



**THE CITY OF CHESAPEAKE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

November 12, 2009

**3:30 p.m. (note new starting time)
South Norfolk Library, 1100 Poindexter Street**

- A. Chairman calls the meeting to order.
- B. Announcements.
- C. Approval of the minutes from October 8, 2009.
- D. Discussion of directional and interpretive sign guidelines (see 2 attachments)
- E. Discussion of December get together
- F. Review of text for Waterford School sign (see attachment)
- G. Cornland School letter
- H. Mission Statement
- I. Strategic Plan
- J. Old Business
- K. New Business
- L. Adjourn

Updates and Items for Review at November Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Cyndia Merrell, Historic Preservation Intern

<i>Action</i>	<i>Item</i>
REVIEW	✓ Certified Local Government Application
REVIEW	→ ✓ South Norfolk Local Historic District Questionnaire
REVIEW	→ ✓ Historic Preservation Commission Mission Draft
	✓ Great Bridge Battlefield Event, Historic Preservation Commission Booth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have access to tent and tables ○ Working on brochure of technology and financial resources, see draft ○ Working on 11x17 foam core mounted posters that will include historic photos of Chesapeake <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think of <i>specific topics for posters</i> (ex: history of Chesapeake, historic districts, why we preserve, resources for preserving your historic structure, etc.)
DISCUSS, PLAN	→ ○ Determine schedule—have 1-2 commission members available to talk with citizens on at least Saturday from 10-4. There will be a rotating schedule, and Cyndia will be there all of Saturday. <i>Events will also take place on Sunday—do we want the booth to be open then also?</i>
	✓ Collecting conservation “how to” articles to place in the Wallace Room and the South Norfolk Library
DISCUSS	→ ✓ Assessing feasibility of creating an online searchable database of information from 1999 Reconnaissance Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have the support of the Norfolk County Historical Society to give advice on designing a database and with data entry
REVIEW	→ ✓ Looking at possibilities for continuing with Cornland School—HABS Documentation and National Register Nomination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General interest/inquiry letter for Cornland School that can be slightly altered for most correspondence on assistance—generally shows our position

Chesapeake Historic Preservation Commission Mission

The Chesapeake Historic Preservation Commission acts as an advisory and review committee by advising city council, the planning commission, and staff on implementing the Historic Preservation Plan and its subsequent Comprehensive Plan updates. The Commission also reviews historic signage to insure it correctly interprets Chesapeake's heritage. City Council appoints three commission members to serve on the Board of Historic and Architectural Review.

Beyond acting as a review and advisory committee, the commission seeks to fulfill the following:

- **Increase awareness of preservation in Chesapeake and advocate for historically sensitive reuse instead of demolition along with the safekeeping of important landscapes.**
- **Preserve and protect the integrity of Chesapeake's historic neighborhoods and advocate when necessary for the revitalization of them.**
- **Evaluate ways to better assist historic district residents with preservation. (*Do we want to be specific to local districts?*)**
- **Educate citizens on financial resources and technology for preservation.**
- **Collaborate with the Norfolk County Historical Society and other history groups to make information on Chesapeake's historic resources easily accessible to citizens. This includes an updated list and map of historic resources.**

For your information, the mission is based on the following:

Goals from Historic Preservation Plan are:

1. Locate, designate, and then protect important historic resources and natural sites.
2. Educate citizens about their heritage and its importance to the community.
3. Preserve and protect the integrity of the City of Chesapeake's neighborhoods.
4. Recognize importance of historic preservation in the City of Chesapeake and ensure that all municipal actions reflect a policy of historic preservation.
5. Promote historic resources through economic development.

Historic Preservation Commission Duties and Purpose: Sec. 2-620.16

Act as an advisory capacity to city council and the planning commission to implement the Historic Preservation Plan dated October 10, 1995.

Maintain and update a list of historic sites in the city.

Maintain a map of the city which indicates the approximate location of all designated landmarks and historic areas within the city.

Recommend sites and areas for consideration as local historic districts

Develop architectural guidelines for historic buildings and structures which may be recommended to city council for inclusion in the architectural review standards of the historic and cultural preservation overlay district.

Three members shall be appointed by city council to serve on the board of historic and architectural review.

Provide information and direction to citizens, visitors, and the general public seeking to located and learn about historic sites in the city.

Encourage the preservation of historic sites in the city through education and incentive programs.

Provide assistance to residents of the city seeking to preserve, rehabilitate, or restore the historic architecture of any building or structure in the city having architectural or historic significance.

Review current applications filed with the planning department for the development of listed historic sites and make recommendations to the planning department, planning commission, and city council for the preservation of such site, building, or structure.

November 12, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Chesapeake has been engaged by a local citizen in preserving an 1885 post civil war African American built school house. While the City remains very interested in the preservation of African American history in Chesapeake, it does not have the resources and ability to pursue a preservation project of this scale.

The building's location and small size present an interesting preservation challenge as well. To make the project economically feasible, the owner would need to take advantage of tax credits and grants that are most readily available to income producing properties. If the building were to be relocated to a more suburban location, it would lose its important rural context. Some reuse possibilities have been discussed, but the owner and city are currently still looking for more self-sustaining reuse options that will allow this building to remain an important part of Chesapeake's built heritage.

In the interim, Chesapeake and the owner remain dedicated to continuing research on the structure and are hoping to complete a full architectural documentation of the existing conditions.

In the Spring of 2009, a student intern compiled research on the Cornland School into a comprehensive binder. Much research was completed, but there are still a few holes to fill before applying for National Register Nomination. We hope to have student interns or the Historic American Buildings (HABS) Survey Program complete existing conditions drawings of the building. Ultimately, we would like go beyond simply documenting the structure and find a feasible option for preservation and reuse.

We thank you for your continued support of African American heritage and hope you will consider the future of the historic Cornland School in Chesapeake, VA. The loss of this structure would be unfortunate as it presents an opportunity to interpret the educational heritage of African Americans in post civil war Virginia.

Sincerely,

The City of Chesapeake Historic Preservation Commission

**WATERFORD COLORED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
AND
EDWARDS-WILSON NEGRO SCHOOL**

On this spot stood the Waterford Colored Elementary School, the forerunner of the Edwards-Wilson Negro Elementary School.¹ On November 9, 1965, after years of receiving petitions from the citizens of the Northside community, the school was renamed the Edwards-Wilson Negro Elementary School by the Chesapeake School Board.² Both Miss Daisy L. Wilson and Miss Leona D. Edwards had served as principal and teachers respectively since the death of the legendary principal A. J. J. Sykes on December 30, 1925.³ On November 9, 1965, The Edwards-Wilson Negro Elementary School became the first and only public school in the City of Chesapeake to be named in honor of two African-American women.⁴ Today 2010, the school is known as the Edwards-Wilson Center.⁵

¹ Norfolk County School Board Minutes, Nov.21-22, 1913

² Chesapeake School Board Minutes, Nov. 9, 1965

³ Norfolk County School Board Minutes, Jan. 4, 1926

⁴ Chesapeake School Board Minutes, Nov. 9, 1965

⁵ Ibid, Jan.15, 1974