet updating notable historic structures in Chesapeake. They
will also approach the Norfolk County Historical Society to see if there are any purchases that may be mutually beneficial to both groups.

A discussion was held on preparations for National Historic Preservation Month. Photography or online video contests might be held.

The HPC would like to promote and restore the Dismal Swamp Canal’s Superintendent’s House. Mr. Pickett will contact representatives of the Department of Historic Resources and the Commonwealth Preservation Group, which developed the 2016 Survey for the Northwest River Basin, to ask for advice on how to move forward on restoration. Currently, the Superintendent’s House is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Two National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review letters for communication towers were received by the HPC. Letters will be written explaining that no impacts were found.

Finally, discussion was held on several historic resources, studies, and field trips. An excavation of pits along the Dismal Swamp Canal for Civil War artifacts may occur. Additionally, Dr. Leary is working on a field trip to see a possible grave near Camp Baker. Also, follow-up was made with Dr. Sayers’s graduate student who is studying Maroon and indigenous communities in the Great Dismal Swamp. She will continue her research once hunting season is over. Finally, the Cornland School Foundation has several contractors working to stabilize the Cornland School.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 5:50 p.m.