

# **VIRGINIA BEACH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

## **Meeting Minutes**

May 3, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

Planning and Community Development Conference Rm., 2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500

Approved June 7, 2023

Members Present: Chair, Sharon Prescott; First Vice-Chair, Christi Lyons; Second Vice-Chair Glenn Carwell; Secretary, Bobbie Gribble; Immediate Past Chair, James Wood  
Derek DuBay (remote); Sharon Felton; Harriet Frenzel; Natalie Hubbard; Richard Klobuchar; Becky Livas; Lee Lockamy; Paul Morrisette; Timothy Oksman; Mac Rawls  
Members Absent: Jenna Morris, Katie Paulson  
Staff Liaison Present: Mark Reed  
Staff Present: Elizabeth Nowak (remote)  
Council Liaisons Present: Joash Schulman

Public Present: Al Henley; Wayne Jarman, Debra McClane (presenter)

Purpose The purpose of the Commission is to advise the City Council and the Department of Planning and Community Development and museums on all issues related to the preservation of historic buildings, structures, and sites located in the City of Virginia Beach.

Mission The mission of the Commission shall be to preserve, protect and maintain the historic identity of Virginia Beach and the former Princess Anne County through a program of advocacy and increased public awareness and involvement.

### **Welcome/Introductions/Remarks**

The Commission Chair, Sharon Prescott, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She read the Purpose and Mission of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Ms. Prescott noted that the newest appointee is in attendance. She welcomed Paul Morrisette to the Historic Preservation Commission. Mr. Morrisette said he is happy to be on the Commission. He said he has a great interest in history and is a member of the Virginia Huguenot Society. He noted that he goes by "Pete."

### **Approval of April 5, 2023 Minutes**

Ms. Prescott asked the members present to review the minutes of the April 5, 2023 Historic Preservation Commission meeting and provide any additions or corrections. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Christi Lyons. The motion to approve was seconded by Glenn Carwell. There was no discussion. The minutes of the April 5, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously.

### **Presentation – Gunning and Hunt Clubs MPD PIF**

Ms. Prescott introduced Debra McClane, Architectural Historian, who was in attendance to provide a presentation on the Gunning and Hunt Clubs MPD.

Ms. McClane thanked the Commission for the opportunity to report on the preparation of a Preliminary Information Form (PIF) for the Multiple Property Document (MPD) and for the Pocahontas Fowling Club individual property. She said the PIF is the first step in Virginia's two-step process to nominate a property to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It provides baseline information for evaluating a property's National Register eligibility. It is reviewed by DHR's staff evaluation team and, if it passes that, it is reviewed by the State Review Board.

Ms. McClane said the Gun and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne County were built for recreational hunters. They were primarily built in Back Bay and Currituck Sound. There were approximately 60 that were built, and Ms. McClane thinks that up to 18 may still be standing. The oldest clubs were the Princess Anne Club, formed in 1894, and the Sand Bridge Club, which was established in 1897.

Ms. McClane explained the function of the MPD. She said it captures an overview of the historic context and development of the gunning clubs from the late 19th century through the late 20th century. It also identifies the geographic region, associated property types, and their defining characteristics. The MPD establishes the registration requirements for individual properties. The MPD must be accompanied by a nomination for an eligible property, and it is the Pocahontas Fowling Club that will be accompanying this one

Ms. McClane explained the National Register of Historic Places criteria. She said the hunt clubs qualify as buildings/sites under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history and under Criterion C since they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Ms. McClane said that because the birds were overhunted, it gave rise to the first conservation efforts for the bird species that were being hunted. Once the clubs shut down, much of the land was absorbed in the state and federal wildlife refuge areas and parks.

Ms. McClane said the general date range of the clubs is 1890 - 1960. By 1960 most of the clubs had closed. Ms. McClane briefly discussed a few of the surviving club buildings

The Drum Point Gunning Club was built in 1913. It has 7 bedrooms in it. There is a register of all guests at the club in the Virginia Beach Public Library collection. In 1953 the club's assets were liquidated. It was sold to a private individual. The surrounding area is part of the Back Bay Refuge.

The Kirn Hunting Lodge was built by the Kirn Brothers in 1910. They owned it from 1910 to 1929 when they conveyed it to their caretaker who was a well-known guide in the area. He maintained the property for many years.

The Horn Point Club was built in 1907 by northern investors. Al Henley's family were caretakers of the club.

The Pocahontas Fowling Club was established in 1904 It was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1931. It features colonial revival details and was one of the most exclusive clubs. Membership cost \$2,500 initially, which would be \$80,000 in today's money. The Commonwealth of Virginia purchased it in the 1960s. In 1992 it was sold to private individuals.

Ms. McClane went over the next steps, some of which have been accomplished:

April 2023 - PIF submitted to Department of Historic Resources/Staff Evaluation Team

May 2023 - Presentation to the Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission

June 15, 2023 - DHR's State Review Board Meeting at the Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News

Mr. Al Henley said that the economic impact of these clubs for the local area was significant.

Mr. Wayne Jarman thanked the Historic Preservation Commission for pursuing the National Register recognition.

Mark Reed noted that staff at DHR is excited about this project. They told him that recreational resources in Virginia are underrepresented in the registers.

Ms. Prescott thanked Ms. McClane for her presentation (see Appendix 1).

Mr. Reed informed the chair that before continuing there is a procedural issue to address. He noted that Commission member Derek DuBay is participating remotely. Mr. Reed said that the audio for the video conference is not working so we are unable to hear those participating remotely. He said he is aware that Mr. DuBay is participating remotely due to medical reasons (Mr. DuBay nodded). Mr. Reed asked Mr. DuBay to send him an email to explain his reason for participating remotely and note the location from which he is participating.

### **VA250 Commemoration**

Mr. Reed noted that the duties and responsibilities for the Virginia Beach VA250 Committee are included in their meeting packet (see Appendix 2). The goal was stated on the meeting presentation slide:

Goal - To commemorate the local events and achievements, large and small, that occurred in Virginia Beach 250 years ago and during all times by all people, that embody the ideals and ideas of the "American Experiment" and declared as essential truths and unalienable rights in the Declaration of Independence.

Mr. Reed said the Executive Committee is working on the process for recommending committee members to City Council for appointment.

### **Historic Preservation Month**

Ms. Prescott said that we have Pints for Preservation activities coming up as part of Historic Preservation Month. She noted the following Virginia Beach History Trivia Nights, all beginning at 7:00 p.m.

- May 17th - Reaver Beach
- May 22nd - Pleasure House
- May 25th - Vibrant Shore

Christi Lyons passed around a hat for donations from the Commission members for Trivia Night prizes.

Mr. Reed said that commemorative pint glass koozies and glassware have been delivered. Proceeds from the sale of the glassware will go to the preservation of the Lighthouse. The glasses will be donated to Preservation Virginia and they will have staff on hand to sell the glasses - \$10 per glass and 2 for \$15.

Mr. Reed said each brewery creates a “special” beer for Historic Preservation Month and \$1 from each pint sold of that beer will be donated toward the preservation of the Cape Henry Lighthouse.

Mr. Reed noted that the Historic Preservation Month proclamation will be read May 16 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Council meeting. All members are welcome to attend.

### **Committee Reports**

Natalie Hubbard reported for the Student Leaders Committee. She said that the Scavenger Hunt for Historic Preservation Month is scheduled on Saturday, May 20 at the Brock Environmental Center. She said it is called History Hunting at Pleasure House Point and will involve posters placed along the trail with QR codes for accessing the questions.

Ms. Hubbard said the next meeting for the committee will be on May 10.

Ms. Lyons invited Commission members to come out to Pleasure House Point on May 20 to help with the History Hunting event.

### **Commission Meeting Attendance**

Ms. Prescott said she wanted to briefly discuss meeting attendance. She said it is something that the City Clerk’s Office and the City Council are watching closely. She noted that the City Council has adopted a policy for boards and commissions that includes the following guidelines for meeting attendance by appointed members:

*Virginia Beach City Code Chapter 2, Article 1, Section 2-3.1:* No member of any such board, commission or agency shall accumulate an annual total of more than three (3) absences, or be absent from more than one-fourth of the total number of meetings held by such board, commission or agency within a given calendar year, for reasons other than personal illness, the illness or death of a relative, or other circumstances beyond the member's control.

- Circumstances beyond the member's control will be determined by the chair
- The staff liaison will notify the HPC chair after a member has had two unexcused absences. The chair shall contact the member to determine why the member is missing meetings and remind the member of the City's attendance policy, and the HPC's remote participation policy.
- If a member accumulates three or more absences in a calendar year for any reason other than personal illness, the illness or death of a relative, or other circumstances beyond the member's control, the staff liaison shall notify the City Clerk's office in writing, with a copy to the chair, and advise the City Clerk of the name of the member of who has accumulated absences beyond those allowed by the City Code.

Ms. Prescott said that staff is required to follow through with informing the chair about unexcused absences and informing the City Clerk once a member has three such absences.

### **Project Updates**

Mr. Reed provided updates on projects that are underway. Several were for National Register nominations that are in progress. For the Seatack Historic District nomination Mr. Reed said that DHR staff did a site visit on April 21. They drove through the areas that are included in the proposed boundaries and areas outside of them. He said it will be difficult to add the streets south of the proposed boundaries due to the preponderance of new construction, but he said we are going to try.

Mr. Reed said this will require additional survey and some narrative additions and adjustments. He said we have an estimate for the costs to make these additions and we have enough funding in the current year's budget. Mr. Reed noted that he has requested a grant term extension from the National Park Service.

For the Chesapeake Beach Historic District nomination, Mr. Reed said he has reviewed some of the VCRIS forms for the surveys. He said there is no date for receiving a draft submittal.

Mr. Reed addressed the Newsome Farm Cemetery nomination since we were not able to get any audio from Elizabeth Nowak remoting into the meeting. He said staff is currently reviewing the draft nomination. He said a presentation to the Commission on Newsome Farm Cemetery is scheduled for the June 7 meeting.

Mr. Reed noted that the Pleasant Ridge School nomination is now under contract and the project is expected to get underway in June.

Mr. Reed also discussed the status of the Preliminary Information Form (PIF) projects. He said that the Commission had already heard earlier about the Gun and Hunt Club MPD, which is scheduled to go to the State Review Board on June 15.

Mr. Reed noted that the Beach Carousel Motel PIF is the fourth nomination going forward under the Oceanfront Resort Motels MPD. He said it scored very high in DHR's evaluation and will also be going to the State Review Board on June 15. He said a presentation to the Commission is scheduled for the June 7 meeting.

Mr. Reed said he had additional information to report on the Newsome Farm Cemetery. He noted that the site cleanup for yard debris was held on April 22, and they filled a yard debris trailer and over 50 lawn bags. He thanked Sharon Prescott and Bobbie Gribble for coming out and contributing their time and energy that day. He also thanked Elizabeth Nowak for participating in the cleanup.

Mr. Reed said he has a proposal in hand for the preservation assessment and treatment plan for Newsome Farm Cemetery. He noted that it is from the Chicora Foundation, Inc. who is probably the top firm in cemetery preservation circles. The stated fee is \$9,522.24 and a purchase order is in process.

Mr. Reed also noted that ground-penetrating radar for the cemetery is under contract and is scheduled to be performed in late June or early July.

Lee Lockamy asked who owns the Newsome Farm Cemetery. Mr. Reed said there is no legal title for the parcel. He said the Commission and the Civic League have started some discussion of the options related to ownership. He noted that the Commission voted several months back to ask the City to take ownership of it as an abandoned cemetery. He said they want the civic league to be on board with that before moving forward.

Mr. Reed said he wanted to make sure that everyone knows that the Historic Preservation Plan has been completed and printed copies have been received. He handed out copies of the printed plan to those that did not receive one at the April meeting. He noted that the link to the document is on the Commission's webpage.

Mac Rawls said it is quite an achievement and is something to be proud of. He said that it probably wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for the Historic Preservation Commission.

### **Historic Properties Glimpse**

Because of the conference room audio issues, Mr. Reed reported for Ms. Nowak on the upcoming items on the Historical Review Board's (HRB) May agenda.

The first item is replacement of the Francis Land House garden fence. Mr. Reed said they propose to replace an existing wood fence with a cedar fence. He said the current fence was salvaged from a tree that fell on the property in a hurricane some 25 years ago and it has reached the end of its viable service.

The second item is a rear addition for a house on Annapolis Circle. The proposal is to remove an existing pergola located at the back of the house and replace it with a sunroom. He noted that the house was built in the late 2010s and is not visible from the rest of the Courthouse district.

Mr. Reed then addressed the Estates Court oyster shed, which is not on the HRB's agenda. He said he has reviewed a structural analysis for the structure, which is in the Commission's meeting packet, and approximately 90 percent of the timber piles supporting the structure have deteriorated and have marine growth deep into the wood. The piles are to the point they no longer provide adequate support for the structure above. The dock and structure have exceeded their useful life. Based on this report, the property owner is planning to demolish the existing structure and build something similar in its place.

Mr. Reed said staff is working to set up a meeting with Threatened Properties Committee on the site so they can examine the structure. He said he knows Derek DuBay is very interested in the shed and he apologized that the audio for the remote participants is not working. He said he would send Mr. DuBay the structural analysis and try to set up the meeting.

### **Old Business**

Under old business, Mr. Reed provided a reminder about the scheduled CLG Workshops. He said the closest one is in Richmond on July 19. The presentation slide listed the dates and locations.

- May 19, Martinsville
- July 19, Richmond
- Oct 26, Fredericksburg
- Oct 27, Leesburg
  - Workshops are 9:30 - 4:00

### **New Business**

Under new business, Mr. Reed informed the Commission that the Skirmish at Kemps Landing historical marker was damaged by a contractor and they are thought to have discarded it. He said staff has tracked them down and are working to get them to commit to paying for the replacement. He noted that it is a Class 1 Misdemeanor in the Code of Virginia to damage/destroy a state marker. He expects that will help encourage the contractor to commit to funding the replacement.

Mr. Reed noted that the end of the fiscal year is upon us and he thinks we will be able to squeeze in a few projects. He said we should be able to fund two dendrochronology projects. He noted that we had put the Carraway House dendrochronology on hold to fund the Estates Court archaeology. He said it has a 1734 date attributed to it, but there is no real supporting evidence, except the Carraway's purchased the property in 1733.

He said he has met with the owners of Pleasant Hall and they have agreed to a dendrochronology project for that building. He noted that some people say it was George Logan's house built in 1769 and was Lord Dunmore's headquarters, briefly in 1775. He said that deed research doesn't support that, and the National Register nomination says it was built in 1779 by Peter Singleton.

Mr. Reed said he thought both projects would be great VA250 activities.

A final project that can be funded in the current year is a PIF for the C&P Telephone Building to determine its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. He said Ms. McClane will be contracted to do the PIF. He said he had asked her about doing the project a year ago and she was too busy to take it on. Kristin Kirchen also declined to do it at that time.

Mr. Reed noted that the Whitehurst-Buffington House Foundation is inviting the Commission to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their lease signing and ribbon cutting. The event will be on Wednesday, June 14 at 11:00 a.m. at the Whitehurst-Buffington House, 2441 North Landing Road. He said he hoped some members would attend.

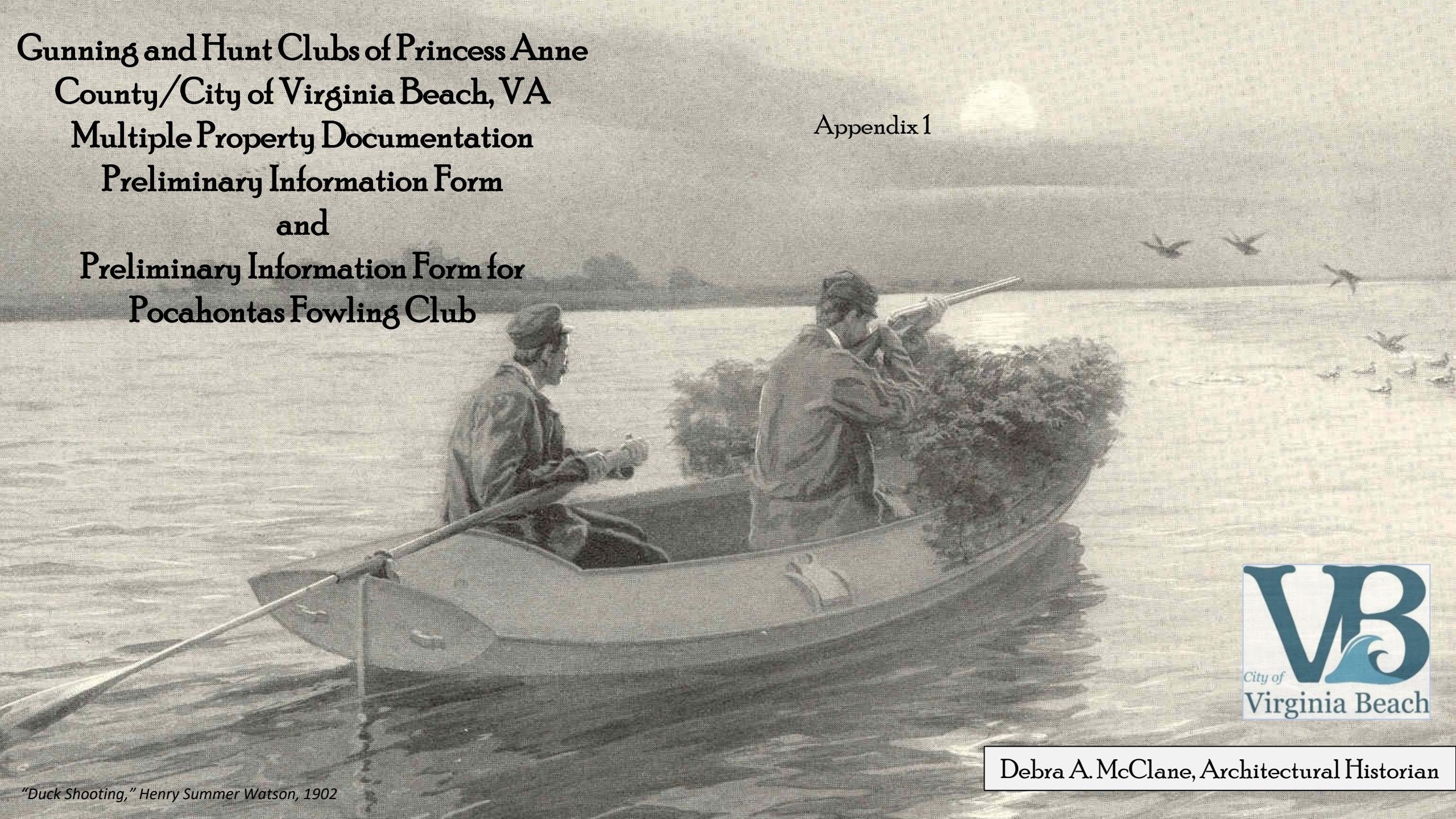
### **Adjournment**

Ms. Prescott informed the Commission members that the next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.



**Gunning and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne  
County/City of Virginia Beach, VA  
Multiple Property Documentation  
Preliminary Information Form  
and  
Preliminary Information Form for  
Pocahontas Fowling Club**

Appendix 1



*"Duck Shooting," Henry Summer Watson, 1902*

Debra A. McClane, Architectural Historian



# PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF)

- First step in Virginia's two-step process to nominate a property to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)
- Provides baseline information for evaluating a property's NR eligibility
- Reviewed by the Department of Historic Resources' Staff Evaluation Team
- Reviewed by State Review Board, which recommends whether the property should proceed to preparation of a NR nomination



*Coppedge and Johnson*



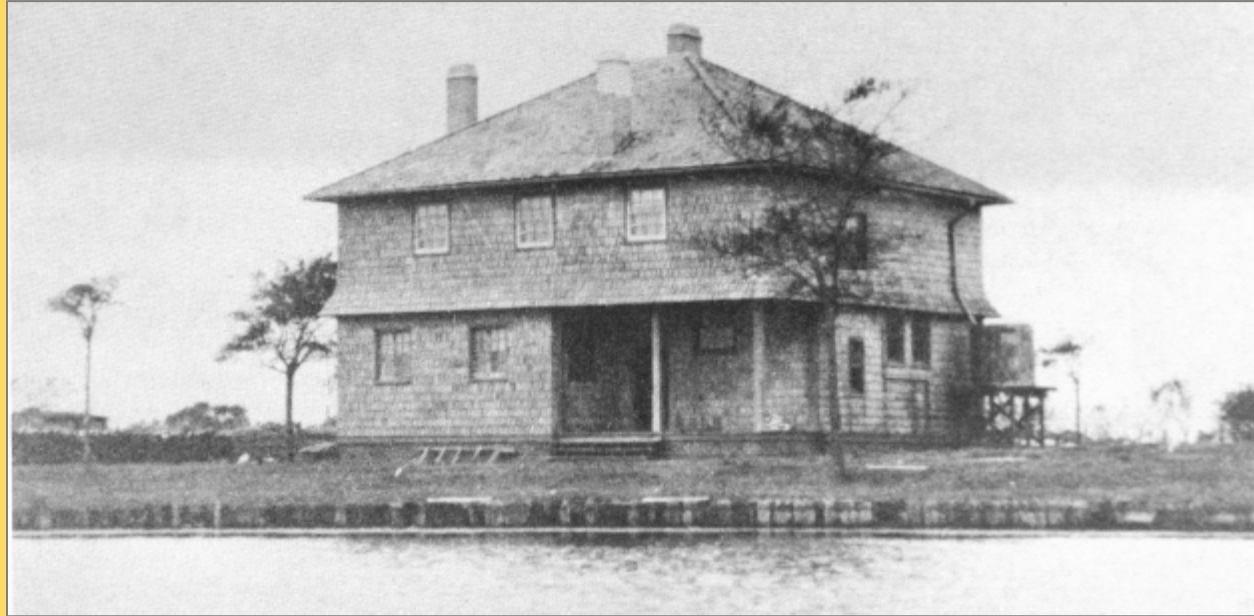
GUNNING CLUBS  
OF  
BACK BAY AND  
CURRITUCK SOUND

Rich Romano



# MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION (MPD)

- Captures an overview of the historic context and development of the gunning clubs from the late-19<sup>th</sup> century through the late-20<sup>th</sup> century
- Identifies geographic region
- Identifies associated property types and defining characteristics
- Establishes registration requirements
- Accompanied by nomination for eligible property (Pocahontas Fowling Club)



*Ragged Island Club, est. 1891*

# National Register of Historic Places Criteria

Buildings, sites, structures, objects and districts that possess integrity and:

- **Criterion A:** That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- **Criterion B:** That are associated with the lives of significant persons in or past; or
- **Criterion C:** That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- **Criterion D:** That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Level of Significance: Local

Period of Significance: ca.1890-1960







Drum Point Gunning Club, 1913





Kirn Hunting Lodge, 1910







Horn Point Club, 1907



Back Bay, Virginia: The Great Provider (Henley)

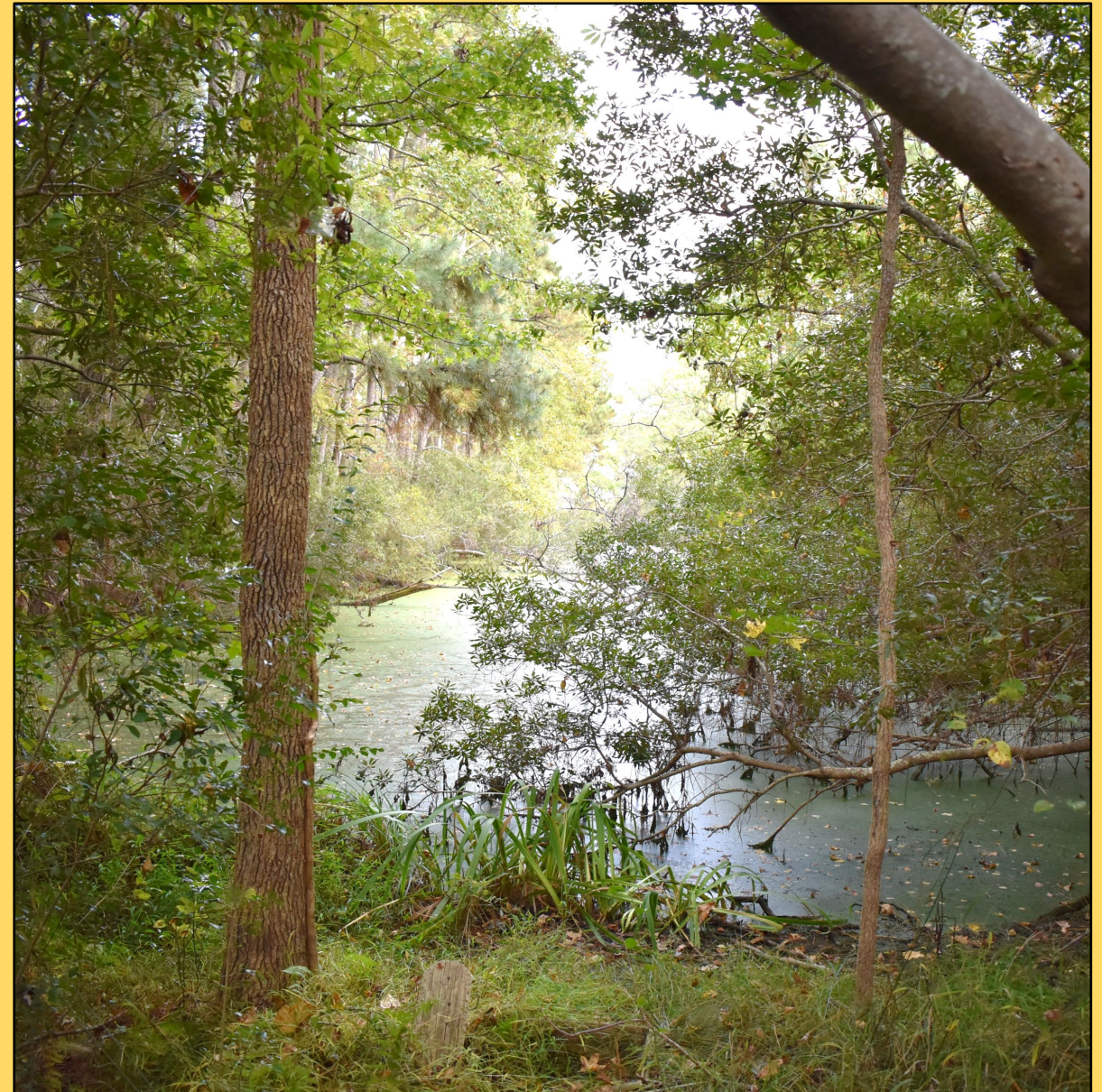




# Pocahontas Fowling Club, est. 1904, rebuilt 1931











# Next Steps

✓ April 2023

Preliminary Information Forms submitted to  
Department of Historic Resources/Staff Evaluation Team

✓ May 2023

Presentation to Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission

June 15, 2023

DHR's State Review Board Meeting  
Mariners' Museum and Park  
Newport News, VA  
<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/boards/>

## Appendix 2

### **Duties and Responsibilities for Virginia Beach VA250 Committee**

**Goal:** To commemorate the local events and achievements, large and small, that occurred in Virginia Beach 250 years ago and during all times by all people, that embody the ideals and ideas of the “American Experiment” and declared as essential truths and unalienable rights in the Declaration of Independence

- Assist in the planning and coordination of community activities to commemorate the events associated with the American Revolution in Princess Anne County/Virginia Beach 250 years ago
- Assist in the planning and coordination of community activities to commemorate local historical events that incorporate the ideals of freedom, liberty, and equality
- Coordinate with City departments, the tourism industry, cultural organizations, and community organizations to raise awareness about VA250 and local historical commemorations
- Coordinate with other regional VA250 committees to encourage cooperative commemorations and marketing
- Seek grant funding available to VA250 communities to support associated events and initiatives