CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
COMMISSION MINUTES

April 28, 2015

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on
Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at 3:30 PM., in the freeholder conference room in Bridgeton, New
Jersey.

Present: Penny Watson Suzanne Merighi
Roy Kaneshiki John Garrison
Maria Cerda-Moreno Merle Silver

Matthew Pisarski, Assistant Planning Director
Jennifer Morgan, Recording Secretary

Guest: Kim Gauntt, Cumberland County Recreation & Tourism
Dr. Richard Hunter, Hunter Research
Patrick Harshbarger, Hunter Research
William Liebeknecht, Hunter Research

Approval of Minutes – March 24, 2015
A motion was made to approve the minutes from March 24, 2015 by Mr. Garrison. The motion
was seconded by Ms. Merighi and passed unanimously.

Update of Battle of Dallas’ Landing – Dr. Hunter, Hunter Research
Dr. Hunter passed out several documents. Most of the research was presented at the public
meeting in November. Dr. Hunter said not much information is available to report, no new solid
information has been found. Mr. Hunter researched the Riggins family. The Riggins families
were the land owners in the Leesburg and Dorchester area. Hunter research found two small
newspaper articles that were published in two different newspapers. Both newspaper articles
conflict with each other with no names mentioned. Prison records have been researched also.
Mr. Harshbarger said since nothing was found in prison or military records the Loyalists were
probably refugees rather than an organized military unit. A James Riggins was found in the
Revolutionary War pension records but he was imprisoned on one of the ships in New York
harbor at the time of the Battle of Dallas’ Landing. The family names Riggins and Peterson
were found in secondary accounts not the original accounts. Dr. Hunter commented that no one
knows the exact location of the Battle of Dallas’ Landing, but the best guess is that it was
between Dorchester and the mouth of the river. Hunter Research has done field work, metal
detecting, a boat trip and ground penetrating radar. Mr. Liebeknecht said they are going to do
further ground penetrating radar on the Calpaldi Farm. Mr. Liebeknecht said there is a lot of
trash along the bank of the river, which is causing complications with the metal detection and
ground penetrating radar. Mr. Pisarski asked if they found anything that dated back to the period
in question during the metal detecting, but nothing was found. Mr. Pisarski questioned if there
was another area that could potentially be part of the battle site. Mr. Liebeknecht said the site
across the street has too much trash and debris to find anything. Mr. Harshbarger spoke about
the KOCOA analysis map that is required for the grant. KOCOA is designed to analyze
traditional land battle fields. Mr. Liebeknecht said the original accounts said people were captured on a boat and later accounts suggested it was a boat to boat boarding action. Mr. Garrison asked if oystering was done at Bivalve during the time period. Mr. Harshbarger commented that it was done at a much later period. Dr. Hunter suggested removing battle from the Battle of Dallas’ Landing since no proof has been found of there being a battle. Mr. Harshbarger said the word battle was added in 1976. Mr. Pisarski will reach out to the National Park Services (NPS) and see what they suggest regarding a name change. Mr. Pisarski said he doesn’t think the locals will want the signage changed in Port Norris. Dr. Hunter said he does not think there is enough information to support a nomination for the National Register. Mr. Pisarski will reach out to NPS and the SHPOs office regarding revising the grant agreement since it will not be available for the National Register unless Dr. Hunter and his team find something in the next two – three weeks. Ms. Moreno asked if a burial site was found how long would it take to determine the age of the burial. Dr. Hunter said hopefully they would find artifacts with the body to help determine the time period. Dr. Hunter will provide a draft report in May and a public outreach meeting will take place June 25th in Leesburg.

Dr. Hunter said they are completing a nomination for East Point. Dr. Hunter gave some back ground history. Ms. Merighi asked if there was any connection to the Underground Railroad, Dr. Hunter said there was not. Mr. Pisarski commented that a three way contract is being signed with the County of Cumberland, Cumberland County Improvement Authority and the Maurice River Historical Society to complete a grant for the rehabilitation of the lighthouse.

**Battle of Dallas’ Landing Signage Quote**
Commission members received in their packet an email from Jeremy Tenenbaum, VSBA regarding the signage for Dallas’ Landing. The oculus and pole will cost $6,980 the Cumberland County Public Works Dept. will handle the installation and the physical mock-up price will be reduced by using different materials. The signage is $3,000 higher than what was budgeted in the grant application but expenses have been saved in other categories. The text has not been drafted yet just the sign itself. The total grant is $19,500 and is supposed to cover: the sign, video podcast, design fee and heritage day. Several sign designs will be made to see what works best in the area where it will be posted. Mr. Pisarski will ask if the sign can be buffed out after years of sitting out in the open, the sign will be under a cover. A motion was made to approve the sign proposal for $7,000 pending any design changes by Mr. Kaneshiki. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

**Nomination of Commission Open Seat – Yogesh Thakur**
Commission members have a bio for Yogesh Thakur in their packet. Mr. Thakur attended a meeting several years ago for a special request for a kite festival. Ms. Merighi asked if the timing of the meetings would be a problem for Mr. Thakur, Mr. Pisarski said it should not be and he is very involved in the Indian Community. A final decision has to made by the Freeholders. A motion was made to approve Yogesh Thakur’s nomination to the board by Ms. Silver. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

**2015 Saturday Artists’ Talk Forum – Recap**
Mr. Pisarski said it was a very positive event with over 50 attendees. Encouraging comments were made on the Commission’s Facebook page. Attendees were asked to fill out a questionnaire, attendees commented they did not know what to expect but were very glad they attended and would like to see similar programming in the future. The event was recorded and
will be posted on YouTube. Mr. Pisarski will apply for the grant for next year’s forum.

**2015 Encore Awards – Thursday, May 21st – Flyer Theater, Camden County College**

An invitation to the Encore Awards is in Commission members packets. Paul and Janet Somers have accepted the Encore Award. They will receive four complimentary tickets and they will receive an extra award. Let Mr. Pisarski know by May 11th if you will be attending the awards.

**Senior’s Month Bay-Atlantic Symphony Concert – Saturday, May 2nd – Guaracini PAC**

The Commission has donated 50 tickets to Office on Aging for the May 2nd concert at Cumberland County College. Mr. Pisarski checked with the Levoy to see if there was an event later in the month. The Celtic Tenors will be at the Levoy but the group rate was high. Mr. Pisarski suggested putting funds towards Disability Awareness month in October and give tickets to the disabled.

**www.ccculturalheritage.org Redesign Quote – Omni Developers**

Commission members received in their packet an email from Jack Hartigan, Omni Developers regarding the new website design. The total cost to revamp the Cumberland Historical website would be $6,000 and the cost for the Cultural & Heritage website would be $7,000. From the 2014 budget $7,813.75 was set aside to cover some of the cost and $5,665 is budgeted from this year’s budget. Mr. Pisarski has not received any communications from Loaded Media. A motion was made to approve the quotes from Omni Developers by Mr. Kaneshiki. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

**Commission Budget – 1st Quarter Review**

Mr. Pisarski went through the 1st quarter review. The Commission has a total of $2,634 from SSRDMO funds that needs to be spent on marketing. The Commission paid for eight memberships to SJ Cultural Alliance. The income from the Artists Talk forum went into the trust account for a total of $330. Mr. Kaneshiki asked if anymore West Jersey Time Traveler podcasts can be done, Mr. Pisarski said more podcast signage will be discussed next month.

**Liaison Reports**

Ms. Merighi attended the Upper Deerfield Community Day she said it was well attended. They had children’s games, food and music. Gallery 50 will have an opening reception for Moe Pagano on May 1st.

Mr. Garrison took a tour of the Bayshore Center he said it was very educational. Meghan Wren told Mr. Garrison that the Bayshore Center is seeking landmark status.

Mr. Kaneshiki gave a report on the Buddhist Temple Fashion Show. Ms. Merighi said it was a great show.

**Tourism Advisory Council Comments – Kimberly Gauntt**

Ms. Gauntt said Kids Fest will be held at the Cohanzick Zoo on May 2nd. The Fishing Derby will be held May 3rd. Cumberland County Recreation & Tourism will have a booth at the Millville Air Show. Mr. Pisarski commented that the previous tourism meeting was held at the NJ Motorsports Park and they are doing very well.

The next Commission meeting will be held at the tribal lands of the Nanticoke Lenni Lenape
Indians in Fairfield Township. Mr. Garrison said he will be going to the tribal lands on May 16th for Tribal Day. Mr. Pisarski said maybe a meeting can be held in the fall at the Motorsports Park.

**Other Old/New Business**

**Correspondence**
A letter was received from EBI Consulting regarding a cell tower at the Millville high rise.

**Adjourn**
A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Merighi. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kaneshiki and passed unanimously.