

Council Agenda Report

Date: October 11, 2016

Prepared by: Sandra Tripp-Jones, City Manager *STJ*

Submitted by: Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley

SUBJECT: Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Membership

Recommendation: That Council:

- A. Accept the resignation of Mr. Gaver Nichols
- B. Appoint Mr. Herschel Johnson
- C. Reappoint Mr. Ron Berman

Discussion:

The Historic Preservation Commission currently has three vacancies:

1. Mr. Berman's term expired 8/31/16. He has submitted a letter requesting reappointment.
2. Ms. Patricia Weichmann-Morris's term expired 8/31/16.
3. Mr. Gaver Nichols resigned and the Mayor recommends that Council accept the resignation.

Several individuals have applied for appointment to HPC. The Mayor recommends reappointing Mr. Berman at this time and adding one new member: Mr. Herschel Johnson. He has been instrumental in the restoration of historic properties at Christ Rock (Stanley Institute and Christ Rock Methodist Church) and has a special interest in local history. Mr. Johnson is a resident of Cambridge. The Mayor intends to request Patricia Weichmann-Morris consider remaining for a few months while additional candidates are recruited who meet the criteria for membership on the Committee. It is desirable to identify additional candidates with professional and/or academic training in: history, architecture, architectural history, planning, archeology, anthropology, curation, conservation, landscape architecture, historic preservation, urban design or related disciplines.

Attached are the HPC membership qualification and Mr. Johnson's and Mr. Berman's letters.

September 21, 2016

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SEP 22 2016

Mayor Victoria Jackson- Stanley
City of Cambridge
412 Academy Street
Cambridge, MD 21613

BY:

Dear Mayor Jackson- Stanley:

I spoke to you about my interest in serving on the Historical Preservation committee, for the City of Cambridge. I feel that I am qualified to sit on the committee because of my experience with my work with a local organization, The Friends of Stanley Institute, Inc., which I am the president. We have restored the one room African-American school built in 1865 called Stanley Institute, located at the corner of the Harriet Tubman Underground By-way (Route 16) and Bailey Road, and the Christ Rock United Methodist Church built in 1875 which is across the road from the school.

I have always believed that if it is possible to save a historic structure, preservation should be the first step. I was born in Dorchester County, and graduated from Mace's Lane High School, I retired from the United States Postal Service after 38 years and 7 months, I was Postmaster in Federalsburg, MD for the last 16 years of my service. I am married to Dorothy Reynolds Johnson, and we have lived on Rock Drive since 1970. Other organizations that I belong are:

Dorchester County Historical Society Board of Directors
Board of Directors Dorchester County Recreation and Parks
CASA of the Mid-Shore Board of Directors
President East New Market Heritage Committee
Treasurer Dorchester County NAACP
Treasurer Mace's Lane Alumni Association
Treasurer Mace's Lane High Class of 1958
Treasurer Camper/Fisher Reunion Committee
Coach in Dorchester Youth Basketball League (50 years)

Thank You


Herschel Johnson

8/23/2016

Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley
City of Cambridge
Cambridge, MD 21613

Dear Mayor Jackson-Stanley:

As my first 3 year term on the Historic Preservation Commission draws to an end and I reflect on the dozens of meetings I have attended, I ask myself what have I learned and what have I accomplished.

What I have learned is a lot about the motivations, attitudes and needs of the Historic District property owners. There are close to 800 Historic District property owners who need a system that will work for them. I have also learned the requirements of the local, state, and federal regulations that govern the HPC process.

What I have accomplished is to start to steer the Commission towards being more responsive to and flexible with Historic District property owners. This can and should be accomplished while still preserving the historic streetscape of Cambridge. This has been my main goal from the start and it is still a work in progress. There is still much work to be done.

Therefore, I respectfully ask that you recommend my reappointment for another 3 year term on the HPC.

Thank you,

Ron Berman
307 Oakley Street
Cambridge, MD 21613
410-463-3171
ron@bermands.com

From: Gaver Nichols Architect [<mailto:gnarchitec@aol.com>]

Sent: Friday, August 19, 2016 11:42 AM

To: LaSara Kinser <kinser@chooscambridge.com>; pweichmann@msn.com; m-russo3@hotmail.com

Subject: THANKS

Dear LaSara,

Would it be ok to say Thank you for all the work you have put in assisting myself and our current Cambridge HPC Board . It has been a joy to work with you and again I thank you for your insight and all the activities you have implemented to improve the Board .

However, everybody knows there has been quite a bit of email traffic during the last week that causes me to question the direction the local City counsel, the Mayor and the local citizens want to take the board . As a very well respected and experienced Design Professional , Building Owner and Architect I would like to take this time to offer my immediate RESIGNATION from the Board .

I am very supportive of our Board, our Design Professionals , Architects, the Chairperson and the Vice chair. I offer my resignation in support of our team and to provide the local citizens a way to complete their new vision for the board .

I am just sorry it appears to not include those of us with experience and knowledge who offer our time to improve the community.

We thank you again and are happy to have served Cambridge .

Gaver Nichols Architect

B. Membership

1. The HPC shall consist of five standing members and one alternate member appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. A majority of the members of the HPC shall be residents of the City, with at least one member being a resident of a Cambridge historic district. Nonresident appointees must possess professional or academic qualifications as defined by the HPC's By-Laws or Rules of Procedures. Each member including the alternate member shall possess a demonstrated special interest, specific knowledge, or professional or academic training in such fields as history, architecture, architectural history, planning, archaeology, anthropology, curation, conservation, landscape architecture, historic preservation, urban design, or related disciplines. Attention shall be given to the required expertise needed to retain the Certified Local Government state designation when appointing new members to the HPC.
2. Members are appointed for staggered terms of three years, commencing Sept. 1st of a calendar year, so that no more than three appointments shall expire in a given year. HPC members are eligible for reappointment. The Mayor and City Council shall fill any vacancy on the HPC for the unexpired term. Any vacancy of the HPC shall be filled by the appointing authority within 60 days. In the case of expired terms, members may continue to serve until the successors are appointed and confirmed. The alternate member may be appointed to fill an unexpired term.
3. Removal for Cause. After a hearing, a member may be removed from the HPC if such hearing is requested in writing by the member, by the City Commissioners or the Mayor with the consent and prior approval of the City Commissioners. In each case, the cause for removal shall be stated in writing.
4. HPC members may be compensated at the discretion of the City Council.